

ZINE II

WAITING FOR___/ WAITING WITH___/



I. QUEER GOSSIP: A CLASSED EXPERIENCE OF ARTICULATIONS, SILENCES AND LISTENING

According to José Esteban Muñoz, queer and minoritarian cultures expand the materiality of performance/performing by following traces, glimmers, residues and specks that other minoritarian bodies have left behind, what Muñoz names “ephemera” (1996, 10). For queer acts and also queer theory to become possible and resist elimination, bodies bodies need to rehearse and perform “as innuendo, gossip, fleeting moments [...] while evaporating at the touch of those who eliminate queer possibility” (1996, 6). They exist in fleeting, ephemeral, gliding moments without necessarily leaving behind observable traces, as it is these traces that may render their elimination possible. Accordingly, bringing our attention to Athens, Greece, and its particularities in relation to this matter, in a creative process that borrows from queer theory and where the evidence of our existence is replaced by the notion and modality of *ephemera*, bodies are experimenting and establishing protocols and methodologies of producing and apprehending sound, that leave behind improvised traces through the performative, the anecdotal and the *ephemeral*. This alternative modality of sonic textuality and narrativity allows a degree of artistic abstraction while also maintaining sociality and communal creativity. As such, attending to sonic practices that celebrate ephemeral and evident aspects of the participants’ lived experiences may lead to the disruption of and the deconstruction of hierarchical positions such those of the researcher, the facilitator, the artist, the collaborator, the participant and the listener. In this context, the emphasis of the creative process is placed on the heuristic, the tentative and the performative qualities of sound. Thus, the ownership of rigor and diligence in producing a voice, a sound, an artwork is now displaced, enabling for non-majoritarian agents to actively contribute in shaping literal and figural spaces of (un)learning, that maintain experiential politics and urgencies across and beyond the structures of patriarchy, capitalism and colonialism. The focus is on contributing methodologies that promote equal distri-

bution of responsibilities, power and knowledge, and make an effort to reassure that all have access to this conversation. The negotiations may then take place not on what was set in stone before – in the music and arts education literature - but on the ephemeral and elusive learnings of non-majoritarian subjects and communities. The process requires openness which often comes hand in hand with vulnerability. Performing and rehearsing ephemeral moments through openness provides us with the opportunity to imagine ways of becoming in togetherness with and beyond archives of evidence and ethnographies. One of the various attempts of the assemblage of this research to capture their *ephemera* was the improvisation activity “Waiting in 2 minutes; pair I, II, III and IV”. Traces of our shared ephemera can be accessed in the fieldwork notes and journal entries, but the majority of them, as explained above, were intentionally not documented nor captured.

In order for *ephemera* to become a methodological territory, a process, and evidence for communal artistic practice, we must first develop methodologies and protocols that celebrate interdependence and togetherness, because such *ephemera* are acts of collective organising and resistance, that resist to be acknowledged as material products. Queer gossip, as *ephemera* and a mode of sociality and relationality offers an embodied understanding of contemporaneity through lived experience and the performances of it. Within the theoretical and practical framework of this research, queer gossip is understood as a concept-in-action and a praxis that binds intersubjective multivalent bodies; bodies that wish to resist consolidating in hierarchical identities related to their gender and sexuality. Gossip, as it is understood in this fieldwork and research, is practiced as a means of contribution to the emancipation and social standing, within existing power structures, of all collaborators. Meanwhile, it fosters alliances between remote localities and temporalities. In fact, gossip, as labour work and feminine guerilla intelligence, is evident to the structuring of various queer and feminine political assemblies as well as feminist activities and initiatives in Athens, Attica. In their “Mapping of feminist* activities and initiatives”¹⁷ project, the Centre of New Media and Feminist Public Practices¹⁸ created a relational public map of the majority of these groups. Even though the information about their internal operations often remains disclosed, the nature of their activities and the interrelationship between them, reflect a synchronous and asynchronous gossip within and across those assemblies and collectives, that contributes via various medial layers to the discourse about overlapping oppressions in the specific context.

Gossip allows for the amplification of voices and thoughts, often silenced by the canonical methodologies in arts research and practice, as well as in everyday life. Gossip – a practice of the commons - is a culmination of embodied gestures and retellings of collective transformation, companionship and collective emancipation. Interwoven into a conversational gossip, bodies produce knowledges in a territory of attentive sensing and being. The tensions produced through their bodies during this performative exchange, depending on the shared intentions of an assemblage, may provide the basis for individuals to improvise and explore exceeding of their individual limitations.

Gossip could also be perceived as *the space between*: either physical or virtual, real or imaginary, material or immaterial, in a process of becoming together, gossip is the territory for ephemeral exchange and transformation. It is a practice that exists within and beyond verbal communication; communication becomes possible through the lingual and the para-lingual, the verbal and the non-verbal, the corporeal, the sonic, the noise, the visual and sensual. Either in an autonomous or a complementary manner those modalities make up the practice of gossip. The more diverse those modes are, the more accessible the gossip becomes to a multitude of bodies that wish to speak their realities and from those depart to transform those in art. The body draws from its own imprints, histories, and lived experiences, reflecting daily existence while addressing the broader scope of social life, as the body is always situated within it. Pauline Oliveros, through her piece Group Processes (Oliveros 2013, 180), offered us, at various moments of the workshop encounters, one out of many tools to instigate a sonic gossip;

Pauline Oliveros, 2010

GROUP PROCESSES

Any Group

We Could

When a group is together, each person (after a focus is established, or not) finishes a sentence beginning with, “We could...” in as many ways as possible. Time could be limited, or open-ended. The sentences could be recorded or not. The group could vote on subsequent action according to the sentences, or just enjoy imagining what they could be doing

We Are Together Because

When a group is together, each person finishes the sentence, “We are together because...” in as many ways as possible. When there is consensus on the essentials of the group then each person finishes the sentence, “We are together like...” (using a natural analogy or metaphor).

¹⁷ <https://www.centrefeministmedia.arch.uth.gr/program/xartografhsh-feministikwn-prwtoboyliwn>

¹⁸ <https://www.centrefeministmedia.arch.uth.gr/>

GOSSIP AND POETRY

Can it be possible to facilitate processes of subject formation in which bodies and voices are no longer confronted as alien and fragmented realities when transmedia poetry improvisation and composition becomes the mode of queer gossip? What are the qualities and methodologies that we need to be shaping collectively in order for performing bodies to resist dispossession when improvising with each other through ‘re patterning’— that is, letting go of old and new patterns (Oliveros, 2010, 9). While exploring ways of *re patterning* our process of improvising and writing together, we rehearsed being together in simple and ephemeral ways. An instance of being and making together collaboratively that proved to be really central to the entire process of the fieldwork was the collective dinner/food feast that took place during the seventh encounter. As described and analysed in other sections of this dissertation, collaborative improvisation and composition took different shapes and forms throughout this occasion. More specifically, in the lead up to this food feast, the collaborators, we, exchanged emails, phone calls and texts to organise our cooking the recipe, the side dishes and the desert, the music playlist and the topics to be gossiped around the dinner table. On the day, we used the kitchen area of FAC, where we peeled, sliced, chopped, roasted, simmered and boiled vegetables and made salad while chatting, listening to music, filming and recording the sounds and movements of our bodies in the room. More videos of the process and information about the recipe can be found in more detail at “Zine III_i From shattering and splattering to responsibility and resistance; feminism as self-assignment”. When food was ready, we moved to the hall of FAC, where we had dinner. During dinner the conversation drifted from the workshop, to our everyday realities, back to the workshop and to what may come up next, for us as a group, as well as for each individual. Followed by dinner and free-form conversation, I facilitated a semi-structured collective reflection discussion, the part-two section of the three-part-interviewing methodology of the fieldwork, where we exchanged in multimodal ways about our experience and reflection of the fieldwork. The notes of this conversation as well as a personal reflection on this encounter were captured in both sonic, visual and textual manner (some of the data of this conversation has been transformed into factional stories that may be accessed at “Zine IV_ii Weaving Faction-al stories in the form of short vignettes”). We somehow rehearsed being together at a dinner table where we ate and gossiped about our collective experience, the challenges, struggles, learning and unlearnings that we shared throughout this workshop series.

Over the course of the fieldwork, gossip was practiced collectively and on a one-to-one weekly over the course of the interviews with the collaborators. Within the loose

structure of the encounters, the moments when gossip emerged were mainly during sections “Check in”, “Who is in the room?” and “Coven/Gossip/Tune in”. More information regarding the set up and the content of those instances can be found in the text “Oscillating; ways of organising the mess of materials” of Zine II as well as in Zine IV, in the factional stories. Gossip was primarily practiced departing from the principle that all bodies should be provided with the resources to listen and apprehend attentively one another, to listen to the space *in between* and possibly inherit the potentiality to resignify both the notions of sound and silence, or else the notions of *something* and *nothing*.

Picture a vacuum.

An endless
and unmoving
blackness

Sensing a continuum.

While it doesn't exist.

Anticipating a catastrophe.

Continue

this process without any break
until you can't find any space
on the paper

-> Is there any space?

-> What is the difference between
waiting and hoping
waiting & expecting
waiting and dreaming
waiting and manifesting
Acceptance + giving up
Impatience. + anticipation.

-> is there emotionless hoping?

-> Do we live in a state of panic?

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II. ANASYRMOS: GENDERED BODIES, NAKEDNESS AND SOUND

In the introduction to his "Lecture on Something" John Cage underlines the complementarity between the notions of *something* and *nothing* by elucidating that they "need each other to keep on going" (Cage 1961, 129). Each a signified inseparable from the other, calls for multiple expressions - its signifiers - and as such they constitute the variables of an *assemblage*. The assemblage, a positive alternative to a multiplicity of intellectual and affective tendencies, consists of the interplay and interconnectedness between noises and silences, speech acts and bodies. My intention to negotiate together with the collaborators of the fieldwork the characteristics, pedagogies and ethics of (un)learning through an intersectional lens pointed towards existing literature and projects/undertakings that assume a critical approach to "community building". More specifically, what has become available to me as knowledge is that the formation of a community may by default pose a risk of being a repository of personal reputations and behavioural patterns of exclusion. Learning communities, similarly to political communities, are often demarcated or 'etched' externally or internally through at least one external 'border'. In other words, the description and making of a community based solely on the characteristics and needs of the subjects who participate in it goes hand in hand with a demarcation process. Under the pretext of safe guarding of its external 'border', the community becomes a site where openness and accessibility become possible on the basis of similarity or relevance rather than expression of difference. In other words, the creation and sustainability of such community are feasible on the grounds of exclusion. To varying degrees, age, sex, migration status, race, socioeconomic status, disability, ethnicity, religion, place of residence, sexual orientation and gender identity are grounds for social exclusion within and on the periphery of societies and the communities they comprise.

On the contrary, the notion of a *social assemblage* presents the potentiality for diverse and nomadic subjects of varying and different identities who collectively shape a territory where the subjects are rehearsing methodologies of equal power distribution. For an approach of equal distribution of power to become possible, subjects need to negotiate the methodologies of listening, observing, attending and responding to one another; methodologies that help make the assemblage resistant to the hierarchisation of silences, sounds, voices, bodies and noises. Within the context of this research and the fieldwork, I initiated conversations about the hierarchisation of silence and sound, noise and music. Both as a facilitator and collaborator, I tried to distance myself from preconceptions I had about being successful only when the room is buzzing with voices, when the ideas are flowing from one to another seamlessly. As a facilitator I challenged myself to take in and respond to every utterance of the collaborators on

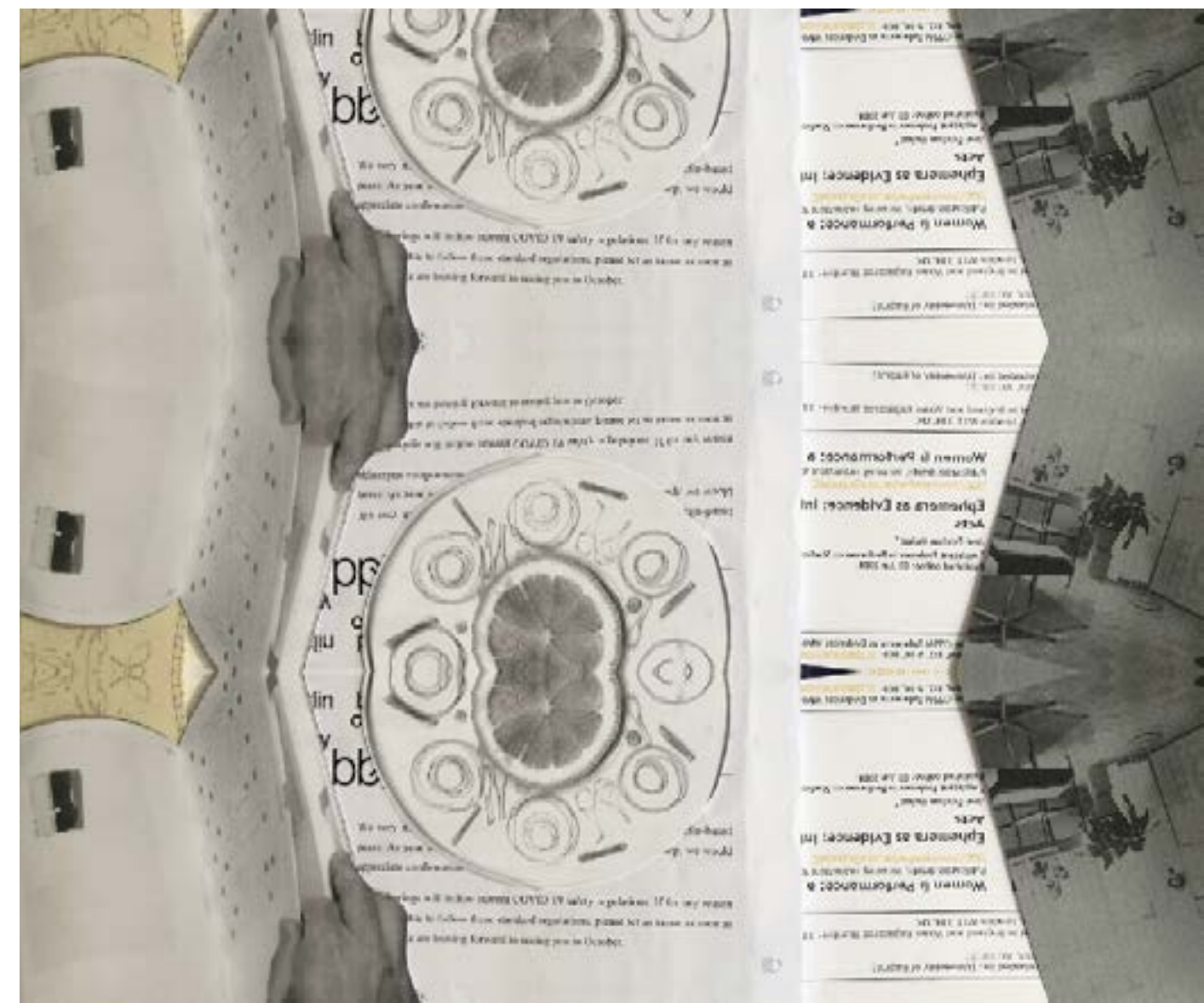


the grounds of equal importance, regardless of their modality and intensity. At times I managed to do so, while at others I failed. Collective decision making and collaboration were not rushed, because the collaborators themselves were firm on their desire to focus on the process rather than the outcome of this workshop. The voices and noises between bodies, the soundscape of the room, the movement and interplay of bodies in the room, the non-verbal communication, as well as the visual and textual articulation of ideas and emotions began to emerge from the room, inviting me to listen to the silence of bodies in the room, the desire of the collaborators for multimodal expression, the need to expand time and decelerate the pace of the collaborative improvisational and compositional/writing activities. The noise in the room, whether visual, sonic, corporeal, became possible thanks to the silence; each a signified inseparable from the rest/others.

Within the context of this *assemblage* we engaged in improvisations that helped us shift hierarchies between sound and silence, and hence refrain from preordaining those that become the signifiers of *something* and *nothing* explored together multivocality and polyphony. Such a *social assemblage*, in the instances that it succeeded to unearth and discard patriarchal semiotics and colonial rhetorics, managed to avoid producing signifiers based on hierarchical assumptions about what *something* and *nothing* are and how much clout they carry. By avoiding to produce such reposit, the joint efforts of the collaborators pointed at rehearsing togetherness differently to a community, that is often destined to function as an apparatus or else a mechanism of enforcement.

Artistic assemblages share many commonalities with social assemblages, as they are situated within societies. Therefore, the negotiation of the ethics and the pedagogies of the *assemblage* of this research reflects how much we as collaborators have been willing to challenge the patriarchal culture embedded in our previous formal training and make space for sexuality, gender, class and race to shape our practice, thinking and organising. Both awareness and practical application of intersectional feminism create a possibility for formations such as this *assemblage* to rehearse negating the silencing non-masculine voices in the politics of speech as well as the politics of art. As Carson argues, the systematic derogation of non-middle-class-white male voices and their ideological association with outrage and disorder has been realised through their silencing (Carson 1992, 121). To imagine an assemblage that celebrates a diversity of sonic imprint and noises of and between bodies we need to begin with unlearning the patterns through which we listen to each other, the exteriorities and interiorities of the context we are situated within. One of the ways of achieving this is through invoking Pauline Oliveros's idea of "bringing listening to consciousness and consciousness to

listening" (Oliveros 2010, 165). Therefore, in the context of this *assemblage* we came up with listening exercises that focused on verbal and non-verbal exchange, musical and non-musical sounds, linear and non-linear conversations. Different sections of the workshop encounters were focused on how a multimodality of expression may become possible, such as the non-verbal exchange during the physical and vocal warm up, the verbal exchange between us in the check-in and gossip moments of the encounter, the writing, drawing and music making exercises that we engaged with in figural and literal *rooms* in which we improvised ways of listening and collaborating.



BODIES RESONATING THROUGH SOUND AND SILENCE

Pivotal to the pedagogies of such an *assemblage*, a territory of (un)learning methodologies of collective improvisation and composition of transmedia [auto]ethnographic poetry, is to consider bodies as one of the various signifiers of *something* and *nothing* and more precisely to look into the materiality of the body in relation to the performativity of gender. According to Butler, “the regulatory norms of sex work in a performative fashion [...] materialize sexual difference in the service of the consolidation of the heterosexual imperative” (Butler 1993, xii). Any attempt to abolish identity categories comes with the risk of denying the power of oneself to self-define their identity and name, as well as to assert the conditions under which they are used and the sociopolitical struggles contained within them. Therefore, it becomes apparent that the materialisation and discipline of bodies into consolidated performative identities allows for a consistent control of the bodies by those who “seek to set the course of terms in the present.” (Butler 1993, 173). Whether an identity is assigned or self-determined, the agency of the given subject(s) may often be stripped away allowing for assumptions on whether this body constitutes a signifier of *something* or *nothing* – of sound or silence.

From the *Great Witch-Hunt* to the criminalisation of the working class in England, the famine spanning the late 15th to the 18th century, the new social-sexual contract and the formation of the “free” independent worker in early 19th century in Europe, the subjugation of women to reproduction in colonies and the institutionalisation of slavery, the pursuit of social discipline has been and still is grounded on dispossessed bodies. Those bodies were destined to signify either *something* or *nothing*, based on whether they were carrying out productive or reproductive labour. The latter also associated with the devaluation of the female body. Looking back to the late 14th century, when the first witch-trials were conducted, the divisive sexual politics, contributed to the reduction of the female body to a tool open “to an infinite manipulation of its powers and possibilities” (Federici 2004, 139). This was reinforced by the decriminalisation of rape and the institutionalisation of prostitution. The social governability conducted by the state, in the various forms and shapes that has been established and operated from the 14th century till present day, over class relations and the reproduction of labour-power in pre-industrial societies was reinforced by the transformation of labour into a commodity. This became possible through the formation of a new sort of ‘individual’. According to Marx, following the expropriation of the land from the European peasantry, this ‘individual’ was the outcome of the transformation of the waged industrial proletariat to the “free” independent worker (Marx 1909, Vol I). Primitive accumulation, though, was feasible under the condition that the body had to be deconstructed to its devices. The concept of it as a vessel of magic powers had to be denied, and more specifically the uterus

had to be reduced to an apparatus that produces the work-force. The body would then “become a political signifier of class relations, and of the shifting, continuously redrawn boundaries which these relations produce in the map of human exploitation” (Federici 2004, 155). Control over reproduction through a deepened understanding of the qualities and devices of the human body can be located in pre-capitalistic Europe and other geographies and cultures around the globe. The exhaustion of communal arrangements of non-masculine subjects and the practices of care and healing - a manifold of forms of companionship and kinship between human and non-human species, such as the practice of gossip - have been “instrumental to the construction” as well as the preservation “of the patriarchal order” (Federici 2004, 170). Patriarchy in previous and present societies has become reality through practices such as the witch-hunt, practiced both by the state and by masculinities that claim their bodies as the sole signifier of *something* in the sociopolitical sphere.

Over time, bodies that have not participated in carrying out reproductive labour have been assessed as lacking meaning and purpose. In other words, their refusal or inability to perform reproductive labour, which is considered by patriarchal capitalistic and/or neoliberal states as *something*, results in identifying them as signifiers of *nothing*. The divergence from consolidated and canonical behavior that the bodies in Baubo’s myth represent, has been associated with the monstrous and the obscene; Baubo represent obscenity and vulgarity while Demetra represent parenthood and divinity. It is bodies like Baubo’s that have been denounced as dangerous, imposing a threat to the sovereignty of the state in which they are situated. These bodies resist dispossession via improvising in the everyday and by doing so they reclaim the substance of social relations and the commons in the political economy. They choose empathy and solidarity to individualism and dismissiveness. They facilitate processes of subjectivation, in which bodies themselves are no longer confronted as alien and fragmented realities.

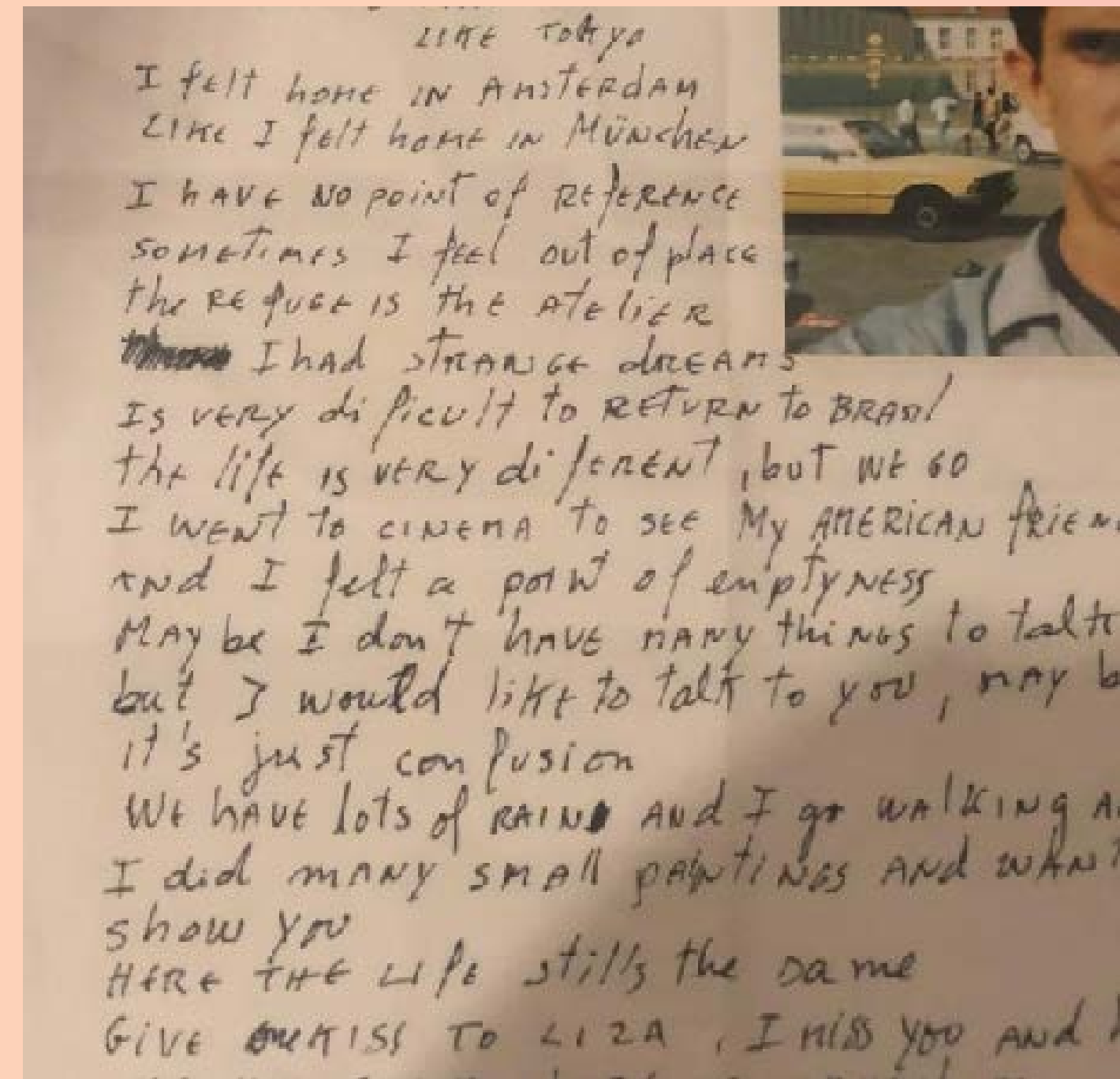
Producing and listening to sound in manifold of forms of companionship and kinship with human and non-human species, prompts us to reappraise the value of shared arrangements of life as an act to intercept the preservation of the patriarchal order. The eurocentric colonial arts education industry is often regulated by white-middle to upper-class cis men. Existing knowledge systems deliberately validate and legitimize their perspectives. Enabled by larger institutional power dynamics, they have assigned themselves the sole signifiers of *something* and have imposed their voice on the arts world, education systems and society at large. Through its open call this fieldwork was addressed to those subjects, to those bodies that were willing to explore in a collective manner how to signify the notions of *something* and *nothing*, of sound, noise and silence as inseparable and interconnected, rather than oppositional and conflictual.

RESISTING THE BINARY

Within the enforcement apparatus of neoliberal multiculturalism, the assumption of a consolidated performative identity, based on mainstream media portrayals, is the sole precondition for a body to be the signifier of *something*, while bodies who resist binaries and dichotomies are classified as *nothing*. Luckily, the apparatus is running in real-time and it comes with its own glitches. Those glitches – affective events generated by the apparatus itself – open up space for potential alliances and unpredictable collaborations between bodies beyond divisive border, across safeguarded communities. Such alliances depart from a common understanding that race, class, gender and sexuality are not solely entities and attributes of subjects, but events, actions and encounters (Puar 2011, 57). How possible is it to depart as well as center the practice of collective improvisation and composition of transmedia poetry from and around those very glitches or in other words those affective events? Queer feminism and feminisms of color provide tools, practices and methodologies to contemplate the politics of location and situated knowledge beyond immaterial and epistemic borders.

In order for these alliances to be achieved, a certain fluidity, an ability to listen attentively, and an intention to resonate with close and remote bodies is required. These qualities constitute the basis upon which three social practices are grounded: improvisation, intersubjectivity and vulnerability. What these three practices have in common is the potential to disrupt our methodological orientation, because they question the authority of established systems and the power inherent in formalism. In his book “The Sight of Sound: Music, Representation, and the History of the Body”, Leppert remarked that “unless she improvises, her own performance is always scripted” (Leppert 1999, 133). Through improvisation, non-consolidated bodies inhabit the lapses and excesses of meaning while they oscillate between the dissonances and resonances of social life. By practicing improvisation, intersubjectivity and vulnerability, they suggest embodied gestures of transformation. Hence, composing and performing sound by means of improvisation may be a gesture that exceeds the subjective and signifies vulnerability not as passivity, but as a part of embodied social relations. Practicing improvisation and composition through the lens of Butler’s understanding of vulnerability “helps us understand how and why forms of resistance emerge as they do” (Butler 2020, 192). It requires giving the power of decision-making back to the artists and the listeners, tuning into the practices and work ethics of artist-run and self-organised autonomous initiatives. By resisting the industry’s rectilinear logic and its sealing gloss, listening and improvising through gossip reverberates the existing sociopolitical realities and instigates genuine, intuitive and visceral responses. This practice-based research has been strongly influenced by bodies/subjects and collectives that queer the field of

heteronormative imperative by introducing *abnormal* factors of signification, by vulnerable, multivalent improvising bodies who manifest their agency on being signifiers of *something* and/or *nothing* through unpredictability and affect. Their performance of speech and sonic acts in public and counter-institutional spaces as well as their expression through self-initiated gestures of covering or uncovering, sustaining or unleashing, performing or quieting their voice and body, has been influential to the pedagogies of this research.



THE MATERIALISATION OF BODIES THROUGH NUDITY AND SILENCE

Nakedness of non-cis-straight masculine bodies has been historically associated with passivity and served as a field for materialisation and sexualisation of the body. Within the politics of the observance and oppression of bodies, a skirt that is lifted or a hijab that is removed, with their own will, is received by the establishment as a threat to the heteronormative imperative. A lack of critical analysis of the motives of the Church Fathers to sexualise Baubo's body, may lead to the perception of their narrative as a fact rather than as an interpretation, one that in contrast to Herondas' definition of *baubon*, resulted in presenting Baubo as a personified vulva. More precisely, in Clement's account, Baubo receive Demeter at Eleusis. Their intention to cheer her up and persuade her to eat, coincides with their lifting their robes/skirt and shows her genitals, *αἰδοῖα*. By isolating and dislocating excerpts of the Homeric Hymn and exegesis of the Orphic mysteries, the Church Fathers assumed Baubo's identity and therefore assigned to her actions of vulgarity related to pagan rituals. Since then, from the 19th century to now, their interpretation has been adopted as a tenet amongst scholars from diverse disciplines. Associating her act with anasyrmos - ανασυρμός, Baubo have since believed to be exposing their vulva. This grotesque personification of the vulva, that was unfolded during the nineteenth century, demonstrates an inconsistency and disparity of modern and ancient sources, contributing to the afterlife of Baubo as the obscene – a body that belongs to a female slave that serves as a signifier of *nothing* compared to the body of Demeter, a mother and goddess, that signifies the ultimate *something*.

**ακόμα κι αν φορέσω τη φούστα μου καπέλο,
όταν λέω ΟΧΙ σημαίνει ότι ΔΕΝ ΘΕΛΩ¹**

¹ "Even if I wear my skirt as a hat, when I say NO it means that I DON' T WANT TO" A slogan from demonstrations that were held in 2018 by women's organisations and feminist initiatives in Athens, Greece against the implication of article 336 of the Greek Penal Code that, in contrast to other European countries laws, does not recognise sex without consent as rape.



Photograph of the slogan tagged on a wall, Athens, Greece

Even though this is an analysis of a myth, not reality, it is important to acknowledge that in the context of the fieldwork our readings and interpretations of this and other myths and stories were approached in a mindful way in relation to possible deductions of meaning for a subject's actions. Thus, if Baubo have ever performed an anasyrmos, they have invested a meaning to their actions and this is something for us to acknowledge. Mediation of an assumed meaning and intention without consent has largely been practiced as a means of deducting agency and repressing on bodies who reclaim their signification as *something*. The surveillance-like transparency comes to disrupt and dismantle the affiliations of Baubo with Demeter and the outer world, by sexualising their body, and more precisely their classed and gendered body, the non-masculine slave. We have almost no information regarding the nature of the affiliations between Baubo and Demeter. Consequently, due to the fact that we have no access to an account from their own perspective, assigning reproductive nor sexual connotations and intentions to the happenstance could lead to a reduced reinterpretation of the myth. Their possible resistance to the canonisation of their bodies and identities provides the opportunity for a reciprocal exchange to take place. Still in the context of the myth, it is interesting to push our thinking a bit further and consider that they may as well have been exploring intimacy, vulnerability and/or emancipation by unveiling parts of their body (anasyrmos) and unleashing their voice (laughter). In both cases we are referring to a myth whose symbolisms only survive in fragments, and the actions of the mythical subjects may be assumed. Through unmasking their body or voice they may be signalling bodily autonomy, integrity and freedom of choice for those who choose to read the emancipatory potential of the myth. Therefore, nakedness may not just be perceived and interpreted as a signifier of *nothing*, while the dressed/covered body as the signifier of *something*, due to the male-dominated pornographic culture of gaze across time and space. Nakedness and nudity manifest in unpredictable ways within sites of enunciation as they celebrate vulnerability in terms of strength rather than weakness. Either naked or dressed, silent or noisy, bodies narrate and perform their autobiographies to bequeath us with "a collective legacy (of nonviolence) of vast people who stood together in unity to proclaim that they would never surrender to forces of racism and inequality"¹⁹.

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¹⁹ Angela Davis speech at Mid-South Peace & Justice Center's 35th Anniversary, Midtown's First Congregational Church, Memphis January 14, 2017.

III. LAMENTING; NAKED BODIES, GRIEVABLE BODIES

Inequality is a historically recurring phenomenon and put in place with overlapping and competing political frameworks through forms of power that use violence as a tool to establish “the unequal worth of lives by establishing their unequal grievability” (Butler 2020, 17). Baubo’s multivalent body and actions are interpreted more negatively than those of Demeter. This echoes a systemic disregard for the lower classes, the disposed and the poor, through the exercise of sexism, racism and misogyny, dismissiveness and depreciation. What, in other cases, would have provided us with a clear example of the binary of the grievable (Demeter) and the ungrievable (Baubo) life? Here it turns out to be a bit blurrier or perhaps deceptive. Baubo are not erased but silenced. Still within the myth, Baubo were assigned a specific class ranking, by Church fathers and archaeologists. Their action - anasyrmos - was attributed to them by the very authority that defined them a slave. They were constructed as a slave with a non-verbal potential to see authority eye-to-eye. From the outset, Baubo’s conditions of livability render their life ungrievable. Thus, they were created to provide care work to those whose access to resources has already been granted, those who represent a higher class.

Nevertheless, Baubo’s non-verbal performing body disrupts the canonical carrying of the task of care; they express their intentions through unpredictable actions and offer new meaning to the notion of care. The invisible nature of care work that Baubo provide to Demeter for the loss or death of her daughter Persephone would have condemned them to silence and most likely to ungrievability. The erasure of their perspective is a function to the motives of those who get to tell the story of the encounter. Baubo are not erased, but silenced, in favor of reproducing inequality within the social organisation of life through the sexualisation of the non-masculine classified body. Myths are often reproduce moral instructions that perpetuate systems of societal organisation, such as patriarchy, racism and sexism. In this case, Baubo are not erased for a reason; their body survives erasure to be sexualised, making them a site for vulgarity and pornography.

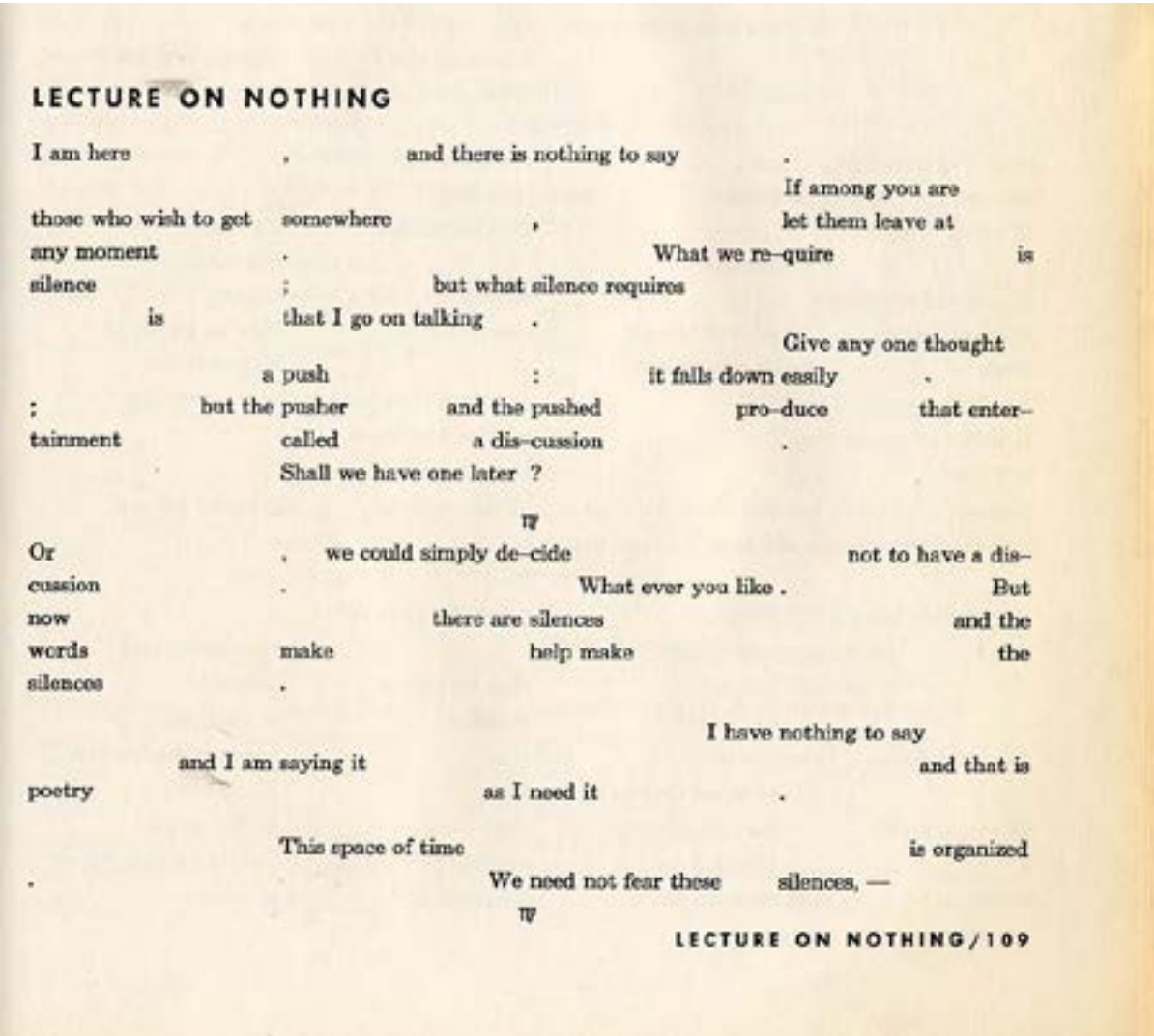
DON’T SPEAK

In their encounter, Baubo refrain from verbal and linguistic communication with Demeter. and they explore interrelationality through the corporeal. The meaning they assign to their actions of anasyrmos and laughter contest the significance of *something* and *nothing*. Nakedness and the non-verbal come into play as a reflexive to the vulnerability of the grieving Demeter. Baubo transcends their bodily boundaries through exploring the limits of vulnerability and intimacy. They improvise with non-verbal and corporeal communication. They reclaim their body parts through what is visible and non-visible. They participate in this exchange through silence and sound. Demeter grieves the loss of her daughter, while Baubo undertakes both the affective and physical labour, the care work, to attend to Demeter’s needs. Instead of lamenting for Persephone, Baubo engage in an unusual performance that allows for their non-normative body, identity and actions to be seen as such. Butler provides some useful tools or bodies in a state of exchange; the unveiling of their body (anasyrmos) and unleashing of their voice (laughter) disrupts the notion of the body as a unit and a threshold to then initiate an exchange between them and Demeter, that reflects equality on the grounds of social interdependency (Butler 2020, 17). Care work and affective labour take a different meaning and become a site of interdependency. Would that be regarded as a first step for leveling up the *room* of their encounter?

Baubo’s actions of anasyrmos and laughter exemplify the complex interplay of vulnerability as precarity, vulnerability as resistance, vulnerability as strength. These notions, proposed by Butler (2020), provide us with an understanding of the interplay between vulnerability and power. Baubo bare their body and voice to Demeter; a non-linguistic act of display of their vulnerability. As Butler asserts, vulnerability can be a demonstration of precarity, a stark reminder of the frailty inherent in existence. In this sense, Baubo’s choice to reveal their body physically and emotionally, may be understood not only as part of the fundamental uncertainty and fragility of life but also as a political demand that may or may not express dissent. “Vulnerability ought not to be identified exclusively with passivity; it makes sense only in light of an embodied set of social relations [...] A view of vulnerability as part of embodied social relations and actions can help us understand how and why forms of resistance emerge as they do” (Butler 2020, 192). Baubo’s actions are not confined to passive vulnerability, but rather assume meaning resistant. They constitute a form of resistance against the normative expectations about care work and the overcoming of pain and sorrow. Their act of contesting the societal and classed gap between them and goddess Demeter through their laughter and the uncovering of their body challenges the dominant practices and role-playing in grieving one’s loss. In the meantime, Baubo’s vulnerability ought not be

reduced to an act that foregrounds exposure as an emancipatory strategy to transform passivity and precarity into strength, but as an articulation of a demand for acknowledgment and interdependence, echoing Butler’s idea that vulnerability can articulate the need for a life with access to resources that can achieve equality in terms of livability. Their body, through its public demonstration, communicates that strength can emerge from vulnerability. In this way, bodies and lives in their most unpredictable and nonnormative expressions are *something*, real and valuable.

Excerpt from John Cage *Lecture on Nothing*, 1961



SEEING RATHER THAN LOOKING

In his *Lecture on Nothing*, John Cage urges us to unlearn the ways in which we apprehend the world. He focuses on *seeing*, both literally and metaphorically, to address issues of perspective, understanding and learning. The unlearning urges us to undertake stems from his claim that “we get to the point more quickly when we realise it is we looking rather than that we may not be seeing it” (Cage 1961, 108). Non-consolidated bodies consensually unlearn hierarchical significations as a means to establish equality. Their embodied, verbal or non-verbal, representations of imagination and desire are unpredictable and disruptive to such an extent that they leave us with an immense variety of interpretations. They refuse to provide us with any truth(s), but rather urge us to exceed individuality and make collective meaning of our actions.

In an attempt to provide a comparative reading of the significance of vulnerability across Cage and Butler, and renegotiate equality in social encounters of collective (un) learning, we need not fear the deliberate and self-initiated silences, for silence gives meaning to the non-verbal, the noise and the words we improvise with, every time we come to explore our subjectivity and interrelationality.

The ephemeral nature of sound, through its diverse variables, allows for corporeal, intellectual and emotional nuances of our interdependence to emerge, especially when words fail us. The sound and the body then push us to find or even create those “words which do not bar the corporeal, but which speak corporeal” (Irigaray 1991, 43). In Baubo’s example the corporeal is a site of enunciation of the politics of speech through the notion of the non-verbal, and for this to be unpacked, it is helpful to first and foremost begin as LaBelle suggests, with the assumption of a mouth (La Belle, 2014).

DOUBLING MOUTHS

The Baubo figurine presents us with a non-normative diagram of their body; by examining the clay figurines of Baubo closely, we realise that their body consists of almost nothing but two mouths. Due to the lack of torso, the upper and lower mouth are attached to each other creating an ambiguity in relation to their anatomical functions. Amplified by the doubling and interchangeability of mouth in Baubo's body, ambiguity allows Baubo to perform their body in unpredictable ways. Therefore, anasyrmos cannot be affiliated with their lower mouth, nor laughing with the upper. Baubo present us with the possibilities and flexibilities of the non-normative queer body, where the anatomical functions are challenges to be resignified and reclaimed. Here Carson reminds us that "putting a door on the female mouth has been an important project of the patriarchal culture from antiquity to the present day" (Carson 1995, 126). At the same time, the interchangeability of bodily functions within the site of queer bodies, such as the one of Baubo, is what renders it possible for them to resist their erasure and silencing. Baubo's radical otherness has been interpreted and theorised by many cultural historians, philosophers, scientists and novelists, who provided their conflicting as well as converging perspectives on the meaning and intentions of the statues. Thus, Baubo becomes a site for meaning-making processes - a territory in which we collectively explore subjectivities through the aural, the verbal, the spatial, the corporeal, the emotional – rather than a body in which mouths appropriate each other by canceling out sex through sound and vice versa, as Carson suggests (Carson 1995, 136). Going back to the practical aspect of this research, reestablishing ways of listening and making sound with and across our bodies in present time has been central to the design and facilitation of the encounters of the fieldwork. How do we pay attention to the interchangeability between mediums and functions on a personal and collective level? How do we disclaim methodologies of collective sonic improvisation and composition which have long dismissed and silenced the voices of nonnormative bodies? How do we raise the problem of racism and sexism within arts education and the society, without becoming the problem? How do we focus on processes rather than outcomes, as a way to reclaim equality in making and sharing knowledge in the field of transdisciplinary arts?

As Ahmed argues "we listen for the slower times of wearing and tearing, of making do; we listen for the sounds of the costs of becoming attuned to the requirements of patriarchy" (Ahmed 2017, 200). Thus, to begin, we not only need more time, but we need to take it slow. By slowing down we make time to observe and realise the level upon which our bodies are attuned to sexism and racism. To reclaim the functionality of our bodies as well as our practice through a feminist and intersectional lens, we

slow down to first see and listen to each other and then improvise ways by which we tend to one another and transcend individualism. We explore radical ways of making sound and puzzle it together in ways that exceed it being reduced to an interruption. The interchangeability between both the sources, the mediums and the qualities of our collective sound, whether verbal, non-verbal, mechanic, natural, linguistic or not, is what is helping us undone when we are struggling to make sense and change that which is making the way we make, share and live our lives wrong. We make sound to recognise and speak those wrongs and by doing that together we come to realise how much of us is in 'wrong'. We make sound to articulate that nonnormative bodies can no longer be wronged. In the context of this fieldwork, we collectively decided and therefore challenged ourselves to slow down the pace of listening and responding to one another, as well as we removed the pressure and the stress of producing poetry in every encounter as well as a final outcome to be shared with an audience. Instead, we made time to share references, our work, thoughts, feelings, ideas, to sit in silence and to experiment with those without necessarily aiming towards a specific output. Loud and soft, solid and unpleasant, fragile and still, messy and raw, the sounds we improvised with throughout the fieldwork of this research were not edited, some were recorded and some not, others were weaved with text and image and were transformed into poetry. Some took the shape of isolated words and some became a conversation. Others made up a noise that followed us throughout the process; a DIY noise of words, sounds, images, videos, conversations, bodies and relations. The sonic practice of this assemblage during our weekly encounters was very much realised on making space and time to listen, articulate and rehearse ways of making meaning at possible intersection of sound, words, image and bodies.

WAITING WITH/IN SOUND

Music, in the context of this research, has been approached by means of sound, noise and sonic practices, through listening, field recording, singing, spoken words and vocal improvisation. Teaching music theory, repertoire and technique was avoided from the very beginning of the conception of this research to give space to exercises/activities of semi-led or free improvisation where sound was either the only medium or one of multiple mediums used by the collaborators. In the past few decades, formal and informal music education has presented us with multiple projects that were often critiqued for their problematic relationship with the notion of ‘community participation’. By promising participation, collective ownership of the final outcome, equal accessibility to resources and empowerment of marginalised/underserved communities as core principles of their planning, large cultural and educational institutions have often acquired funds that are aimed at structural changes within the field of arts education, while at the same time they are reproducing neoliberal and hierarchical structures of knowledge production. Claire Bishop in her book “Artificial Hells: Participatory Arts and the Politics of Spectatorship” (2012) offers a thorough analysis of the challenges posed over the course of projects that foreground participation as a core element of the process or their presentation to the public. Furthermore, the conversation about the above shed light on a need for many more bottom-up mechanisms that hold institutions as well as artists accountable when their methodologies lean towards instrumentalisation and appropriation rather than participation and representation of people and communities. In her essay “The Social Turn: Collaboration and Its Discontents”²⁰ (2006) Bishop moves the conversation a bit further, by speaking about socially collaborative art and the *social turn* – an ethical turn – in art criticism. Even though it is quite impossible for an artist to facilitate a process in which participating subjects will be fully represented, it is crucial that a heightened attention is undertaken to how collaboration is realised within participatory arts projects. For emphasis to be placed on process rather than product, such projects may become possible outside conservatoires, music schools, galleries and arts institutions more easily. Without that being the case always, collaboration on the basis of equal power distribution, is more likely to happen in DIY and informal learning contexts, where experimentation is prioritised to production. For constructive social change to be instigated through an arts project, participation may need to be transformed into collaboration. Such take on collaborative exploration, improvisation and making has the potential to resist the silencing and erasure of voices, bodies and histories of the collaborators involved.

²⁰ http://cam.usf.edu/cam/exhibitions/2008_8_torolab/readings/the_social_turn_cbishop.pdf

Whether a site of music, visual arts, writing and/or transdisciplinary exploration, the *how* of the workshop encounters was envisioned as a site of (un)learning rather than teaching. As a practitioner who is interested in facilitating processes of knowledge exchange and production within the field of music, as well as sonic practices that argue for social justice and contribute to constructive social change, I have urged myself to start by examining the political facets entangled with the positioning of music as a site of cultural and societal contestation. As in other disciplines, similarly in music practice, the notion of learning is often won out by that of education. Knowledge production is often facilitated within highly hierarchical spaces and systems of power. Based on this observation, it is necessary, in the context of this research and beyond, that I engage with unearthing the multifaceted array of inquiries and implications of sound within the lived experiences of diverse populations and individuals. The silences, noises, verbal and non-verbal, the ephemeral sounds produced by bodies and in between bodies is a site of exploration that a workshop/research facilitator needs to engage with in order to approach sound as a variable of emancipation, empowerment and resistance across heterogeneous bodies and positionalities. The polyphonic, often chaotic, non-productive, non-linear sound between bodies may be the *what* and *how* we are invited to listen attentively as a way deconstructing hierarchical structures of exclusion, by means of social interdependency.

For the hierarchical roles within a territory of learning and unlearning to be contested – which in the case of this research apply to my role as a facilitator, researcher and collaborator – the structure of the encounters and more specifically of the sonic activities/exercises had to reflect the notion of equality and transformative justice. All collaborators, regardless of their familiarity and training in music and sonic practices were to be treated as equals. In order for this to be achieved, I planned a series of preliminary improvisations during the first two encounters, that allowed me to understand the level of familiarity of the collaborators with sound and music, singing, improvisation and composition as well as their aspirations with regards to skill-sharing and the practical making of material. Based on my observations as well as the feedback of the collaborators, I made adjustments to the music materials I intended to introduce to them over the course of the workshop series. Regardless of my intention to avoid leading a ‘music’ workshop, I decided to remain available, on the margins of our encounters, to all collaborators interested in acquiring technical skills in the field of music, as an attempt to not shy away from my responsibility to share specialised knowledge related to my training. Throughout the fieldwork, the collaborators did not express a particular interest in acquiring more specialised music skills, than those that were developed already over the course of the encounters. In order to contest the inherent hierarchies

and power relations usually inbuilt in workshop-style work, in my preparation for the facilitation I also engaged with transdisciplinary understandings of issues around representation, collaboration and accessibility, so that I could begin to operate beyond the mere pedagogical transmission of my musical competencies. The aspiration of an equitable facilitation of transformative experiences, where individuals' positionalities are celebrated, beckons us to slow down and reflect upon the difference in the way people apprehend this world and express their intellect and emotions. Thus, an exploration of the political undercurrents inherent in art's societal positioning prompt us to reimagine the mediums and methodologies that we employ when we want to ensure that all individuals, irrespective of their backgrounds, have accessibility to transformative territories of learning and unlearning.

The structure of the fieldwork allowed for flexibility according to the particularities of the context. More specifically, we explored ways by which the ethnography of the everyday within our shared geography, Athens Greece, as well as the overlapping temporalities and localities among us could be reflected in the materials we rehearsed. Starting from the open call-invitation to the workshop, leading to the encounters of the fieldwork, to the one-to-one interviews and the final group-reflection conversation, we asked ourselves about the ways by which theory informs practice and vice versa within this particular territory of learning and producing knowledge and art, as well as in our everyday life and work. In our questioning dominant paradigms in collective improvisation and composition we engaged – through reading and conversation – with different epistemologies such as feminist, postcolonial, postmodern, and queer perspectives. Individuals were inclined to use the language and tools that were more familiar with as an entry point to the process. From that we encouraged each other to explore unknown and unfamiliar mediums within collective and solitary improvisation and composition. By slowing down the process and resisting to produce solidified outcomes, we were confronted with the different ways and levels by which each one of us had internalised a set of principles and criteria for efficiency, productivity and validity in arts production. This has given space to tensions to arise and therefore to be addressed and discussed. This particular aspect of the fieldwork has contributed to it being a dynamic and constantly-evolving territory of practice and learning; namely, it created a territory within territory, one that encompasses the hopes, dreams, wishes and aspirations of the individuals and the collective, that the reader(s) of this thesis can familiarise themselves with by reading the the factional stories that weave together the findings of the one-to-one interviews and group reflective conversation with the collaborators of the fieldwork.

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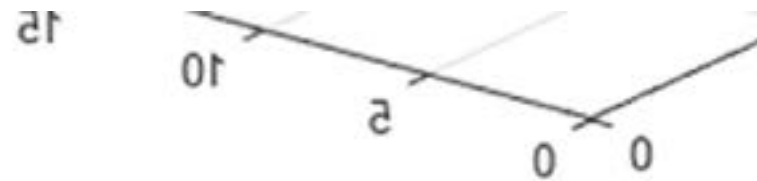
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IV. OSCILLATING; WAYS OF ORGANISING THE MESS OF MATERIALS

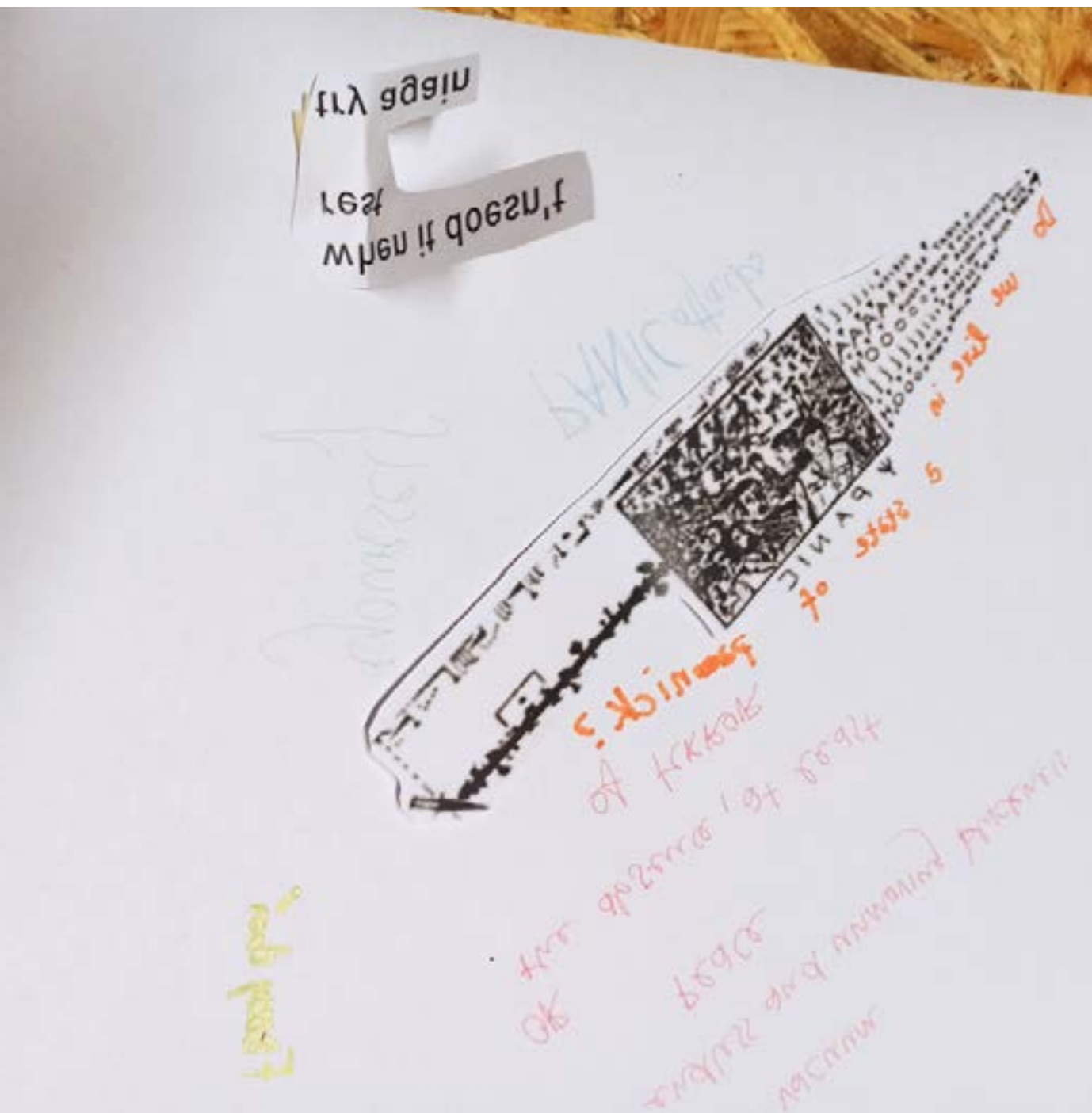
The design of *Waiting with/for Baubo; a transmedia [ethnographic] poetry workshop*, aside from the one-to-one interviews and the group reflection discussion, consisted of three main stages; preliminary research in existing methodologies and tools for socially engaged arts practices, a draft open-structure of the main structure of the workshop, a final week-to-week fine-tuning of the details and particularities of each encounter. The preliminary stage involved detailed research on the works and musical scores of Pauline Oliveros (2010, 2013), John Cage (1961), Meredith Monk (Book of Days, Panda Chant, Memory Games, Shing Way, Eva's Song), folk songs. Alongside the musical repertoire, I tended to activities and methodologies of improvisation and group composition that I have applied in my practice so far and I have experienced when participated in workshops and collaborated with artists and practitioners across different disciplines, such as theater, dance, music and sound art. Parallel to the research on practices and tools, the design of the fieldwork was also influenced by the transdisciplinary approach to music composition and performance of Ayumi Paul²¹, involving paper, textiles, sewing techniques and vocal work. In conversation with music and sonic practices, I researched into poetry of queer persons and persons-of-colour, in original and translated editions. Those included the works of Franny Choi (2022), Kae Tempest (2014, 2016), Rebecca Elson (2018), Audre Lorde (1982), Saeed Jones (2022), Kim Sousa (2022), MKX (2022), some of which I incorporated in the readings of the workshop encounters.

The middle stage of the design and preparation of the fieldwork involved, in addition to the methodologies, practices and works mentioned above, the texts of theory and the original transmedia poetry submitted by the collaborators of the fieldwork. One of the fundamental aims as a facilitator of the fieldwork was to hold space and time for all these, new or existing, materials and knowledges to be introduced, shared and discussed among the collective; an attempt to foreground multivocality of perspectives. All encounters were outlined around some pillar sections and free-form processes that were introduced and facilitated by the collaborators. What follows is an outline description of the backbone of each workshop encounter. Please click [here](#) to access notes, personal or collective, of the various stages of the design and realisation of *Waiting with/for Baubo; a transmedia [ethnographic] poetry workshop*. More specifically, these include sketches of the workshop outlines/structure ([an example](#)), [side notes](#), [notes from collective brainstorming](#), [to-do lists in preparation to the workshop series](#), [collec-](#)

21 <https://www.berlinerfestspiele.de/en/gropius-bau/programm/artist-in-residence/ayumi-paul>



tive drawing, fragments of transmedia poetry improvisation, a log of the edits of the shared board in the form of a short video, amongst others. Along with this, the reader(s) may find information about the way those were perceived and actualised by the collective and therefore how they evolved to the final stage of design and realization.



WORKSHOP BACKBONE: CHECK IN

Check-in was a group exercise in the setup of a circle, where each individual took turns to share any thoughts and feelings in relation to their everyday life and how they were stepping in the process/each of the encounters. The *check-in* was planned at the beginning of every encounter. The primary purpose of the *check-in* was to establish open communication, encourage individuals to become more familiar with each other by sharing perspectives of the everyday. Over time the *check-in* was followed by conversations regarding aspects of the shared process of the fieldwork. Those were related to suggestions about improvisation, composition, reading and listening actions and activities we could take, our long-term vision and aspiration for the process and the possible outcome of our encounters, our roles and the ways by which we self-organise our process. As an assemblage of collaborators formed upon the circumstance of the open call, this section of our encounters was the primary space for building trust and interdependency between us. Our engagement in listening to one another attentively led to *check-in* being an unled activity. This section would usually begin with a simple prompt or question, such as "How are you feeling today?" or "How are you coming to the room today?" or "What would you like to share with the group before we begin today's session?". Answers were given individually while listeners paid full attention without interrupting each other or being judgmental. We established together the level of disclosure that suit each and every one of us, keeping in mind that there was no pressure to share. Silence alternated with sound, with both being regarded equally important.

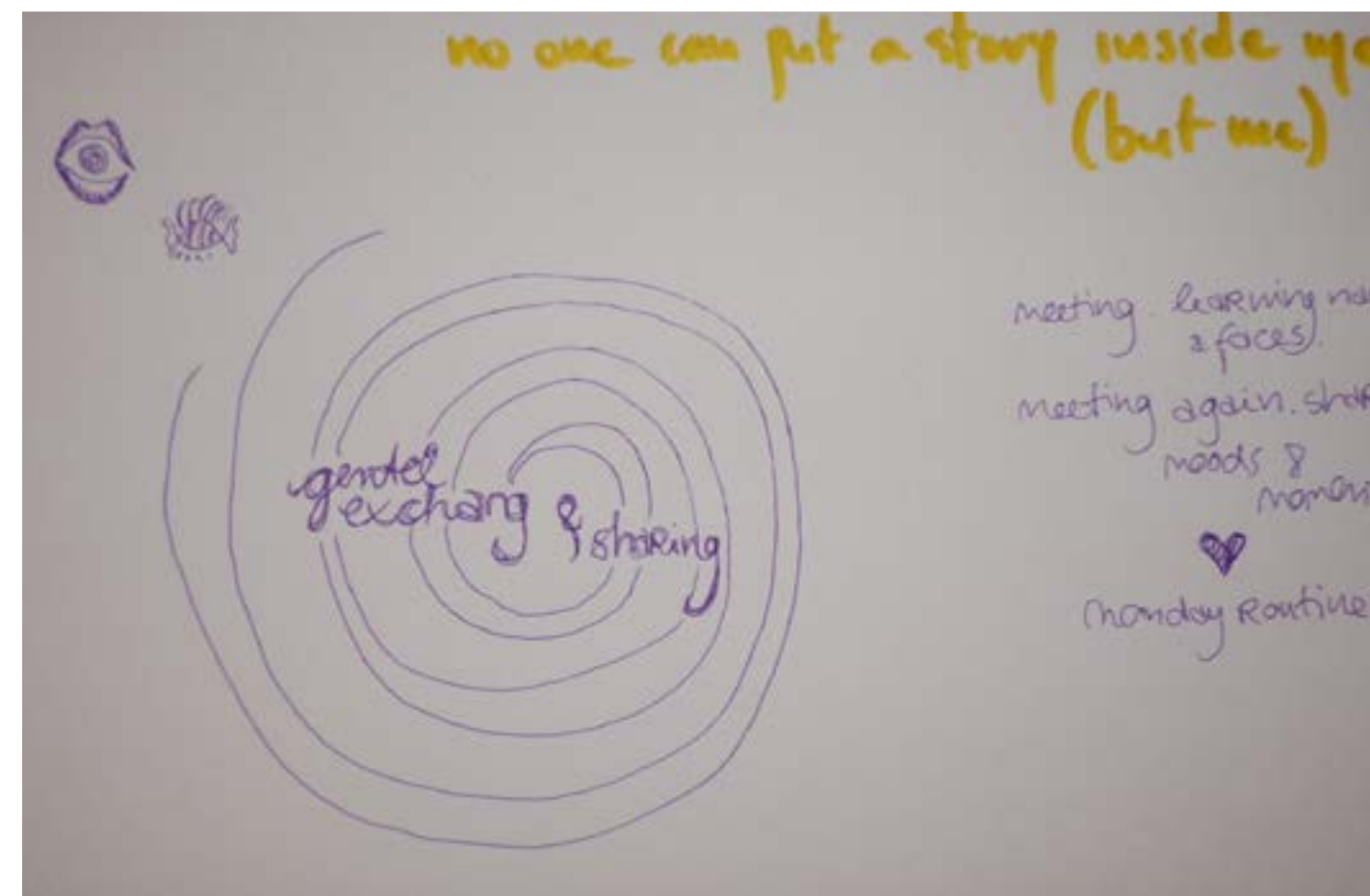
WORKSHOP BACKBONE; WARM UP

This section consisted of a series of physical and mental exercises that involved body and vocal work, games, breathing exercises and singing. It functioned as a transition from verbal to non-verbal communication and expression. The exercises aimed at bringing attention to the body through movement, listening, seeing and making sound with and in between bodies. From bringing attention to our bodies to opening up our awareness to the others and all those that made up the room of our practice, *warm-ups* focused also on exploring co-dependency in leading and facilitation. Halfway through the fieldwork, we discussed and negotiated the time that the *warm-up* should take within our practice. Individuals expressed varied opinions regarding this matter ranging across a desire to allow more time for it and take the opportunity to practice a more hands-on slowing down in the way we collaborate with each other, to the complete opposite in order to allocate more time to other activities and especially to the composition of a fixed outcome. At the end, the duration of this section was slightly reduced and time allocated to the rest of the sections of our encounters, but the pace of the overall workshops was slowed down and not rushed for the purposes of a fixed outcome.

Warm-ups' primary function has been the preparation of collaborators to delve into the main creative process collectively. Indicatively warm-ups would include; stretching and breathing exercises, call and response and mirroring activities, listening and vocalisation exercises, basic rhythmic and coordination skills, singing. By instigating mental and physical activation we engaged in group singing and improvisation and explored singing repertoire applicable to rest of the process. Texts and vocal scores by Pauline Oliveros and Meredith Monk were set as the basis of the vocal experimentation and singing of the assemblage.

WORKSHOP BACKBONE; SINGING

Despite my intention in the preliminary phase of the design of the encounters to insert a section of bi-directional learning of songs, I soon came to realise that this did not align with the expectations of the rest of the collaborators. The function of a singing section, that is based on teaching each other songs of our liking and singing as a group, contributed to the empowerment of the collaborators through the cultivation of some basic vocal skills. Further to this exchange and basic training, the collaborators had the opportunity to share music repertoire of their liking. The decision to extract this particular section – the group singing – was taken after asking the collaborators if they are interested in it. The positionalities of the collaborators were reflected upon their familiarity with and ease in singing in public. More specifically, only a small number (3) of us had attended classical music training, and had been exposed to an audience when performing an instrument of any sort, including the singing voice. Notions of right and wrong, in-tune and out-of-tune singing were brought up in our initial conversations. The dismissiveness of voices that do not align with the canonical standards of classical training was the reason why the majority of the collaborators would rather obtain from singing music repertoire in a circle, whether folk, classical, pop. Unexpectedly, vocal improvisation and interpretation of visual and verbal scores were much celebrated by the assemblage. This approach seemed more appropriate to our shared practice and provided us with the opportunity to make sound through our voices, resonate as a group and tune to each other, literally and metaphorically.



WORKSHOP BACKBONE: WHO IS IN THE ROOM?

From sharing names and pronouns, to positionalities and aspirations, this section was conceived in order to give space and time for all collaborators to introduce themselves to each other in and out of their work. More specifically, during every encounter two to three individuals were allocated approximately ten minutes each to share the transmedia poem that they submitted to the open call and/or a piece of their work that they felt was more relevant to the context of the encounter. The rotation between each of us was implemented weekly on a voluntary basis. Similar to the *check-in* section, no pressure was applied to any of us to share work.

The majority of the collaborators decided to present the transmedia poem that they submitted during the open call process, while a few decided not to share their work but actively engaged in providing feedback and expressing their reflections on the works of the rest. Taking into consideration the twofold nature of my role, I decided to sketch a transmedia poem myself, similarly to the rest of the collaborators of the assemblage, to contribute to our collective process. The section “who is in the room?” served as a space where each collaborator shared their materials in the format they believed was most appropriate to the materials themselves; this included played-back and projected materials on screens of laptops and mobile phones through speakers and headphones, as well as printed copies, fanzines and art books. The sharing of the collaborators’ work and materials was followed by conversations and reflections that often allowed the particularities, the perspectives and the approaches to conception and making of transmedia poetry to be diffused in the collaborative process of improvising and composing as an assemblage in general.

WORKSHOP BACKBONE: IMPROVISATION/COMPOSITION

Improvising and composing in a collaborative manner, either in small configurations or in an all-in formation, were considered to be interconnected practices. Fundamental, both to the design and the facilitation of the process, it was my intention to explore collectively methodologies and tools that empower us to oscillate between both. The preliminary research on musical scores, practices and methods of improvisation, traditions of composition that come from and/or are influenced by non-Eurocentric cultures and traditions and distance themselves from the notion of teaching, became central to my practice. The ways in which sound, text, image and bodies/performance may complement and contrast each other has been central to this section. Instigating processes where we could intuitively shift from one medium to another in order to express and articulate meanings and emotions without having to justify the messiness and roughness of our process and the materials is located in this section. A messiness similar to the one of the improvised materials was our approach to editing and reclaiming pre-existing materials, such as music scores, texts, poems, songs, recordings, drawings, images, videos.

Throughout the encounters, there was little to no reference to the term “improvisation” or “composition”; the words that came into use were *making*, *trying*, *writing* and *creating*. Alongside the prescheduled collective work at our weekly encounters, some of us additionally initiated and executed asynchronous collaborative work. Others also worked also in a solitary manner, responding to materials that were shared between sessions through virtual workstations. The words that we often used at varied moments within the process for the description of the materials were *unfinished*, *fixed*, *a suggestion*, *a draft*, *a response*, *making-no-sense*, *borrowed*, *poem*, *diary entry*, *reflective journal*, *track*, *image*, *video*, *text*, *something*, *game*, *sketch*, *score*, *process*, *answer among others*.

Although the collaborators were not expected to not use other mediums during our improvisation and composition sessions, the penultimate encounter of the fieldwork was turned into a cooking and eating feast. During this *food-fiesta*, as it was named by a collaborator, we worked on recipes collectively, prepared dishes and/or sweets improvised dishes with left over ingredients and engaged ourselves socially. During this special moment of getting together to improvise and compose with non-artistic materials, we took a moment to collectively look and listen through all the materials that we have made so far and shared ideas about where those might lead us, how we reflect upon them and the process in general.

WORKSHOP BACKBONE: COVEN/GOSSIP/TUNE IN

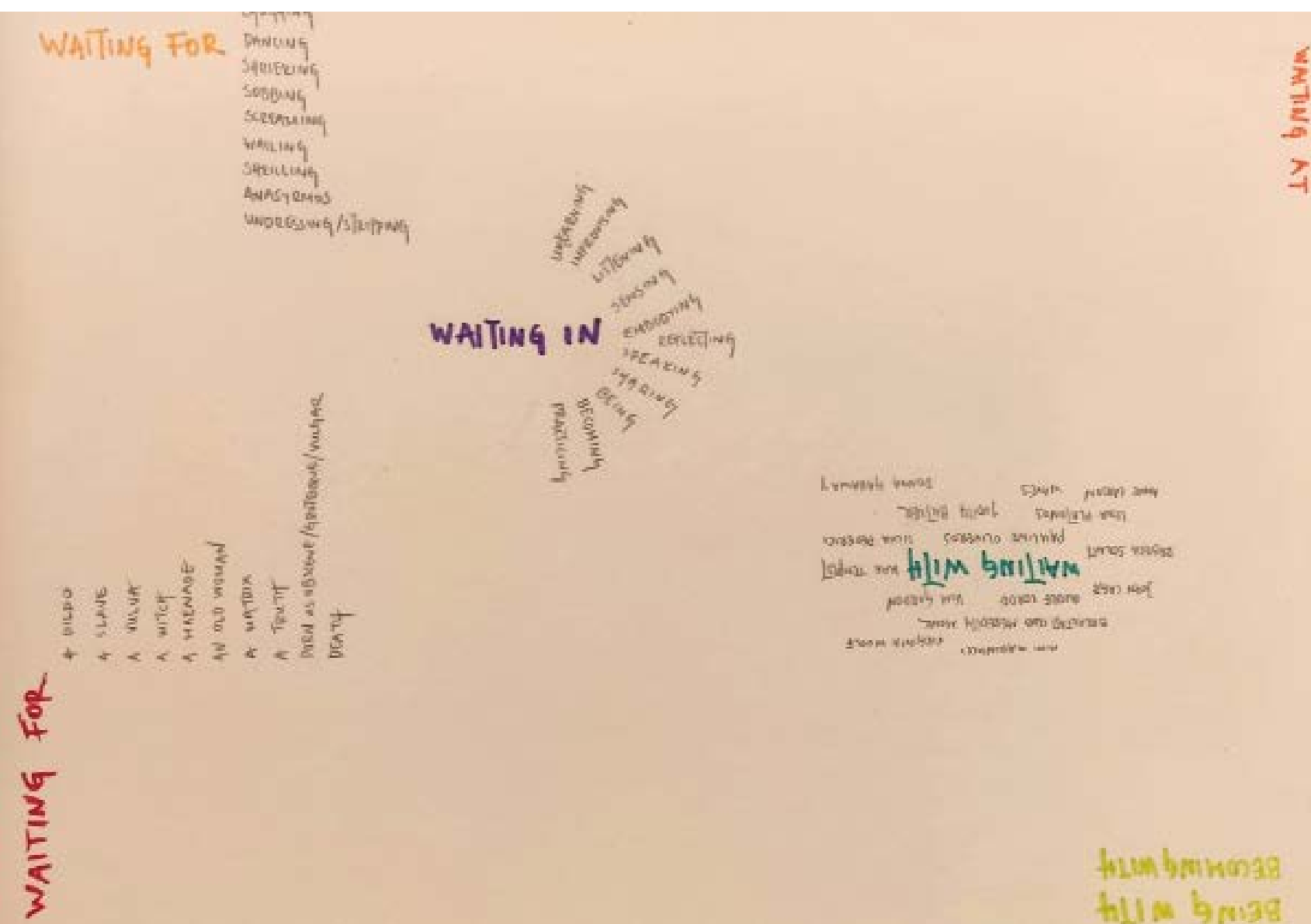
The oscillation between the different names of this section is indicative of its function and purposes within the fieldwork and each of the encounters. This section was primarily designed to provide an opportunity for a closing time; a group time to gather thoughts, impressions and feelings regarding the session. Alongside this functionality, it was designed to contain the conversations regarding organising and preparing for the next encounter; wishes, distribution of tasks, self-assignment for the facilitation of sections of the encounter to follow. Most frequently within collaborative arts practice we are faced with difficulties of keeping track of time and paying attention to the way we end our sessions. This section took place in a circle, in the same room that we would start every encounter. Its duration varied and the conversations exceed the finishing time, both in full group and smaller group configurations. Coven/Gossip/Tune in, among other things, has been a site for further reflection upon methodologies and strategies of collaboration and facilitation. Most importantly it has been an opportunity to verbally and non-verbally express concerns, wishes, hopes, fears about the ways in which we interact and respond to one another.

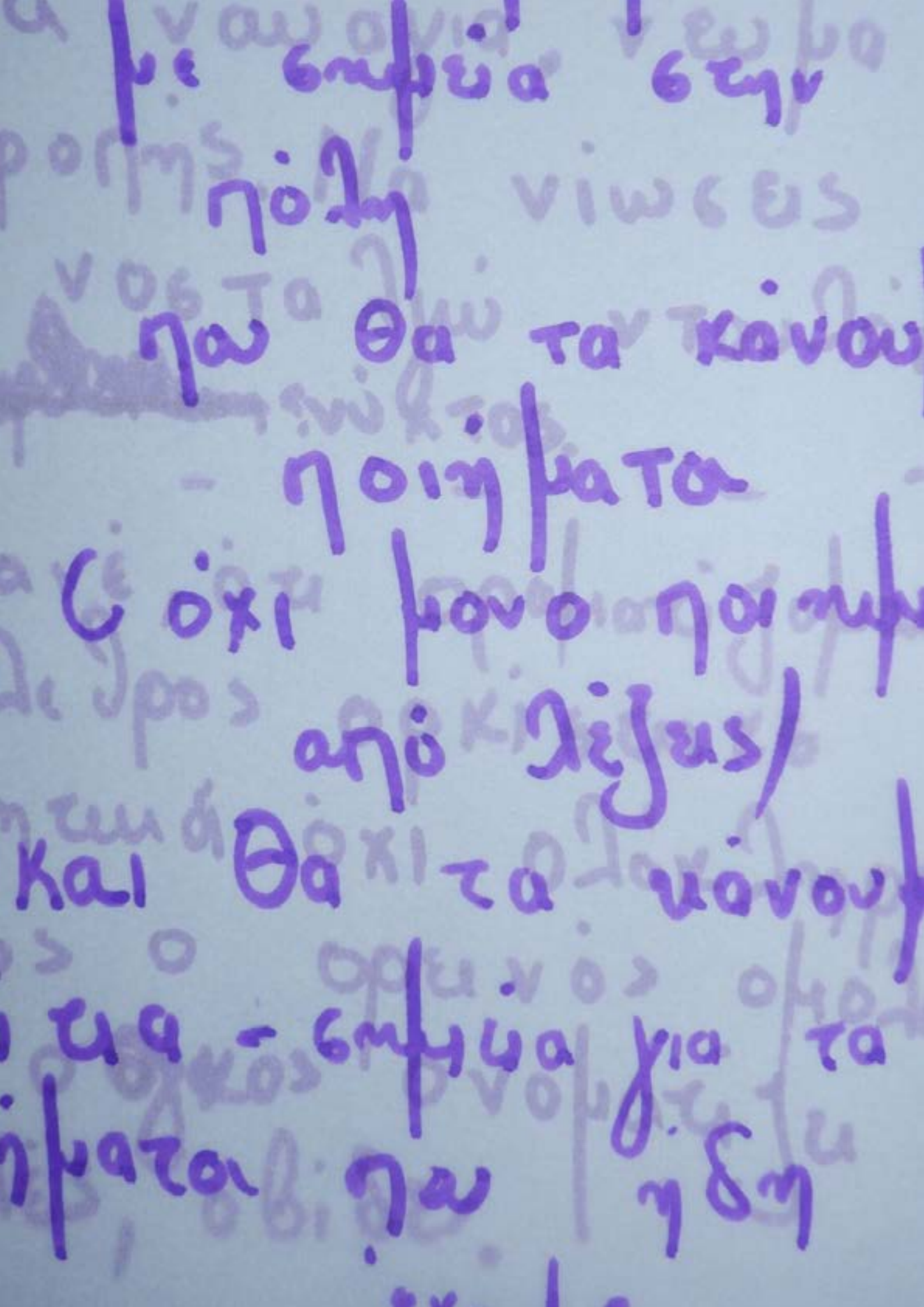
REFLECTIVE DIARY

Another element of the design was intended as a solitary practice that I undertook at the end of every weekly encounter; a sound recording of reflections via my speaking voice. A series of sound recordings contained the instant and intuitive thoughts and responses about the particularities of my role as an artist, collaborator, researcher and facilitator, as well as my reflections about the methodologies and tools that we explored within the collective. The spontaneity of speaking, in comparison to writing, radiated nuances of the practice and the way it informs and is informed by feminist and queer theory that are often difficult to capture in written speech.

The entries of the reflective journal/sonic diary were afterward to text format. The content of the reflective diary entries consists mainly of observations of the process, thinking-out-loud changes for the encounters to follow, minutes of conversations during the section “coven/gossip/tune in” regarding organising among each other for the next session, observations and reflections about my skills and performance as a facilitator, concerns, worries and hopes for the encounter to come.

As mentioned in preceding Zines of this dissertation, the contributions of the collaborators in conversations and activities throughout the fieldwork motivated us to rehearse non-hierarchy in collaborative improvisation, facilitation and composition. Included in this effort, was a series of interconnected instances of collective improvisation, thinking and writing that spanned multiple sessions. During the first encounter of the workshop series, I facilitated a process of thinking collectively on the ways we wish to hold space for each other in the encounters to follow. This was an invitation to all collaborators to offer their contributions on “how do we hold this space together”, a process that is described and analysed in “Zine I_ii Baubo; reclaiming the myth, resisting transparency in collective control in self- and collective processes”. We captured our ideas, wishes and hopes on a big piece of paper either as single words or in the form of sentences, that we returned to sporadically over the course of the fieldwork.





Below please find a few of those ideas, wishes and hopes in the format of a sentence;

"We waited with each other while improvising with sounds, words and images and bodies.

We waited with each other while singing and listening to the soundscape of the room and the city that surrounded us.

We waited with each other while trying to find places of connection and interdependency.

We waited with each other while talking through the every day, our life paths and perspectives.

We waited with each other when unlearning felt overwhelming.

We waited with each other while nothing was making sense."

How do we hold the space together?

Selected entries of the code of contact and conduct; an open-ended document

Workshop encounter I

This activity was followed by collective brainstorming on the notion of "waiting with" and "waiting for". Again, we used big sheets of paper where we drew, wrote, cut and pasted fragments of drawing and graphic scores, elements that we had available in the space. While making notes and sharing our ideas and thoughts, we kept the conversation going switching from verbal, to non-verbal and visual exchange. The room was filled with noise, voices and silences. Examples fragments of our shared canvas of ideas can be found here; [photo I](#), [photo II](#), [photo III](#), [photo IV](#).

Another instance that is deeply interconnected with the above two, is when one of the collaborators asked our permission to gather together all the notes that we made during those two activities and transform them into a poem. This poem reflected both the ways we envisioned a non-hierarchical process of improvising and writing trans-media poetry within this assemblage, as well as our multivocal approach to the notion of the central concept of "waiting with" and "waiting for" collectively throughout the process.

“My peers,
my equals,
a classless, genderless,
antiracist revolution.”

“-> Is there any space?
-> What is the difference
between
waiting and hoping
waiting & expecting
waiting and dreaming
waiting and manifesting
Acceptance + giving up
Impatience. + anticipation.”

“As if it could_when it doesn’t”
Waiting with
My stupid little hope,
refusing to stay silent, refusing
to lay down.”

“Yourself.
You. <-> You
Me?
I didn’t know you were waiting
for the same thing!
together
together
together
Together
to get her – waiting with”

Poem

Selected lines that encapsulate the latter intention are the following;

The poem on the left may assist the reader(s) understand how the draft structure of the workshop, and week-to-week fine-tuning of the details and particularities of each encounter, were very much determined by the contributions, the initiative and the expectations of the collaborators, their understanding of what transmedia poetry is, how it can be rehearsed collectively, what collectivity is and how it becomes possible through horizontality and how we share responsibility of holding a site of (un)learning together.



V. LISTENING WITH: A PRACTICE OF ATTENTION AND AWARENESS TO OTHERNESS

SOUNDS FROM CHILDHOOD

Can you imagine a time in your childhood when you
loved to make mouth noises?
Can you imagine freely making those sounds now?
In the next five or more minute, make as many of those
sounds as you want in spaces you hear and claim as your
own.

Pauline Oliveros (2010, 31)

The practice of listening aims to focus one's attention on what is perceived not only aurally but also psychologically. Perception is then followed by categorisation. The context we have been trained in and therefore our experiences define the ways by which we associate meaning, interpret and categorise the sounds we listen during our lifetime. Sounds, whether human or non-human, musical or non-musical, mechanic or natural, in all possible formations, are relational to each other and to silence. For non-hierarchy and equality to be achieved within the context of collaborative improvisation and composition, listening as a practice that "heightens and expands consciousness of sound in as many dimensions of awareness and attentional dynamics" (Oliveros 2005, xxiii) need to come first. In her *Deep Listening* and *Sonic Meditations* (2005, 2002) Oliveros highlights the particularities of hearing, listening and meditation as interchangeable practices, in relation to the level of attention and awareness we experience during our interactions with 'otherness' and as we make sense of the world around us. An attempt to deconstruct normalised and hierarchical methods and roles within improvisation and composition includes researching or otherwise listening to relevant decolonial, non-eurocentric, non-white and non-heteronormative traditions and approaches. For those traditions and approaches to be understood one must move across disciplines and mediums, and familiarise themselves with tools for listening with intentionality. One needs to engage with a *deep listening* practice in order to "remain aware of inner and outer reality" through simultaneously exercising their attention and

awareness, for "attention is narrow, pointed and selective" while "awareness is broad, diffuse and inclusive" (Oliveros 2022, ii). They complement each other and are activated by interest, desire, curiosity, pain and pleasure.

Sara Ahmed, in her work on the politics of emotions (2014) understands listening as an act of 'orientation'; the practice of listening requires a conscious positioning of ourselves in relation to the world. We position ourselves accordingly in order to actively engage with the world through active listening. Listening, a practice that differs significantly from the passive act of hearing, presents us with the opportunity to tune in to the affective resonances that arise from our encounters and kinship with otherness. Moving beyond the visual, staying close to sound, listening offers an opportunity to develop skills and make use of resources to articulate and perceive the voicings and soundings of human and non-human agents, through tuning in the dialogical sonic exchanges of their everyday. By listening to their interplay and interconnectedness, we acquire new skills and access to resources that then help us "navigate the pressures and possibilities" of our everyday life and practice (LaBelle 2020, 2). The practice of collective listening provides us the opportunity to embody sonic sensibility and receptiveness as acts of emancipation, while it helps us understand that sound, verbal or nonverbal in all its possible formations, is "mobilised as a structural base" and as "speculative guide" in relation to struggles related to gender, race, sex and class oppression (LaBelle 2020, 2). When listening is attuned to the multivocality of the social fabric it becomes a practice that helps us acknowledge that we can shape and be shaped by sound. Deep listening urges us to listen beyond what is said; to gaps, silences, and all that remains unsaid. Sound and listening as forms of agency and orientation, prompt us to acknowledge the complex interplay of perspectives, experiences, positionalities and power dynamics of a given sociopolitical structure. By engaging with the affective dissonances and resonances within and around us, we suspend prejudgment and challenge preconceptions. By tuning into tonalities, sonic practices, narratives, voices and sonorities of the silenced, "the un-counted" and the "unheard" (LaBelle 2020, 4) listening becomes a transformative practice.

Transformative listening is a core practice of situated *assemblages* who organise in a non-hierarchical and collaborative manner, because such practice transgresses the limits of the body, the limits of the individual to tune into otherness. It comes to life by means of affection, care and solidarity. For sound is political and needs to be listened *from below* (LaBelle 2020, 9). For sound and listening can hold a manifold of roles, constructing or disrupting boundaries, nurturing or displacing voices, visibilising or dismissing the collective, amplifying or eliminating systemic violence and oppression. The notion of assemblage - a territory used here for (un)learning and organising processes

of equal collaboration - as delineated in according to the writings of Deleuze, Guattari and Puar, is conditioned and enacted by listening. For listening intersects with broader societal, financial and political structures, especially those that perform and establish exclusions and oppressions on racialised, classed, gendered and non-conforming human and non-human bodies. Listening, similar to collaboration, is a “community of effort – preferably an equality of effort” (Oliveros 2010, 26) that shapes the temporal and spatial aspects of a territory. Often messy, risky, unpredictable and vulnerable the soundings of a transmedia multivocal *assemblage*, such as the one that was formed for the purposes of this fieldwork, may produce situated knowledges that exceed the artistic and contribute to the political and the social; in other words, they can offer transformative methodologies and practices for claiming equality within the space we socialise, share, exchange and make together.



I SEE YOU AND I RAISE YOU

~~I HEAR YOU~~ *LISTEN TO YOU* AND I RAISE YOU

In one of her interviews Pauline Oliveros responds to the question of *why deep listening is so important to her* as follows; “Listening is learned, it isn’t a natural thing. It’s something that you can deepen with practice and with receptivity. So, it’s important to me because it’s a tool for growth and change and spirituality” (Mokus, 2008, 165). For the encounters of *Waiting with/for Baubo* to become a territory where we collectively challenge the ways we apprehend sound, I inserted active listening as a practice and a metaphor in most sections of the overall structure. From the physical warm up, to the vocal improvisation and group singing, to the sharing of theoretical and artistic references, our experiences and work of our own, I invited the collaborators in a process of “I see you and I raise you. I ~~hear you~~ *listen to you* and I raise you”, where we first and foremost listened to each other before engaging in the practice of collective improvisation and composition. By expanding our awareness and consciousness we were better able to share resources, become vulnerable with each other, improvise and make from scratch what we understand to be transmedia ethnographic poetry.

Alongside listening as a practice of awareness, listening also became a means to perform collaboration through self-organising. The particularities of the everyday life of the collaborators, as well as the challenges we faced as a collective during the fieldwork were listened with attention and willingness to *hold each other* and *the room of our own*. Halfway through the process, the deadliest rail accident in Greek history occurred (28th of February 2023)²². Depending on the level at which each of us had been emotionally affected by this incident, we created space to share our emotions and thoughts during our encounters. We listened to each other’s fear, anger, disappointment, numbness and hopes. Also, during the workshop encounters artists and students from the performing arts sector went on strike against Greek government policies to downgrade the educational qualifications of artists, causing precariousness and degradation within the sector²³. Many of us were directly involved in the strikes and demonstrations in an attempt to react to deprivation of human life in the case of the rail accident, and the devaluation of labour in the struggles of the striking artists. We

22 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/mar/01/greece-train-crash-an-unimaginable-tragedy-as-death-toll-likely-to-rise>

23 <https://www.europeantheatre.eu/news/etc-denounces-the-devaluation-of-theatre-education-in-greece>
<https://seestage.org/features/greek-artists-theatre-strike-protests-nothing-to-lose/>
https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2023/03/06/in-greece-artists-are-revolting_6018366_4.html

questioned whether making art, within and outside of our encounters, at times such as those, made sense at all. We shared our unease with the inherent contradictions of the arts industry and arts education in late capitalism, where art is marketed and consumed exclusively as entertainment or as remedy for forgetfulness. We reminded ourselves of the danger that arises when participatory art is mobilised in order to offer an antidote to structural deficiencies of welfare systems. We asked ourselves when does the talking and listening stop and when does action start. We realised that in order to organise processes that resist hierarchy and normalised roles, we should keep listening to one another at all times. If we stop listening, we are risking to condemn non-hierarchical voices, whether ours or others', to invisibility and dismissal. A week after the train-collision, one collaborator withdrew from the fieldwork in order to process the emotional effect caused by the accident. A week before the last one another collaborator followed, as their emotional fatigue was too debilitating to allow them to engage actively in the process. Regardless of the significant change that both departures caused to the group, their decision was *seen* and *listened to*, as the practice of this fieldwork had been from its very beginning a territory for us to come together, meet each other, explore and work together on what and how we are in present time. *Waiting with/for Baubo* has been a big unlearning curve to me, both as a researcher and facilitator, in practicing slowing down, letting go of expectations, presumptions and fears of failure to fulfill one's role, all as means to practice listening with compassion, curiosity and consistency; as a means to apprehend otherness and unpredictability in the everyday.

The unpredictability of the inner and outer particularities of this *assemblage* and the territory it inhabited was apprehended by paying close attention to the behavioral patterns, either verbal or non-verbal, of each collaborator and making time and space between us to share important information about our state of being. Some of that remained unspoken and/or became known through the work we made together. The common denominator between the transmedia poems that were shared via the open call, the raw materials, and the semi-finished transmedia poems that were devised collaboratively over the course of our encounters, is that they capture and imprint the spatial and temporal aspects of our positionalities in the given context. Over the course of this fieldwork, intersectionality prompted us to approach collective transmedia improvisation and composition as forms of social mediation. It has been imagined and rehearsed as a lens for listening to sonic expressions of difference; one that takes into consideration the division of labour according to the diverse positionalities present in the room. Utilising the analytical thinking of Born on music improvisation, transmedia improvisation and composition may also engender the cultivation of "intimate socialities", the production of "imagined communities" and the formation of "hierarchical and

stratified relations of class and age, race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality" (Born 2011, 377). When failing to listen to each other through intersectional feminism and practice improvisation and composition in equity, our artistic practice and its outcomes are destined to produce and reproduce the mechanisms of late capitalist cultural economy, as is presented and forced upon us by the agenda of various private or public cultural institutions.

During our encounters, collective listening was instigated using a series of verbal and graphic scores by composers such as [Cathy Berberian](#) (1925-1983), [David Berezan](#), [John Cage](#) (1912-1992), [Jani Christou](#) (1926-1970), [Baude Cordier](#) (1380-1440), [Mira Martin Gray](#), [Slavek Kwi](#), [Meredith Monk](#) (1942-), [Makoto Monura](#) (1968-), [Pauline Oliveros](#) (1932-2016), [Will Redman](#) (1975-), [Teresa Sauer](#), [Chiyoko Slavnics](#) (1967-), [Yūji Takahashi](#) (1938-). We approached those scores as listening and improvising devices and allowed ourselves to make some amendments that would fit the particularities of the group. As you can see in the links below we chose to adapt some in order to create our own transmedia mind maps, scores and/or compositions, while others we used in their original form; [example I](#), [example II](#), [example III](#), [example IV](#), [example V](#) (please look at the far left and far right side of the map for Pauline Oliveros' scores embedded in the document), [example VI](#).

Namely, the works that we explored were the following (some of the works are available on the internet, hence reader(s) may access them via the provided hyperlinks);

Aria by John Cage (1958)

[Lecture on Nothing](#) by John Cage (1961)

Response Ability by Pauline Oliveros (1978)

Group Processes by Pauline Oliveros (1980)

[Wind Horse](#) by Pauline Oliveros (1990)

Old Sound New Sound Borrowed Sound Blue by Pauline Oliveros (1994)

Word Sound by Pauline Oliveros (1996)

Deep Listening Meditations: Egypt by Pauline Oliveros (1999)

Heart Chant by Pauline Oliveros (2001)

[Papericity for Laptop Orchestra](#) by Pauline Oliveros (2015)

As If by Mira Martin Gray (2023)

[Belle Bone Sage](#) by Baude Cordier

[Tout Par Compas Suis Composes](#) by Baude Cordier (1391)

[Deliberative Assembly](#) by Will Redman (2009)

Book by Will Redman (2006)

Drawing the air by Slavek Kwi (2007)

Oi Asitawa by Nakoto Nomura (2000)

Metastasis by Iannis Xenakis (1953-54)

Stripsody by Cathy Berberian (1966)

Listening both as a practice and a metaphor throughout this research has been a state of “concentration, attentiveness and silence” (Irigaray 1996, 188); a deliberate action to unlearn, relearn and share knowledge inside and at the periphery of this fieldwork and research, a possibility of making space and time to relate to each other on equal terms when expressing our intentions, expectations and desires in and out transmedia poetry.

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VI. IMPROVISING WITH AND WITHIN TRANSMEDIALITY; THE CORPOREAL, AFFECTIVE, COLLECTIVE AND SITUATED IMPROVISATION

“I spoke; did you listen, did you listen? I spoke”

Kieron Rienne, *Unleashed*¹

Positionality preconditions whether we are provided the access to material and immaterial resources that grants us a point of entry to processes of producing and sharing knowledge. Even when access is granted, the conditions through which we engage in a learning process are affected by our biographies. More specifically, our experiences until the moment we enter a process of collaborative arts-making — as an expression of formal or informal learning, — are shaped by the level and the overlapping ways by which our bodies have been racialised, gendered, abled and classed. Taking into consideration the entry point through which each and every person arrives in a process of exchange is a step toward acknowledging that the relationalities by which we stand next to each other are complex and multilayered. Whether semi-scripted or free, improvisation has the potentiality of becoming a site of non-hierarchical learning; a practice of exchange and exploration grounded on the relationalities of a given *assemblage*. Improvisation often presents itself as an action and a form within which individuals express themselves equally. It presents itself as a site where spontaneity and collaboration flourish, but let’s pause here to take a closer look, to listen.

Improvisation, in the performing and visual arts sector, is a practice and a system of countless iterations, meanings and connotations depending on its spatial, temporal and sociopolitical characteristics and functionalities. At the same time, improvisation is a practice and a habitude of the everyday life. Our lives are improvised, to a smaller or larger degree, according to our positionality at every given moment of the everyday. Improvisation is launched as a site of play and exploration by those bodies whose situated lives are provided enough resources to commend themselves grievable. Less privileged individuals are often entering literal and figural sites of improvisation without

having material and immaterial support. For improvisation, in any shape or form, may be a site of vulnerability; a site where inequalities and oppressions are disguised in the name of ‘freedom of expression’, where bodies are exposed in the name of false-liberation and exclusions are performed in ways that go unnoticed. “Forms of action and discourse that are rooted in ableist, sexist, and racist principles” (Kanellopoulos 2021, 9) may be found in numerous occasions where bodies improvise, by themselves and with others, as an expression of resistance to injustice. They improvise, by multiple means, to attain their right to survival and grievability. According to Butler, societies and economies are built upon an “unequal distribution of vulnerability” (Butler, Gambetti and Sabsay 2016, 5) that renders itself possible through various forms of symbolic, epistemic, and material violence. The ways different subjects are offered the support to pursue their education in different theoretical and practical fields is largely affected by their positionality. The various expressions of systemic racism, in formal and informal sites of learning/education, are inextricably linked to forms of material and immaterial violence. Violence is mostly exercised on non-conforming bodies, which are left “unsupported, exposed, excluded, helpless” (Kanellopoulos 2021, 9). The critique against the epistemic violence that is embedded in the neoliberal agenda of arts education and performed by cultural and education institutions is a useful process of revealing the inequalities experienced by some bodies. If we were to place all our attention on institutional critique though, we might miss something equally important.



¹ Devised entirely by young people from Drum Works, Boy Blue Entertainment, Barbican Young Poets & Filmmakers and Future Band, the music theatre piece *Unleashed* was performed on the Barbican’s theatre stage in November 2012. Drawing on the young people’s experiences living in London, the show presented the city through their words, dance, films and music. Trailer: <https://youtu.be/FD0ILSM5-eQ>

FEAR OF THAT WE ARE MISSING SOMETHING OUT (FOMO)

Improvisation – a fundamental tool to reimagine and negotiate the terms by which we unlearn what is encrypted and learn anew from each other – rarely becomes the politics that urges us to imagine and hold each other through a transformative process that points to the collective. Improvising with sound, text, image – with and through our vulnerable bodies - is to write/express “not inside identity, confirming its limits, but apart from it, out of it, expressing its inexhaustibility and transitory nature” (Voegelin 2019, 100). The transitory and ephemeral nature of improvisation points to a possibility of becoming with and through each other in a multivocal transmedia *assemblage*. Departing from the noise, the words, and the silences that the “sonic possible” assemblage produces, throughout its journey of transformation, it is rendered indexical rather than absolute, and therefore “formless, fluid and ephemeral” because it exists in slices, or else in “variants of its identity” (Voegelin 2019, 122). Practicing improvisation as a multilayered intersubjective process requires sonic and visual sensibility, affective labour and accountability; a willingness to explore sharing responsibility when letting go of hierarchical notions of organising, a shared desire to understand and experience improvisation as a means and politics of transformative justice. What appears to be missing often, is self-critique and reflection on the ways inequality and injustice are also reproduced in informal sites of learning, where improvisation is a fundamental tool of experimentation and exchange. One of many reasons, why bodies are left unsupported in a state of unintentional vulnerability, is the lack of attention to the particularities of each person’s positionality within a collective figuration. We often fail to listen and look at each other attentively. Carried away by a self-indulgent desire to dismantle hierarchical pedagogies and methodologies of making and sharing art and knowledges, we end up appropriating ethnographies, geographies and temporalities. Disruption and unpredictability are discussed but not experienced collectively. Values, canons and conventions of arts education are not challenged enough by otherness.

This practice-based research has been driven by a desire to renegotiate the role of the facilitator of collective processes of improvisation and composition as someone who holds the space rather than guides the process, from a versatile role and position; one that includes that of the listener, the improviser, the writer, the interlocutor and the facilitator. The renegotiation and reimagining of the role of the facilitator, in this context, is derived from a personal realisation that, regardless of its collaborative and often radical nature, improvisation, whether in music, sonic or transdisciplinary practices, learning and experimental situations, it mirrors as well as creates additional gender, class and ethnic imbalances. The predominance of cis-straight-white-male bodies in genres

and practices, such as the free improvisation music scene², causes a striking disparity despite the fact that it outwardly prides itself on equality, freedom of expression and inclusion. Moving beyond mere representation, the inequalities that go hand in hand with improvisation, urge us to raise critical questions about the ways improvisation within the context of transdisciplinary arts practices in the West intersects with patriarchy. Even though this research does not aspire to provide a thorough analysis of the achievement of equality within the practice of improvisation and specifically musical improvisation, it is important to note that the socio-political components, the functionality, the roles and power relation differ between the western music canon and that of jazz and other traditional western and non-western music traditions. In the former context the methodologies of improvisation that are used often inadvertently replicate patriarchal norms and power structures rather than challenge them. “If improvisation is complicit with patriarchy, how can it possibly represent difference?” (Waterman 2008, 2) Can improvisation genuinely serve as a practice for interrelationality, or does it perpetuate the very inequalities it aims to transcend?

The creation of conditions where collaboration and interdependence are explored through an intersectional lens, provides us with a greater possibility of resisting male-domination as well as class, race and gender asymmetry within the realm of transdisciplinary improvisation. We cannot expect improvisation, either in music or arts education, to liberate us from unjust processes. Having said that, it is unrealistic to expect equity to be brought about solely through ensuring accessibility and equal representation in artistic (un)learning and learning processes. Both are necessary but not sufficient in order to disrupt multiple cultural and structural factors grounded on the intersection of colonialism, patriarchy and capitalism that constitute the context we live in. The approach to facilitation for the workshop of this fieldwork as well as the methodology of documenting the experiences and findings of the collaborators rehearsed a prefigurative territory of listening where relationships are formed beyond the binary of workshop leader – participant, player – listener, professional – amateur and explore more just and equitable social relations within the wider sociopolitical context it is situated. As Benjamin Franks argues, prefigurative practices provide a possibility for relations to be nurtured and forms of organisation to exist on the grounds of challenging forms of domination that perpetuate power relations and hinder revolutionary struggles, in order to foreshadow their transformation (Franks 2018). Might

2 https://edisciplinas.usp.br/pluginfile.php/7837684/mod_resource/content/0/Ritwik%20Banerji-Whiteness%20as%20Improvisation-Nonwhiteness%20as%20Machine.pdf
<https://ro.ecu.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1110&context=soundscripts>

we develop a repertoire of activities, references and tools that nurtures prefigurative pedagogies and helps us to imagine and practice transdisciplinary collective improvisation otherwise? This was one of the key questions that ran through each encounter as well as the analysis and reflection of this fieldwork. DeNora's concept of "musical capital" helps us explore the ways by which familiarity with improvisation often manifests the level of accessibility to resources in western music tradition and education. Whether material or immaterial, these resources help us create analogies between musical experiences and preferences and social class. Interrelationality within the same or across different social classes is much affected by the gendered and raced experiences and expectations that play out in the realm of improvisation, since it is an embodied practice where subjects navigate within social worlds to express their creativity, feelings, desires and intellect. Whether music improvisation nurtures otherness, when the music industry is largely dominated by male professionals and presents/addresses itself to its audiences via binary, classed and raced stereotypes, is questionable. The issue at hand is not whether representation becomes possible through improvisation—this has been already to a certain degree rehearsed across various art forms—but rather its negligence to highlight the underlying problem; focusing solely on representation can overshadow the need for substantive change in the power dynamics and structures within music and arts industry and education. The politics of representation and diversity often become ends in themselves, rather than means to an end. Merely diversifying the participants or collaborators in art projects does not necessarily challenge or alter the capitalist frameworks that underlie the practices we may be facilitating. By prioritising representation over genuine transformation, we fail to dismantle the capitalist structures that limit artistic and social possibilities. Therefore, the analysis of the fieldwork wishes to shed light on those instances of collective effort where the collaborators practiced improvisation as a means of transformative justice and a strategy of prefigurative pedagogies; a hotchpot of hybrid, often ephemeral, non-linear, transmedia tools and practices.

The reflections and critical responses of the collaborators of the fieldwork alongside the literature that this research explores provided me with lenses through which I attempt to situate the pedagogy of this project within the map of prevailing visions of improvisation pedagogy. More specifically, the decisions and actions regarding listening, not only as a tool for making poetry but as a practice of becoming aware and being in conversation, that were undertaken at various *pedagogical moments*³ often resem-

ble those found in a genealogy of music pedagogies that understand improvisation as an act of awareness, a way of acknowledging preexisting oppressive structures—artistic and social. In this light, the act of learning, within the context of music pedagogy, is intertwined with the recognition of power and resistance (Abrahams, 2005; Allsup, 2003; Freire, 1965; P. Schmidt, 2005). Here, improvisation is not simply an educational tool but a strategy of self-awareness and the role of the educator is not to dictate but to foster an environment of responsibility, trust, empathy, and dialogue, where students, in the case of this research the collaborators, are encouraged to contribute via their own intersectional perspectives. Such a vision of improvisation pedagogy, named *Vision I: From rupture of certainties to creative problematization*⁴, places improvisation at the heart of political expression, offering a space to engage with, and perhaps even enact, democratic ideals (Kanellopoulos, 2007a).



formative experience for the learner. These moments emerge through unpredictability, in the midst of dialogical exchange. *Pedagogical moment* highlights the significance of real-time learning experiences that are shaped by both the teacher's decision and actions aimed at the learner's active participation, foregrounding a deeper engagement with the material of improvisation and their personal development.

4 According to Siljamäki's and Kanellopoulos' (2019) map of the different visions of improvisation pedagogy, "the choices made at each pedagogical moment between different approaches to improvisation inform one's vision of improvisation pedagogy", providing us with five visions of improvisation pedagogy.

3 According to Siljamäki and Kanellopoulos (2019), a *pedagogical moment* refers to an instance in the learning process when the intentional actions of the educator or an interaction help form a trans-

PERHAPS THIS TIME I WILL TRY TO ENTER THE ROOM

A number of activities of this fieldwork aimed at exploring how we share responsibility at all stages of the process. By taking into consideration the overlapping struggles that each and every one of us in the *assemblage* have and are still experiencing, the collaborators contributed their agencies in co-shaping a process according to how they perceived collaboration within improvisation. Improvisation was constantly experienced individually or collectively through a transdisciplinary lens. During our first encounters, it became apparent that the collaborators wished to explore if transmedia poetry, a hybrid format, can become a territory that liberates us from hegemonic methodologies when improvising and composing collectively. Alongside this, the majority of collaborators felt the urgency to apply a slow pace in improvisation, as a way to observe pre-existing materials, deconstruct and devise new materials. Beyond the materials – whether theoretical or artistic - the collaborators demonstrated a desire to observe and analyse behavioral patterns of improvising, negotiating and decision-making in a collective manner. Their engagement in the process of improvisation was informed by their past experiences, their theoretical references, their own practice and the work of artists and theorists of their liking. Allowing our autobiographies to inhabit the territory of the *assemblage* opened up possibilities to negotiate if and how each one of us is willing to exceed the individual and tend to the collective.

Because the arts may act as a field of self-referentiality, a facilitator of such processes holds a significant responsibility to the collaborators and the community of practitioners within which the research is situated. More specifically, lacking an awareness of the diverse positionalities of the individuals and avoiding to rehearse equity in *the room* engenders the risk of improvisation becoming a means of domination. The nature of the improvising exercises, the way in which we reflect upon them and the materials that came out of them is core to the practice of improvisation. It has an impact to composition, if and when that follows improvisation. Leveling *the room* without homogenising the autoethnographies of the individuals involved, while still celebrating their unique contributions is not only a quality but also a task of the facilitator that is rarely discussed in music education training. In my personal journey of renegotiating my social role as an artist, pedagogue and facilitator, queer theory and feminisms-by-doing, feminist collectives, practitioners and arts collectives, thinkers and pedagogues of the 21st century have been highly influential. The majority of them are referenced throughout this dissertation, while others wish to remain anonymous. This research has been significantly affected by the methodologies by which feminist assemblies and collectives, as well as a handful of political groups have self-organised and mobilised, in Thessaloniki, London, Athens, and other locations that I happened to visit, live and work. Their resource-

fulness in strategies of engaging with arts improvisation as a means of prefigurative pedagogies and politics, is a remarkable site to observe attentively and draw not only inspiration but also knowledge. The resources of *the commons* are those that empower us to imagine, facilitate and practice intersectional transdisciplinary improvisation beyond survivalism, as a strategy of and for transformative justice.

The situatedness of their methodologies of facilitating workshops, conversations, performances, film screenings, collective readings, translation groups, concerts and exhibitions and solidarity kitchens, amongst others, urged me to come up with ways of facilitating a process mindful of class and gender disparities, sexual orientations and racial characteristics. More specifically, such observation have challenged me to rethink participation versus collaboration, leadership versus facilitation, equality versus equity, and therefore attempt to rehearse transferability of knowledge and experience of improvisation across positionalities, arts mediums and practices. The exploring and devising methodologies of how transdisciplinary improvisation and composition can be implemented non-hierarchically are inherently connected with an aspiration that the experience and knowledges acquired during the fieldwork may be useful and beneficial to initiatives, collectives and individuals in close and remote locations. Offering back to the communities that I have been and still am educated by, has challenged me to provide a thesis that exceeds the verbal/textual and shares ephemeral and affective aspects of it through sonic, visual and transmedia materials in various formes and shapes – from unfiltered, to raw, to structured, to mapped, to finished. This aspiration emerges through the feminist and queer practice of gossip, not only as a vessel of knowledges but as a medium to organise against oppressions in the sphere of arts, education, and generally within the political and the social. The approach to improvisation and composition implemented within the fieldwork of this research, belongs to a genealogy of artistic practices carried out by collectives and ensembles on a local and international level, and does not aspire to present itself as an absolute method or analysis, but rather a partial and fragmented *assemblage* of notions, reflections and practices.

By paying close attention to the practices of feminist collectives, assemblies or initiatives, I became aware of the diversity of mediums and practices; some of them place their focus on specific mediums – visual arts, poetry, performance art, music – while some have a more transdisciplinary approach to curation and presentation of the work. Similarly, others place great focus on the collaborative element of improvisation, composition and performance, while others highlight transmediality. *Waiting with/for Baubo* tuned into the former, because it shares with them a basic principle in the way organising comes to terms; they are conditioned within their messiness. Therefore, messiness

of perspectives, positionalities, practices and expectations is reflected in the ways by which improvisation and collaboration are practiced. Staying in and with messiness presents us with an opportunity to start disentangling the systems and the values of constructing monolithic, prestigious and canonical artworks. In other words, it urges us to explore and come up with non-hierarchical strategies and methodologies for composing, performing and sharing artistic work. Initiatives, assemblies, practitioners who belong in the same genealogy and have been a great inspiration to the design of the fieldwork are the music ensemble [Breakfast Club](#) (UK) – for the ways by which its members practice collaborative music improvisation and composition in a non-hierarchical manner within and beyond this quartet, the poetry magazine [ΤΕΦΛΟΝ](#) – for its transnational polyphonic approach to poetry publication and translation and for providing a platform to individuals who self-identify as poets to publish their poetry and participate in public events of spoken poetry in Athens, [Waves transfeminist periodic magazine](#) (Thessaloniki, Athens Berlin, Stockholm) - for its organising, through events, discussions and publications, to feminist thinking and organising, as well as to the application of a transfeminist lens the personal and the political, for the inclusion of the sexual question in local political and social struggles since 2000, [8EIGHT](#) (Athens) – for nurturing a culture of open and accessible arts-spaces where radical and non-hierarchical pedagogies can be rehearsed within the arts-landscape of Athens, [Systeming Collective](#) for their workshops and publications on precarity in the academic and professional sector of the performing arts field based on personal narrations, [undercurrent](#) for their discursive, performative, and educational practices in and beyond the field of dance, choreography, and performance, [A\) GLIMPSE\) OF](#) (Athens) – for their contribution to the landscape of feminist publications, [Centre of New Media and Feminist Public Practices](#) (Volos) – for offering an open, situated and multi-faceted prototype institution which is empowering for knowledge production at the intersection of art, feminism and technology, and the production of discourse and art, [Melissa Network for Migrant and Refugee Women](#) (Athens) – for their work with migrant and refugee women on supporting them to sustain a life in Greece, in the process of reunification with their families, as advocates of their rights and as survivors of gender-based knowledge. Regardless of the different practices and perspectives that those initiatives, groups, assemblies stand for, they all induce a collective conception of ownership.

As this piece of text is written, other workshop-based feminist and/or intersectional initiatives have come to my attention, with which this research shares a common ground, especially on how knowledge is collectively produced and transmitted. Those include,

[Multimodal Community Scorebook](#)⁵ by Danae Stefanou, [D\[inner\]rawing workshop](#)⁶ by Anthi Kosma and [\[αυτο\]σχεδιάζοντας, ομάδα ανάγνωσης](#) ⁷ ([self]drawing, reading group) facilitated by Anthi Kosma and Valia Tsirigoti, [Silence – Listening – Intimacy: A Feminist Listening Handbook](#)⁸ by Eva Matsigkou, [Reading Feminisms](#)⁹ in collaboration with Erica Scourti, and the practice of sound artist, feminist networker poet [AGF](#)¹⁰ as well as her audiovisual poetry and her publication work.

Within this genealogy of practices one can point out a shared understanding of knowledge production and exchange, beyond financial and social disparities, and the acknowledgement of the labour that this exchange and offering entails, on intellectual, emotional and corporeal level. As both subjectivities and collectives “we are acting and acted upon” (Butler, 2016,16) via our intentional actions and responses to unforeseen twists of our everyday lives and in the contexts we find ourselves in. We emancipate ourselves to collectively inhabit a state of vulnerability in interdependence. As Butler argues, improvisation, in this case, creates “a space where vulnerability can emerge as a positive force, transforming a ‘deficiency’ into an opening” (Butler, 2016,16). Each of the collectives mentioned above presents itself with its own spatial, temporal, political, social and cultural characteristics, but their practices and methodologies, ranging from a few years to a decade, have been influential to this research, especially regarding the ways by which intersectionality and abolition feminism provide the foundation for transdisciplinary improvisation and composition, as core practices of this research.

5 A collection of collaborative performance scripts for diverse groups of players with different backgrounds, composed by members of acte vide, ARTefacts ensemble and the Syrian Greek Youth Forum. Stefanou, Danae. (ed.). 2022. Multimodal Community Composition Scorebook. Athens: Onassis Stegi / Sounds Now.

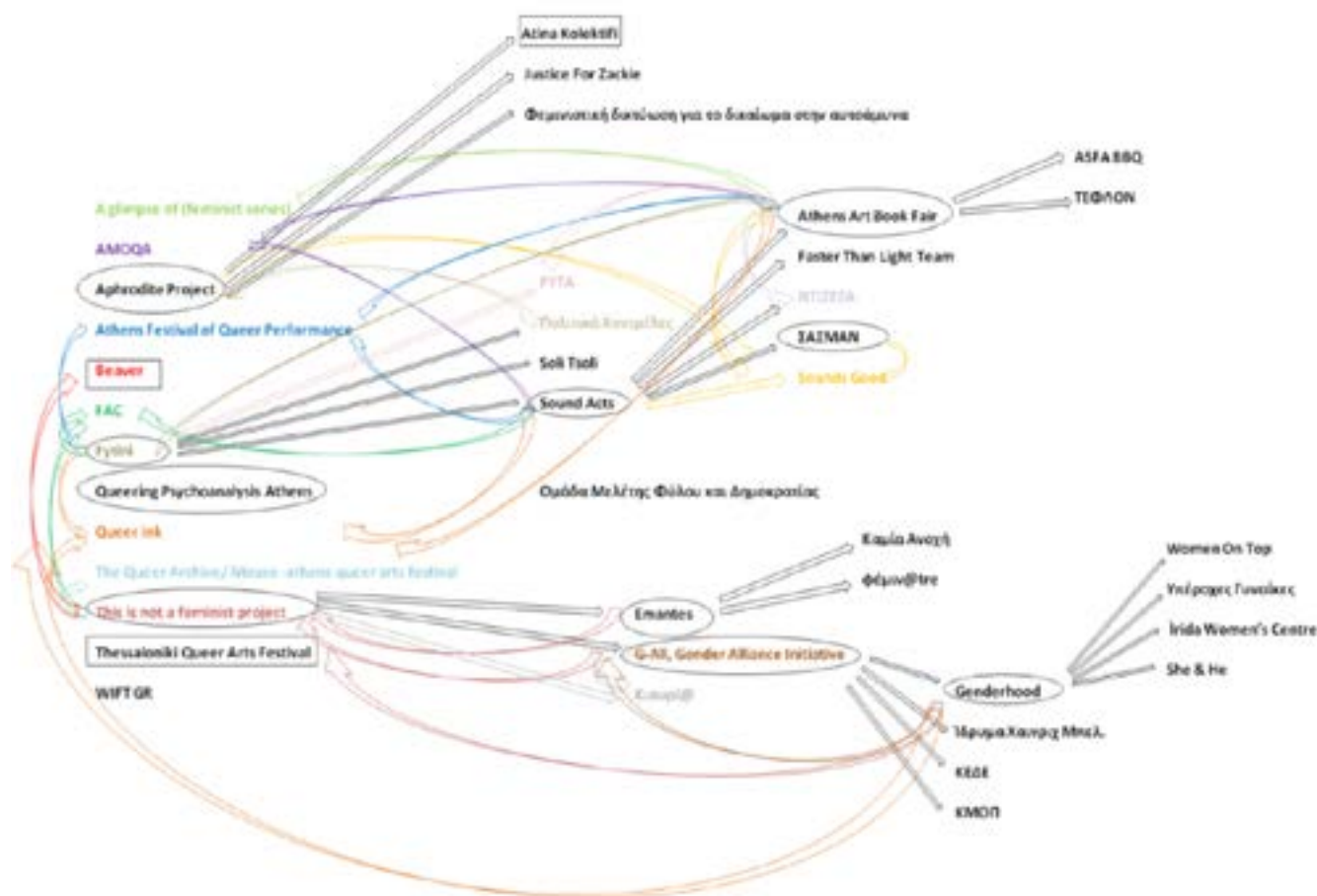
6 D[inner]rawing workshop was held at Loughborough University. TRACEYDrawing Research Network Conference 11-12th July 2019 by Anthi Kosma.

7 A workshop and collective publication under the title “Μα σαν κύριος με φουστάνι”, 25th March 2023, Athens, Greece

8 MA Thesis by Practice (in Greek) by Eva Matsigkou, School of Music Studies, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. https://sophia.mus.auth.gr/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/2087/AEM_1870.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

9 A workshop and seminar series facilitated by Erica Scourti at Tavros Space with guest contributors Dimitra Ioannou & Evi Nakou, as part of *Revolution is not a one time event** a three-month public program at Tavros Space, Athens Greece

10 Antye Greie-Ripatti’s (AGF) work is also available at [rec-on platform](#), under the artist name [poemproducer](#), as well as at her Mastodon profile [here](#)



Mapping of feminist activities and initiatives
Valia Papastamou
Centre of New Media and Feminist Public Practices

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VII. BECOMING WITH_: COMPOSING WITH MESSINESS

Waiting with/for Baubo, the fieldwork of this research in the form of an assemblage and territory of collective doing and undoing, learning and (un)learning, hopes to be in conversation with a genealogy of prefigurative pedagogies that come into being at the intersection of artistic practice, feminisms, queer theory and philosophy. Situated within its spatial and temporal context it runs the risk of reproducing those asymmetries and inequalities of music and arts education of the Western canon. Regardless of my aspiration to facilitate a territory of bi-directional and non-hierarchical exchange and unlearning, it is crucial to recognise that the education philosophy and aesthetics in which I and the majority of the collaborators have been trained – institutions such as public and/or private schools and universities, families and late capitalistic societies at large – have been operating for long as colonizing discourses. Thus, this fieldwork and the research as a whole may at times fail to provide a pedagogical methodology that is grounded on equal distribution of immaterial and material resources. For pedagogies to be culturally and socially relevant, especially in the terrain of the arts that often operate in isolation, and distance themselves from the “realisation of the colonial relationship” (Asher 2009, 3), it is key to unmask existing power dynamics, denounce notions of internalised inferiority, excellence and talent, as well as apply a hands-on reflexivity regarding the exclusions that derive from overlapping struggles and oppressions.

The majority of reasoning and belief mechanisms passed down to us via national education have been shaped by a colonialist system that operates through misrepresentation and unauthorised appropriation, leaving no room for processes of emancipated meaning-making. Bradley (2012) speaks about an “epistemological tyranny” where the exploration of questions is rushed into fixed answers discouraging individuals to engage in critical thinking. Regardless of the willingness of individuals who participate in music education contexts to examine and negotiate their roles within a learning process and context and to actively engage in philosophical inquiry and informed practice, they are often intimidated by the ways philosophy is presented to them. Philosophical ideas are often employed as a colonising force. They are understood as a given rather than a living organism and a practice. In other words, accessibility and parity in the formation of philosophical ideas is granted to few. Bradley, again, points out that “to deny a people a philosophy is to deny them any kind of intellectual activity, a system of thought, culture, and civilization” (Bradley 2012, 674). Subjects have been forced into specific roles within the terrain of canonical and hierarchical knowledge production, even as others hold on to a privilege of rendering the voices of otherness as inferior, thus vulnerable to dismissal and silence. On the contrary, my intention for this fieldwork was that philosophy would be understood first and foremost an activity, or in other words a practice



well

See definitions in:

[All](#)
[Oil Industry](#)
[Architecture](#)
[Law](#)
[Alcoholic](#)
[Physics](#)

adverb

adverb: **well**; comparative adverb: **better**; superlative adverb: **best**

1. in a good or satisfactory way.
"the whole team played **well**"

Similar: skilfully with **well** atly competently proficiently adeptly ▾

• in a way that is appropriate to the facts or circumstances.
"you did **well** to come and tell me"

Similar: satisfactorily in a satisfactory manner/way nicely correctly rightly ▾

• so as to have a fortunate outcome.
"his campaign was not going **well**"

• in a kind way.
"the animals will remain loyal to humans if treated **well**"

Similar: decently fairly **clerly** politely gently kindly ▾

• with praise or approval.
"people spoke **well** of him"

Similar: admiringly highly approvingly favourably appreciatively warmly ▾

• with equanimity.
"she took it very **well**, all things considered"

without difficulty
"she could **well** afford to pay for the vacation herself"

Similar: easily comfortably readily

• with good reason.
"What are you doing **well**?" "because **well** you."

#00214

adjective: **well**; comparative adjective: **better**; superlative adjective: **best**

1. in good health; free or recovered from illness.
"I don't feel very **well**"

Similar: healthy all right fine fit right

• in a satisfactory state or position.
"I do hope all is **well** with our new car."

Similar: satisfactory alright fine iside

2. sensible; advisable.
"it would be **well** to bring just about five megawatts of power"

Similar: advisable sensible prudent politic

exclamation

well/salutation: **well**

used to express a range of emotions including surprise, anger, resignation
"well, well! I've received it from people!"

• used when pausing to consider one's next words, to mark the recurrence of a situation
"well, well, yes"

Who is in the room? Who owns the room? Who is writing? With whom is the writing being done? Who reads? Across diverse temporalities and localities, Virginia Woolf (1929), Edward Said (1998) and Deborah Bradley (2012), have shared their unique perspectives on the ways through which writing and composing textual and non-textual works has the potential to contribute to non-hierarchical pedagogies of knowledge-production that resist masculinist representation and domination over non-consolidated and non-hierarchical bodies. Writing and/or composing transmedia poetry also function as a mechanism of unequal distribution of privilege and benefit, consequence and exclusion. My wish, as a researcher and facilitator, has been to apply prefigurative pedagogies and methodologies through the lens of intersectional feminism and transform collaborative writing/composing of transmedia poetry into a “community of effort – or preferably an equality of effort”, as Oliveros (2010, 26) points out. Hence, this intersectional territory of (un)learning acknowledges the positionalities of all collaborators, and contains an equality of effort, parity and equity in composing collaboratively across text, sound, image and bodies. Writing with all voices becomes a collaborative play of negotiation, exchange, conflict, reflection and collective decision making. Each and every perspective is valued regardless of the possible tangibility or measurability of their outcome to the music industry and education. The process, the findings and the knowledge shared and produced within the fieldwork of this research sustained an in-progress nature that allowed us to focus on the particularities of the “making” rather than the finalisation of an outcome to be publicly presented. We prioritised processes to outcomes by resisting to finalise and polish the materials that we woven and drafted during and in between our weekly encounters.

- * **probably, advantageously**.
"she would marry well or not at all"
- * in a condition of **prosperity or comfort**.
"they lived well and were **generous with their money**"

Similar: comfortably in comfort in (the lap of) luxury in ease splendidly

- * **ARCHAIC**

such as algorithms and digital software, in to our process. This consisted mainly in inserting raw materials to language or image model-based chatbots, as well as digital audio, image and video to digital workstations. Transmedia composition and writing resembled the practice of a synchronous and asynchronous gossip (see a video reel of the log of entries of the rhizomatic map at the end of [this webpage](#)), between us as collaborators – in smaller or larger constellations – between us and the context we were situated in. To our asynchronous gossip we ‘invited’ a multitude of writers, practitioners, musicians, poets, visual artists, film makers, photographers, performers. We were informed by their practice and theory. At the same time, we used AI chatbots and digital tools to generate, assort, edit, deconstruct and/or share materials. The making process varied from being unled, semi-led and scored/structured. The role of facilitating this process was either shared or taken as a sole responsibility of one of us, the collaborators, leaving also space and time for instances of unled writing and making. Based on our collective decisions on how we are holding this territory of unlearning and learning together, during our first encounter, we established a way of offering and receiving feedback that resisted the pursuit of excellence. We distanced ourselves from applying a hierarchical system of evaluation where affects, ideas and materials are more or less important, better or worse, right or wrong. Via reaching an agreement on having an awareness of possible reproductions of sexist, racist and oppressive behavioural patterns and methods, we collectively navigated through the process and the materials with attention and empathy to difference and otherness.

Interdependence through difference was explored through the mediums and formats that were available during the fieldwork. More specifically, the resources that became available were those that were shared by us as the collaborators of this *assemblage*. Immaterial resources consisted mainly of the skills that each one of us brought into the process of collective improvisation and composition, as well as the interpersonal skills that contributed to our negotiating our subjectivities and positionalities within the collective. The skills varied from analytical and communication skills, to critical thinking, knowledge of specific arts mediums and formats, software and literature. The non-hierarchical notion of collaboration was practiced based on our immaterial skills, experiences and knowledge on organising through a feminist, political, intersectional perspective. Affective labour, regardless of its invisible nature, has been key to the ways by which collaborative and non-hierarchical composition was explored. Similarly, the immaterial, the material resources that became available to us were those that were introduced from the subjects of the *assemblage*; books of literature, theory, poetry, verbal and graphic scores of music, digital equipment such as laptops, recording devices, cameras, mobile phones, projector, stationery, paper material, food ingredients, tea, coffee, amongst others. As

mentioned in Zine I_{ii}, the physical and virtual spaces of the fieldwork are considered as material (Feminist Autonomous Centre) and immaterial (virtual chatrooms and workspaces, email correspondence) resources of the writing process, that had a significant effect on the ways through which collaboration was implemented in writing, improvisation and composition, either in a tactile, embodied and in-person manner or in a virtual - beyond the limits of our bodies - digital and hybrid manner.

The rhizomatic map in the format of a digital workstation had multiple functions and applications; most prevalent were a *journal* of our shared collective process, in which materials were added freely by collaborators between the encounters, a *map* of our collective intellect and affect, where theory, process, reflections were placed in relation and/or reaction to one another, as well as a *transmedia score* open to interpretation by an individual or a group of future readers and performers. The digital mapping of ideas, affects, artefacts and materials of *Waiting with/for Baubo* fieldwork may as well be read as an in-progress collective transmedia poem.

For the purposes of this research the fieldwork was implemented within eight weekly encounters, with the collaborators of the assemblage consenting that the knowledge and materials produced will only be shared for the purposes of my PhD dissertation and thesis. The evolution of this research process and the materials devised have led to the question of how we can ourselves devise, in future practice-based research, those open-source digital and hybrid tools and methodologies in an open-source manner. This entails a variety of skills that people to cultivate and offer to the collective. They might encourage the collaborators to make work that is open-ended and accessible to the readers and audience via means of overwriting (write on top of), rewriting (delete and write again), underwriting (write below something else), miswriting (write in a way that is not accurate), ghostwriting (write in the name of someone), literally and metaphorically, within transmediality. The safeguarding of ethics around equity and accessibility that must be in place before any collaborators consent to engage in such a writing-gossip require setting up of autonomous server, as the host domain and the archive of the process and the materials, one that especially focuses on intersectional and feminist approaches to data accessibility and preservation. Shifting between the in-person, hybrid and digital rooms/spaces of a learning territory would potentially empower an exchange of knowledges and artistry across diverse localities and temporalities; one that motivates us to envision the collective without homogenising our autobiographies, without forcing each other to move on through our affect, but through appraising theory and practice, intellect and emotions on equal terms, in a joint effort of equality – a non-hierarchical system of improvising, writing and reading with each other.

The system needs your numbness. [...]

It's chaos, ongoing.

The industrialisation of inequality continues.

Your numbness is necessary.

My numbness is necessary.

And yet.

Telling poems levels the room.

Kae Tempest (2020, 19-21)

Exploring existing and conceiving new non-hierarchical methodologies that take into consideration the positionalities of subjectivities that engage in collaborative improvisation and composition presents itself with the necessity to become critical about theory and practices across diverse fields. Becoming critical with a hands-on approach, helped me design a structure for the encounters of the workshops that was subjected to change according to the desires of the collaborators. Similarly, the structure and evolution of the one-to-one interviews was similar, shifting its format from an interview to a conversation. Designing a fieldwork that would focus solely on theory and text-based knowledge runs a similar risk and often adds to the existing class, raced and gendered disparities. Making a structure whose limits are flexible forced me to remain open to the stimuli and the contributions of the collaborators, their expectations and perceptions of the medium of transmedia poetry and the process in general. There are no rules available that predicate how a transmedia poem should look, what methodologies and techniques one should follow when composing a transmedia poem, what the spaces and platforms for sharing and publishing such poetry are; there is no market yet that sets the conditions for the redemption of the artworks. Transmedia poetry may look sound, taste, feel, smell as chaotic, as messy, as non-linear and queer as it gets. It may be open-ended or finished, polished or raw; it can be any and all of the things that the individuals of an assemblage make of it based on their autobiographies. One of our shared responsibilities, within a territory of learning and unlearning, is to resist providing a definition of transmedia poetry, allowing it to remain unpredictable and open-ended. As a practice, a vessel, a

medium and/or a tool transmedia poetry exists within diverse medial layers, such as sound, text, image, networked and programmable media, modulating and transforming into each other. Transmedia poetry opens up the possibility of queering composition by destabilising monolithic and canonical methods and expectations within participatory/community arts practices. Writing transmedia poetry as a collaborative situated practice may become a practice of resistance through unpredictability and vulnerability; a process of constant transformation through transition across senses, art mediums, theory and affect.

“This is poetry as illumination, for it is through poetry that we give name to those ideas which are, until the poem, nameless and formless-about to be birthed, but already felt. [...] poetry is not a luxury. It is a vital necessity of our existence. It forms the quality of the light within which we predicate our hopes and dreams toward survival and change, first made into language, then into idea, then into more tangible action. Poetry is the way we help give name to the nameless so it can be thought.”

Audre Lorde “Poetry is not a Luxury” (1985)

Audre Lorde sheds light on the urgency to constantly challenge the prevailing sociological tendency that individualises societal problems. Through her overlapping identities, that of poet, academic, mother, lesbian, teacher, she resisted reducing problems to individual pathologies and argued for transformative justice through the medium of poetry, as a means of unearthing the deep-seated issues of structural racism. Lorde delved into the personal and collective aspects of psychology to comprehend the complexities of structural racism, colonialism, and capitalist devastation. Poetry to Lorde is an *illumination* that equips us to recognise our personal overlapping struggles within the larger framework of political and economic structures. Though intersectionality was not a concept that Lorde herself used, her work profoundly embodies it through her references to the interconnected nature of social categorisations such as race, class, gender, and sexuality, and the ways by which they overlap and intersect, leading to complex mechanism of assigning oppression and privilege to bodies across the globe. A black lesbian woman herself, she argues that poetry is a means for marginalised/underserved bodies to articulate their intellect and affect, reclaim their narratives and resist oppression. Resisting dismissal and silencing, she sees poetry as a tool of asserting agency and existence within systems of racism, patriarchy and colonialism.

Through her learning and teaching philosophy she has been influential to the design and implementation of this fieldwork. More specifically, she was constantly eroding boundaries that derive from power dynamics, by embracing vulnerability, intimacy and even hostility as pedagogical tools. Her incitement to action and learning within but also beyond the classroom, resonated with the expectation of this practice-based research to be situated, temporarily and spatially in ways that the limits of the room, the borders of this practice, whether virtual or physical, of the research and the outside are blurred; imaging the figuration of agencies as an *assemblage* inhabiting a semi-structured framework and structure of a territory of practice, a territory of learning and unlearning, doing and undoing, transforming in equality and togetherness that challenge territoriality.

Collaborative transmedia poetry, an iteration of poetry as it is described both by Kae Tempest and Audre Lorde, has the power to challenge, queer and subvert dominant narrative, when it explores the gaps and biases of the western canon. In those very gaps subjectivities with diverse intersectional backgrounds reclaim the resources to express their struggles and locate the commonalities of their lives. Collective transmedia poetry writing is a form of organising collectively the ways in which we redistribute our learning resources. Grounded on curiosity, imagination, play and consent, writing transmedia poetry with others invites us to share wishes, hopes, struggles, and dreams of the and transform them into poems of sound, text, image and performance. In other words, reading and writing poetry help us navigate across and resist the complexities of intersecting oppressions in a collective manner. Throughout this journey of unlearning to oppress and resisting oppression, Lorde has shared the benefits of keeping an archive of personal journal entries, a practice that urges primarily the facilitator of an improvisation and composition process and secondarily the collaborators to document their reflections about all aspects of the collaboration, the exchange, the nuances, particularities and developments of the process. The fieldwork of this research was accompanied by a weekly audio journal of myself as a facilitator, as described in other sections of this research already, that played a key role to the evolution of the processes overall, since it consisted of my personal reflections not only on the methodology of the research, but of my understanding of the behaviour and engagement of the collaborators during our weekly encounters, the relationalities and the distribution of power. The collaborators had contributed to the process their own reflective journal entries, in forms and formats (e.g. poem) of their liking and shared some of them during the one-to-one interviews and the group reflection discussion at the end of the fieldwork. The process of improvising and writing was highly influenced by their feedback. Messy and chaotic, it allowed us to resist until the end of this research to perform an act of mas-

tery to the materials and knowledge produced. By avoiding to transform our shared knowledge and practice into a fixed outcome, we refrained from inhabiting the roles of curator or producer, an act that would have brought us a step closer to solidifying what transmedia poetry is and how much profit one can make out of it.

What follows is a list of selected poetry that functioned as a catalyst within our communal/writing practice. We explored ways by which we write our own histories and biographies and how those resonate with each other.

Franny Choi, The World keeps Ending, and the World Goes On (2022)
MKX, Βουκαμβίλια Ποπ, (2022)
Kae Tempest, Hold Your Own (2014)
Kae Tempest, Let Them Eat Chaos (2016)
Saeed Jones, Alive at the End of the World (2022)
Kim Sousa, Always a Relic, Never a Reliquary (2022)
Audrey Lorde, Chosen Poems – Old and New (1982)
Rebecca Solnit, A Responsibility to Awe (2018)

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