



**WHAT THE MUCK: AGITATING BOUNDARIES IN
PERFORMANCE**

by

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ABSTRACT

This text serves as an accompanying document to the performance work *Muck*, first produced on May 10th, 2007. *Muck* is both a performance and an installation. Performed by four actors and a pianist, the work runs in a loop, and alternates between a series of gestures and songs. The first performance was set in a small black room within a larger white gallery space; the spectators entered and left the performance space as they desired. The purpose of this document is to examine the production of *Muck* as it relates to both performance art and theatre. It proceeds to define *Muck* (and my broader practice) not by the distinctions put upon performance art and theatre but rather by the proximity and relationship of the audience to the work. By destabilizing expected structures of viewer/performance interaction my work attempts to activate the threshold between the two.

Keywords: Theatre, Performance Art, Mimesis, Proximity, Performance, Theatricality, MySpace, the Double, verfremdungseffekt,

To the boundless spirit of Play

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION



Figure 1 *Muck* and the audience

The first performance of *Muck*, my graduate thesis project, occurred on May 10, 2007. *Muck* conjoins many strains of my practice. Although my education thus far has been in the field of visual arts, I have also long been inspired by theatricality and the flamboyant musicals of the twentieth century¹. Over the years, these influences have found their way into my work, such as in

¹ My favourite movies as a child were the *Wizard of Oz* and the cult classic *Shock Treatment*, the lesser known sequel to the *Rocky Horror Picture Show*.

the theatrical production *Bone Love*, which I produced for the FOOT festival at the University of Toronto in 2004, or the numerous quirky show tunes that I have written for various cabarets and performance events². To date *Muck* is my most ambitious project, bringing together my love for show tunes and an art practice rooted in performance art viewership³.

Muck is performed in four 7.5 foot tall, by 4.5 foot wide and 4 foot deep boxes which resemble shipping containers with store front windows cut out of one side. Their interiors are painted with bright colours and vivid patterns. The work is made up of eight original songs inspired by the songs of Kurt Weill, and Leiber and Stoler⁴. Four performers occupy the boxes (one performer enclosed in each). Throughout the work they move between the performance of the songs and a series of gestures, constructed as a procession of intervals and events. The work is organised as an installation⁵. At the performance on May 10th the four boxes were situated within a small square room with black walls and a floor (theatre's black box) inside a large studio space with white walls (the gallery's

² I performed an original show tune, *My Shoes Are Made In China*, at numerous cabaret events including the Vancouver Fringe Festival in 1998 and the Or Gallery/Access Artist Run Centre joint fundraiser cabaret in 2004. My most recent show tune work (preceding *Muck*), titled *Boils and Goils*, was performed with an accompanying dance routine by the Bring Your Own cabaret collective at the Femme 2006 conference at 12 Gaaxies in San Francisco, August 2006.

³ By the term performance art, I am referring to the strain of performance work that has emerged out of a visual arts sensibility.

⁴ The songs in *Muck* were inspired by early Twentieth Century musicals and cabaret tunes. Songs such as *Pirate Jenny* written for the *Three Penny Opera* by Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht in 1928 greatly influenced the mood and lyrical style in *Muck*. Also, I grew up listening to some of Leiber and Stoller's more theatrical songs such as *Professor Haupmann's Performing Dogs* (1975) and *Is That All There Is* (1966), which, in retrospect, also guided the development of the songs for *Muck*.

⁵ A visual arts term referring to a work of art that envelops the viewer by engaging the whole architectural space in the work. Installation art can include sculptural materials, video and sound components, lighting, performance, or any medium that can be used to transform the viewers experience of a space.

white cube). Spectators were invited to move between rooms, and enter and leave the performance space in their own time. At that initial showing we performed the songs and gestures in a loop for three hours.

By drawing from a diverse range of performance strategies, *Muck* is situated in the blurry divide between theatre and performance art. While practitioners working under the banner of each respective camp operate in similar ways - as the essential medium of both is *the body in time and space* - a formal separation between them seems to persist.

Regardless of the cause of this distinction, as an artist who works within the structures of both, I often find myself challenged by attempting to define what it is I make. As a result, contextualizing my practice with traditional definitions from either form is always inadequate. My belief is that theatre and performance art have more in common than they do in contrast, and that the breadth of each illuminates the diversity of performance strategies from which a practitioner can choose from. However, when a practitioner is educated under the banner of either "theatre" or "performance art," s/he tends to utilize strategies most commonly found in one or the other. For this reason I recognize the value of acknowledging the division, if only in order to investigate the histories of each and further discover the broad spectrum of practice. However, my artwork is agnostic: it breaches any perceived difference between the genres.

As such, this thesis is an attempt to identify various performance strategies drawn from the vast scope of theatre and performance art, and to assert new criteria by which to define a kind of artwork. This categorical

delineation does not fall along the borders of genre, but rather defines a kind of work that manipulates proximity, the distance between the spectator and the performance. Renowned performance theorist Richard Schechner states: "Entertainment/theatre emerges . . .out of a complex consisting of an audience separate from the performers" (1988, pg137). While I think of my work as defining this space, and while I as a performer position myself closer to and farther away from the viewer, in my work, the audience also makes choices about their proximity to the work and the performers in it. This is their agency; the various ways that an audience negotiates their physical, temporal and psychic distance from a work shows us that a separation exists and that it is in fact necessary. I call this space between the audience and the performance the threshold. My work asks questions about the negotiation of this space: What space do these two bodies inhabit? How do they come together and move apart? What are the devices that push them away and draw them together? How do they resemble each other, and what is created by their meeting?

CHAPTER 2: THE DIVERGENCE OF PERFORMANCE ART AND THEATER

Character vs. the Non-fictionalised Body

For the sake of this investigation, I will momentarily take the position that theatre and performance art are autonomous from one another. By doing so this section will explore the various elements that traditionally divide the genres; allowing a harvesting of performance strategies gathered from the farthest reaches of performance practice.

One element that most often distinguishes the autonomy of performance art from theatre is the use of character as opposed to the non-fictionalised body. In theatre, for example, the development of a performer's activities on stage most often results from a maturation of character as it relates to the unfolding narrative of the play. Character is the most dynamic and layered manifestation of a theatre performer's presentation, dependent upon their circumstance, relationship/s and objective. A narrative arc is essential to this type of work, as the dynamic quality of a character is present only because s/he goes through a transformation visible to the audience. The circumstance, relationship and objective of the character must be, or become clear to the viewers as the play progresses.

Through these elements – circumstance, relationship and objective - the action of the play is produced. This process is acting. Therefore, another way of naming this distinction between performance art and theatre is acting versus action. This is no more visible than in the respective educational institutions of the two forms. Where theatre school is rooted in the study of established acting techniques, performance art education, based on a visual arts model, is often structured around the presentation and peer critique of students' physical experiments with action and gesture. As acting is the foundation of theatre, and character is the foundation of acting, it is important to understand what exactly character is, and how it affects the audience's relationship with the work.

As I described previously, character is developed from three essential points of departure, one of which is relationship. In theatre, elucidated by relationships are the emotional, spiritual or intellectual motivations of the character (desire, love, lust, fear, greed and so on). Although relationship may not always refer to a relation between two characters (as there are numerous examples of an actor working off only an object, the space, or an imaginary partner), the transformation that occurs is primarily at the level of human emotions. As an audience, our understanding is that this transformation occurs in a fictionalised realm – the *world of the play*. Although it is important for actors to have a formal process of disconnecting from the character after a performance, as it is common for them to be emotionally and psychologically affected by their work, we as spectators assume that the actor does not go through this same transformation as the character they embody.

Performance art, however, holds as its hallmark the breaking down of the fictionalised body. Acting is set aside for action. Although the performer may still undergo a transformation, most often the perceptible change occurs at a physical level. In the canon of performance art, it is not the human emotions that have been emphasized, but rather the materiality of the human body in relation to an object, physical space and time. There is an *unmasking* that is expected in performance art, an audience assumption of *realness*. For example, when Chris Burden is shot in the arm (as he was in his most famous work *Shoot*, performed in 1971), the audience assumes that it is Chris Burden's *real* arm, not the fictive arm of character protected by illusion. Theatre on the other hand is produced with an inherent safeguard for the physical protection of the audience, that of character in relation to fiction. For no matter what level of extreme action occurs in the world of the play, the audience can be assured that it is well considered, rehearsed and illusionary. It is as if every theatre production comes with a disclaimer: no actor or audience member will be harmed during the course of this play. That assurance is not present in many performance art works.

Rehearsal vs. Improvisation

The construction of a fictionalised space as opposed to a non-fictionalised space requires a process of production based in rehearsal. In order to develop a contained play world, in which the terms and conditions are understood by all of the inhabitants (in other words, all the performers in a production) time must be spent rehearsing as an ensemble. To develop a character an actor must invest time and energy in discovering its layers. Rehearsal, therefore, is time spent by

the ensemble (which may or may not include an outside eye - a director) in order to develop the depth of each character and their relationships, and to compose the unfolding narrative. Although there is a certain amount of improvisation that arises from slight variations actors will make over the run of a show, as related to the melody of their language or the intensity of their movement, the composition of a play is often set in advance⁶. Improvisation plays a large part in the rehearsal process, however it is often not the primary organizing principle during the final production. This is due in part to the fact that theatre is often guided by the blueprint of a script, as such, a level of rehearsal is necessary to effectively *bring to life* the text and manifest the narrative laid out by the playwright in an organized and well constructed way.

Performance art on the other hand, not often concerned with maintaining a fictive world, is structured around improvisation. Since there is no play world separate to that inhabited by the audience, and therefore, no fear of breaking verisimilitude, the terms and conditions of the *here* and *now* suffice. A classic example of improvisation in performance art is Carolee Schneemann's *Meat Joy*, performed in 1964 in Paris, London and New York. Guided by some simple directives Schneemann instructed a group of performers, as well as the sound and lighting technicians, to create an orgiastic expression of physical, visual and sonic excess (likely also fragrant, considering the abundance of raw meat). Set in close proximity to the audience, the performers squirmed and wriggled,

⁶ It is important to note, of course, that I am not referring to improvised theatre, which relies on a completely disparate set of conditions and considerations. For the sake of simplicity, I will refrain from discussing improvised theatre in this paper.

rubbing themselves and others with raw fish and chickens, rope, transparent plastic, paper scraps, and wet paint. Although Schneemann *set the scene*, and gave loose instructions, the action was left up to the performers to invent. Their movement was based directly on their experience of the moment.

Physical Time and Space

Another fissure along which performance art and theatre often diverge is their time signature, or duration. Because of its historically experimental structure, performance art regularly leaves the time duration open, without a pre-determined end. The length of a work becomes dependent on factors related to the unfolding of the action itself. To illustrate the nature of performance art time I often describe a work made by Richard Kristen, a peer of mine at Vancouver's Emily Carr Institute in 2000.

In Kristen's work, a kitchen table missing two of its four legs, set with a breakfast for four (eggs, pancakes, orange juice and so on), was held up at one end by the artist. As a comment on societal expectations of the role of the father (himself a father of two) he sat at the end of the table, holding it up with his hands in place of the missing legs. He held it for as long as he physically could, which lasted a couple of hours. In that time his muscles began to shake uncontrollably, and as he became unable to hold its weight everything slid off the table and spilled onto the floor. The results in this work could perhaps be expected (one could guess what would happen after enough time had passed) however the action itself was not rehearsed. The breakfast slid off the table not at a prescribed moment but only after the artist could no longer exert the effort it took

to hold the table and all its contents. Kristen's piece is an example of a form of performance art titled Endurance work, where the performance is organized around pushing the human body to its limit. The duration of the piece is directly linked to the performer's physical capacity to continue the action.

Performance artists have also historically been interested in pushing the duration of a work to extremes. For example, artists Linda Montano and Tehching Hsieh have both produced work that is structured around the yearly calendar and the unfolding duration of a human life. Their best-known work was a collaboration in which they tied themselves together at the waist for one year, and documented their experience in audio recordings and photography⁷. The production was an improvised performance of *living*, as framed by the device of a rope connecting the artists. The duration was set (one year) however the action within that time frame was completely open, directed only by the physical constriction of the rope.

Theatre, when tied to a script, works with time in a different way, and should be divided into two distinct time signatures. The first is the duration of the play as it relates to the time of the spectators (non-diegetic), the second relates to the time passing within the narrative (diegetic). Diegetic time, based on the fiction of the play, contains only moments essential to the unfolding plot. A narrative that stretches over two decades may be relayed to the audience in only

⁷ This work was subtitled *Art/Life* and was the fourth of five one year performances undertaken by Tehching Hsieh that took place in New York City between the years 1978 and 1986. *Art/Life* began on July 4th 1983 and ended exactly one year later. Part of the strictures put on the performers was, although they were connected by an eight foot rope, they were to refrain from actually touching. Montano and Hsieh did not know each other before beginning the work.

two hours. In fact, non-diegetic time in most western theatre does run somewhere between one and two hours. Although many experimental theatre works, as well as theatre forms outside the European lineal tradition, run for an extended duration⁸, the brevity of most theatre experiences is based around audience comfort.

This also holds true for the construction of theatre spaces. Most contemporary theatre buildings (and many of the works themselves) are constructed so that the physical needs of the audience (such as eating, sleeping or urinating) won't distract them from their spectatorship. Historically, they have been outfitted with seats or other provisions to create a circumstance where the viewers can, if they choose, remain with the performance for its duration in an uninhibited way. The various locations of performance art, on the other hand, are often less conducive to lengthy spectating. The gallery space, with its stark white walls, acute angles and lack of chairs, is designed for an upright mobile flow through the space. Or the city street, as another common performance art location, is most accommodating to momentary chance encounters by viewers.

Psychological Space and Distance

The construction of the physical space where a performance occurs directly affects the psychological proximity between viewers and performance. In theatre, as echoed by Richard Schechner, the space of the action and that of the audience must be segregated in some way. This is evident by the use of the

⁸ The best example of this is Japanese Kabuki theatre, in which the theatrical production will last an entire day, and the audience will come and go as they please, eating meals between viewings.

fourth wall. The fourth wall is a device used to divide the world of the play from that of the spectators even farther than the structure of the architecture. The format of a proscenium stage is best fitted to use this device, however the fourth wall can be utilised or discarded in relatively unlimited circumstances. The most common way that it is employed is as the imagined fourth wall of a room that is located on the stage of a proscenium theatre, transparent for the audience yet opaque for the characters. Erecting a spatial, temporal and psychic barrier, the fourth wall allows the performers to go about their business uninhibitedly, permeated only by the occasional laugh, cough or squeaking seat. For the spectators it secures for them a safe space as it positions them decidedly outside of the action of the play.

Although much theatre discards the use of the fourth wall (most notably solo theatre⁹ and works by Bertolt Brecht which I will discuss shortly), it remains one of the most accessible strategies in a theatre practitioner's toolbox. Its use, and clear breakage, can manipulate the relationship of the audience to the performance in numerous ways. The degree to which the fourth wall is *closed* can directly determine the level of safety the audience feels, and therefore influence how closely they are willing to engage a work. For example, a theatre event that calls for the audience to break the fourth wall by *audience participation* or *volunteering*, can produce feelings of anxiety in the viewers. When the spectators are no longer hidden in the shadow of the house, and are aware that

⁹ Solo theatre, in which a single actor performs for an audience, often includes some form of a direct address, where the actor speaks through the fourth wall to the audience members. One pertinent example of this is in *Miss Margarida's Way*, a play written by Brazilian playwright Roberto Athayde in 1977. In it the central character, a school teacher, uses the theatre as her classroom, addressing the audience as if they are her pupils.

they are not only the viewers but also the viewed, there is a tendency to become more guarded. When a work is a live event, not separated by the skin of a cinema screen for example, the construction of distance, real or imagined, becomes an essential element in negotiating the relationship between the two worlds.

This is most evident in performance art where the fourth wall is largely nonexistent. For example, extremely physical works like Marina Abramovic's *Rhythm 10*¹⁰, in which she rhythmically jabs the table between her splayed fingers with a knife, imitating a Russian game of similar action, can go even farther to affect extreme discomfort in an audience.

I witnessed a re-working of *Rhythm 10* by a young performance artist at the Western Front in 2004. When she missed the space between her fingers, instead stabbing her hand, the view of her blood, the sound of a muffled knife as it hit her fingers and the knowledge that she was cutting herself right there in front of us that caused both a visceral and emotional reaction in the audience. Many people present responded that the experience was very troubling. There was a physical closeness that we shared with the performer, uninhibited by any excess distance, tangible or imagined. The event was one of unusual physical empathy; the violence of the act almost brushed up against our own bodies. For this reason our response was to reassert a distance through other means than

¹⁰ Marina Abramovic first presented *Rhythm 10* at a festival in Edinburgh in 1973. The initial incarnation of this work included ten knives, she later increased the number to twenty. Each time she cut herself she would switch to another knife. The work also included a sound component: she recorded the exercise then attempted to repeat the same pattern a second time, following the sound of the recording.

physical proximity, and secure for ourselves a zone of safety, a buffer between her and us. As much as possible we willingly disengaged, turned our faces away and directed our attention towards other things in the space.

CHAPTER 3: MANIPULATING PROXIMITY



Figure 2 Helmet Piece, November 2005

Threshold

It is important to note that each of these examples of performance art and theatre practice, used as categorizing strategies in this paper, are both fluid and malleable. Over the extensive histories of both, practitioners have taken up and discarded these methods innumerable ways. Regardless of whether a work is contextualized as theatre or performance art, the pivotal relationship for me as a performer and creator is between spectator and performer. Where the two

distinct worlds come together is the active location of the work. Formal choices made by performance practitioners, regardless of what camp they position themselves in, are in essence various methods of organizing this decisive relationship. I have come to designate the point of connection between these two bodies (performance and audience) as *the threshold*.

As is illustrated in the previous discussion of theatre and performance art, the threshold is made up of spatial, temporal and psychic principles, and is negotiated by both parties. Who moves in the direction of whom, who is held back and who is pushed, whether one party is more active or more passive than the other, all of these things are part of a fluid navigation. The artist has a certain amount of control over this process because s/he can construct the grounds and conditions upon which the bartering is done. The audience has the choice to extend or withhold their willingness to participate, relative to what the performance requires of them.

Nowhere in my work has the threshold been made more visible than in my first year graduate project *Helmet Piece*. *Helmet Piece*, a performative installation, consists of five performers arranged in a chevron. They stand very still inside a gallery space, each outfitted with a round white helmet. A prosthetic device (a stethoscope) is attached to the centre of each helmet, located roughly where the nose of the performer would be. The audience engages with the work by standing *head to head* with the performers and inserting the headphone end of the stethoscope into their ears. Normally a psychic boundary, in this work the threshold is given a material existence in the helmet and ear-piece; the meeting

of the two worlds are literally two physical bodies coming together. Positioned as a sculptural structure (the performers stand static in one spot) the audience has freedom of movement to walk about the space and interact with the work at their own discretion. Their choice to participate in the work is directed only by their own curiosity.

To look at the threshold between performance and audience as malleable, both physically and psychically, produces an amazing opportunity for performance practitioners to investigate this important relationship. Every formal choice, whether it concerns time duration, entrances and exits, space allocation, viewer participation, the use of objects and props, and so on, affects the dynamic of the threshold.

Muck at the Threshold

With my graduate production, *Muck*, I was interested in unsettling viewer expectations in order to produce a dynamic relationship at the threshold. To do this, I used strategies across the spectrum of theatre and performance art. Although there is no formal script in *Muck*, it does rely on a text: eight original songs. The lyrics of each song contain an expression of the character's fears and desires however the narrative arcs this elicits are housed within each song, and do not extend over the course of the entire work. There is a fictionalised world produced in *Muck*. Physically included in this world is the interior of each character's box, the immediate exterior space where the audience resides, the other boxes and characters inhabiting those boxes. For the most part, the distinction between the audience and the performance is maintained. The

organisation of space goes beyond inserting a fourth wall, with an actual physical barrier of the wood and plexi-glass boxes erected between the two worlds of audience/performance. However, plexi-glass can be breached by a gaze, and I instructed the performers to sporadically, in a limited way, make eye contact with the audience. In this way the autonomy of the two spaces was at first erected and then dismantled.

The duration of the work was decided in advance, but only as an arbitrary length of time dependent upon the performance context. The content of *Muck* runs in a flexible loop, made up of a series of intervals: an improvised succession of gestures; and events: the songs. For this structure, a certain amount of rehearsal was needed, and our ensemble worked both together and separately with our director Adriana Bucz and our musical director James Coomber. The rehearsals however, were not a process of structuring the work in order to lock it into a repeatable arc of movement; rather they were meant to help us each build a small gesture bank, which we could draw from over the course of the work. In fact, the gestures we developed in the rehearsals were all that we had to work with in terms of movement. Adriana directed us to use only what we developed while working with her, although we could manipulate them in near limitless ways during the performance. We played with the gestures we created, varying the speed, size, intensity or combination. As the temporal structure of *Muck* operated as a loop with no set beginning or end, the performers were not responsible for keeping pace of the whole, but only for the duration of each gesture that moved in succession.

As the use of time in *Muck* is designed more closely in relation to the time signature of performance art, and due to the lack of a narrative arc in the work, there is no expectation that the audience will remain with the performers for its duration. I wanted to have some control over the spectator's range of movement within the space, but leave the final decision as to what they looked at and where they placed their bodies up to them. I did this by enclosing them in a small space yet offering multiple viewing options at any one time. I positioned the audience in the middle of the performers so they were required to change the direction of their gaze in order to view the multiple parts of the work. At the initial performance I located the performance space in a small room adjacent to another room where wine and snacks were provided. The audience could enter or leave the performance area as they desired, talk to other audience members, socialize or stand and witness the performance proceedings. It was important that the audience had to take responsibility for their viewing experience.

A comment / criticism that I often heard after the performance, was that a spectator had felt "uncomfortable" being *squished* inside the performance space, forced to be so close to the performers. A friend who came to see *Muck* commented to me afterwards that what was strange for her was her physical closeness to our characters when we seemed to be struggling emotionally, and her inability to know how to *help* us. She said that as she watched me she thought: *if she were in my kitchen at this moment, I would either want to hug her or leave the room and give her space*. But instead she stood only inches away, impeded from this type of engagement. She saw herself, therefore, not as a

removed spectator, but as implicated in the event. She was compelled to want to insert herself, yet was removed from doing so by the formal structure of the performance. For her, the experience of *Muck* evoked both feelings of intimacy and of alienation.

My friend's observation was in alignment with the affect I had hoped the piece would elicit, as my intent in *Muck* was to trouble the audience's position of comfort with their proximity to the work. To draw them in and push them away, ideally positioning them in a liminal space where the threshold is always in negotiation. My objective was to produce this effect at the physical level; I wanted the spectator's world and that of the performance to fluctuate between the same and different. However, my aim was also to push beyond the physical into the psychological, to touch on a larger investigation of how we display our selves in North American contemporary society, and how that display affects and controls our relationships with each other. My intent was to implicate the audience through the proximity of resemblance. I approached this by using the on-line social networking site MySpace as the source of the work, a topic I will discuss in the following chapter.

Bertolt Brecht and *Verfremdungseffekt*

In the history of theatre and performance, a notable playwright who infamously challenged his audience to be more active in their viewing experience was Bertolt Brecht. To accomplish this Brecht used the technique of *verfremdungseffekt*, or the alienation effect. Regarding the actors of his era he stated that they

act wrong. . . by means of hypnosis. They go into a trance and take the audience with them. . . with nobody seeing anything further, nobody learning any lessons, at best everyone recollecting. In short, everybody feels. . . Spectator and actor ought not to approach one another but to move apart. (Brecht, 1929/2004, pp 185)

Verfremdungseffekt was a way that Brecht could ensure the meaning of his plays were understood not on an emotional level but on a analytical, intellectual level. He developed this strategy in order to insert critical thinking into what he considered a complacent theatre - going audience experience. Brecht produced *Verfremdungseffekt* by telling his audience what was going to happen in advance of the play or by using old, familiar stories rather than new ones. He would often have his actors break character and speak directly through the fourth wall to the audience, use placards to announce scene changes and otherwise break down the conventions of narrative verisimilitude. He would also set his plays in *far-away-lands*, without any attempt to maintain cultural authenticity. His belief was that if you set a work in the contemporary context of the spectators, the meaning would be lost in a subjective emotional response. These tactics were a careful negotiation of the threshold, layering distance upon distance, challenging the viewers to move towards the work only with careful intellectual consideration.

Walter Benjamin recounts the means by which Brecht sets out to develop an audience that would gain an intellectual interest in his plays.

The first is the action; it has to be such that the audience can keep a check on it at crucial places on the basis of it's own experience. The second is the performance; it should be mounted artistically in a pellucid manner (Benjamin, 1968, pp 147).

In other words, Brecht's strategy of *Verfremdungseffekt* called for the formal structures of the play to be translucent, so the audience could easily *see through* them, making the meaning visible. The audience also had to be able to understand the points within the play that illuminated its meaning based on "it's own experience," and seek to connect them analytically.

Although these strategies begin to resemble the kind of proximity cultivated in performance art, Brecht did not abandon the conventions of theatre. Moreover, he *relied* on them. He depended upon the viewer's comfort with theatre conventions in order to draw attention to their construction and boundaries. Brecht worked within the form of a narrative, yet the narrative was the least important element. Regarding Brecht's theatrical style Benjamin writes, "[i]ts basic form is that of the shock with which the single, well-defined situations of the play collide. The songs, the captions, the lifeless conventions set off one situation from another" (Benjamin, 1968, pg 153). Structurally, the play's well-ordered anatomies – its set, characters, text, gestures lay beside one another, as if specimens on a scientist's slab.

I believe that Brecht's frustration with the theatre of his day was that the threshold had become inactive. That complacency was produced because the negotiation had become a simple sale and purchase transaction, which quickly settled into stillness. *Verfremdungseffekt* reactivated the audience's and performers' ability to barter. For even while he used theatre to alienate, to distance the audience from the action, his intention was also one of bringing

together. As Benjamin said of Brecht's Epic theatre, it allowed for "the filling in of the orchestra pit. The abyss which separates the players from the audience as it does the dead from the living" (Benjamin, 1968, pp 154).

The Absurdist Playwrights

Another group of performance practitioners who worked towards creating an active audience by breaking convention was the absurdist playwrights. Their technique, however, was largely explored at the level of narrative rationality.

When discussing the use of language in absurdist theatre Martin Esslin notes,

*what happens on the stage transcends, and often contradicts, the words spoken by the characters. In Ionesco's *The Chairs*, for example, the poetic content of a powerfully poetic play does not lie in the banal words that are uttered but in the fact that they are spoken to an ever-growing number of empty chairs (Esslin, 1961, pp 26).*

The hallmark of Absurdist theatre is not only the use of theatrical conventions in an unconventional way, but also that it conveys a break-down of the formidable expectations of rational human expression.

Absurdist theatre utilises theatrical devices – actors, lighting, stage sets, entrances and exits, text, props – and puts them in irregular relationships with one another. Resemblances to the world are present, yet as they bump up against each other in equations that do not add up to an easily understandable whole, the audience is required to make connections in new and possibly challenging ways. In *Waiting For Godot*, for example, the end of each act is marked by the two characters exclaiming "let's go," yet the script clearly instructs the actors to remain in their place. This exchange relates directly to the

existential themes upon which many of the early absurdist playwrights based their works. By putting dialogue and action in antithesis to one another there becomes a space created between them; the philosophical and psychological content of the interaction is suggested but not illustrated. The audience, therefore, is required to engage their analytical faculties in order to understand the work. Using these examples, it can be said that narrative theatre can produce a dynamic relationship with its audience only when there is space left for them to insert themselves, if only at the level of their imagination. It is taught in theatre training to *always play the subtext*, in other words an actor should never play the text itself but what underlies it. There needs to be some room for an audience to complete the work with their own active choice of engagement.

CHAPTER 4: RESEMBLANCE: CLOSENESS AND DISTANCE

Resemblance and Doubling

Performance practice further engages the threshold when proximity is explored in relation to the mimetic relationship of the work to the audience. From Plato to Auerbach art has been discussed as having a mimetic relationship to the world¹¹. However, rather than seeing this as imitative or illustrative, where a (dead) copy seeks to replace a (living) original, mimesis can also refer to a notion of resemblance. As Theodor Adorno states, rather than being “a copying or imitation of what has been” mimesis is “a continuity from reflection to reflection”(in Huhn, 2004, pp 7). He offers us a house of mirrors where there is a continuous process of producing similarities that recreates and redirects focus, where the magic of life is reflected again and again in various shapes and forms. Within this framework, the threshold between the performance and audience is not described so much as a coming together of two autonomous bodies, but instead it describes the treacherous moment in which a being encounters a spectre of itself.

¹¹ Discussion of Mimesis can be found in Plato's best know work, *The Republic*, written in 360 BCE. Auerbach discusses mimesis in his work *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, first published in German in 1946.

The groundbreaking theatre and performance philosopher, Antonin Artaud, in his seminal work *The Theatre and its Double*¹² describes theatre in metaphysical terms. Comparing theatre to alchemy, he states that

where alchemy, through its symbols, is the spiritual Double of an operation which functions only on the level of real matter, the theater must also be considered as the Double, not of this direct, everyday reality. . . . but of another archetypal and dangerous reality (Artaud, 1958 pp 48).

Laden with mystical language, Artaud explores theatre as existing in a space of magic. Echoing this sentiment, Michael Taussig, in his book *Mimesis and Alterity*, discusses mimesis thoroughly in terms of its magical qualities. In an impassioned introduction he urges his readers to

note the magical, the soulful power that derives from replication. For this is where we must begin; with the magical power of replication, the image affecting what it is an image of, wherein the representation shares in or takes power from the represented –testimony to the power of the mimetic faculty through whose awakening we might not so much understand that shadow of science known as magic (a forlorn task if ever there was one), but see anew the spell of the natural where the reproduction of life merges with the recapture of the soul (Taussig, 1992, pp 2).

Mimesis in these terms is a powerful force that artists can use to investigate, express and influence the often confusing, barely rational experience of human life. As performance practitioners, who use the human body as our medium, there is a distinctly ego-centric quality about our work. For it is always about *ourselves*, the human body in its context, in relation to space, objects, movement or each other. Relying on the human body and its gestures, on the male or female voice, on a spoken language comprehended by spectators, on

¹² First published in French in 1938.

recognizable objects and familiar physical and emotional expression, performance inherently brings together the two bodies of spectator and performer through resemblance and recognition. Although a work may not be particularly imitative, as with parody or re-enactment, when the medium is the human body there is an immediate similarity that connects a work with its performance context. Mimesis is always present, and acts as a foundational union of the two worlds of spectator and performer.

Elaborating on this connection, Gebauer and Wulf, in their book *Mimesis: Culture, Art, Society*, differentiate mimesis from mimicry by stating that mimesis “usually refers to a wider process of *representation* that involves the mediation between different worlds and people –in essence, between different symbolic systems” (1992, pg 94). Both the world of the audience and that of a performance, individual systems made up of their own codes and conventions, are malleable and penetrable by one another. In this way, the experience of the world, by both audience members and performers, is cast and recast by mimetic resemblances.

Muck and MySpace

Muck was an attempt to work with resemblance in this way. Although inspired by various forms, such as Bertolt Brecht’s and Kurt Weill’s musicals,¹³ as

¹³ As previously mentioned, the raw language of the songs in Brecht and Weill’s collaborative work *the Opera* had a great influence on the writing of the songs for *Muck*; specifically the song *Pirate Jenny*, and the visceral intensity of the version sung by Nina Simone in 1964.

well as many Queer cabarets and performances¹⁴, *Muck* is directly linked to my experience on the internet social networking site MySpace. Although not a direct imitation, I was interested in exploring the way that people construct their identities through the flash and glitz of its user-friendly web design. In MySpace, everyone can design their own *rock-star* persona through pictures, wallpapers (page backgrounds), slide shows and sound tracks. As a participant, you list your favourite books and movies, who you would like to meet, and your sexual status. It operates to construct an identity for oneself and to connect with a (potentially huge) matrix of other people (or other personas). In this way MySpace operates as a mimetic representation of community and as a spectre of the self. *Muck* is a reflection of this virtual space, cast back into the context of physical presence.

MySpace is a phenomenon of a fleeting contemporary moment. Founded in 2003, it had 100 million users by August 9, 2006. However, today (August 27th, 2007) it is already being overtaken as the most popular social networking site by FaceBook, with crowds of users making the switch every day. With the creation of *Muck* I was conscious that a large percentage of the audience would be familiar with MySpace and other social networking sites, and are in fact users themselves. However, the work was constructed as a phantom of this virtual landscape; rather than quoting it directly I sought to produce a resemblance, not

¹⁴ As a queer artist, I have been involved in, as well as witness to, numerous performances in queer centred spaces. Stemming from a long history of societal repression of self expression, these performances spaces have become a central part of queer culture. As markers of struggle and as locations for joyful escape, these performances are often filled with biting sarcasm, bright displays of camp lavishness and beautiful grotesqueries. All of these qualities inspired the look and feel of *Muck*.

only a resemblance of MySpace, but also of the contemporary human condition and the construction of identity.



Figure 3 Excerpt from Maya Suess' MySpace account, August 2007

The Uncanny

By working with the awareness that the audience and the performance are in some way connected through resemblance, the potential to trouble the threshold expands even farther. Like proximity based in a spatial relationship the key to an active mimetic threshold is tension: “[P]ulling this way and that, mimesis plays this trick of dancing between the very same and the very different” (Taussig, 1992, pg 129). This dance configures a central part of the threshold,

for although mimesis relies on recognition, it is not merely the similar that makes a mimetic item, but the pull between sameness and alterity.

The mimetic faculty in its active state can invoke a feeling of the uncanny in the viewer. The uncanny is produced when the space between the familiar and the strange is obscured. As Freud describes it, the “uncanny is in reality nothing new or alien, but something which is familiar and old-established in the mind and which has become alienated from it” (F1919/2000, pg 944). From this perspective, the uncanny has a way of putting the experiencer *on edge*, into a state of slight discomfort, a state that can produce an impulse towards movement. It is this relationship between the familiar and the strange that propels the audience into ambivalent and dynamic territory. To invoke the uncanny, an artist can play with moving towards and away from resemblances of conventions familiar to their expected audience.

For example, in the play Fucking A, playwright Suzan-Lori Parks establishes a dystopic world that mirrors our own. She is able to draw on familiar symbols and characterizations to construct a nightmarish society that will resonate with her intended audience. In the following excerpt, the character Butcher lists crimes for which his daughter has been convicted and jailed for life. In the text of the script the list extends for a page and a half.

. . . racketeering, moneylaundering, cyber fraud, intellectual embezzlement, highway robbery. . . taking and dispensing narcotics without a permit, smiling in the off season, hunting on private land, lying on private grass, trespassing, eating from the table of authority, fornicating with the Other. . . general dismemberment, congregating without a permit, speaking her mind without a permit, not wearing drawers, leaving her lights on, playing loud music, fighting the power, passing the buck. . .

murder in the first degree, not knowing what time it is, talking too much, laughing out of turn, murder in the second degree. . .
(Parks, 2001, pg 160-161)

Butcher's list ranges from the horrendous to the absurd, including crimes that demand serious punishment (in the audience's familiar world) with those that are commonplace activities such as "laughing out of turn" or "not wearing drawers." By giving equal weight to both "murder in the first degree" and "talking too much" Parks makes a strong statement about law and obedience. She blurs the boundaries between what is acceptable and what is not. By lumping together these actions of varying moral acceptability, the world of the viewers is "made strange," and the viewer's ability to make an unambiguous judgement is challenged.

Beauty and Grotesque in *Muck*

Creating an ambivalent space between the familiar and the strange, and maintaining a push-pull dynamic with the audience, were central to the production of *Muck*. One strategy used to keep this tension active was to ensure all of the elements of the piece were in a continual negotiation with both beauty and grotesque. *Muck* was made to exhibit a clean, bright, highly ordered aesthetic. The songs were composed to *please* the listener, written with complex yet agreeable melodies, in genres familiar to people accustomed to North American pop cultural traditions. The use of humour in the songs was also an attempt to invoke joy in the viewer. Yet beauty in *Muck* always rides the line of excess, which by its nature, pushes towards the grotesque.

Excess played an important part in the construction of the look for *Muck*. The design of the sets and costumes was a negotiation between designer Atom Cianfarani and myself. As she created each character's look, we discussed the colours and patterns of the walls of each box. The environments were created to be a whole organism, where the character would either dissolve into the wall or pop out from it with vivid colours. We wanted the aesthetic to be highly constructed, where the make-up was just a little too much, giving the performers a hyper-human, or doll-like, quality. The costumes were slightly more formal than street wear, however they didn't reference any specific context or event. The wallpaper, although structured to resemble an early to mid-twentieth-century domestic style, hid within it penises and intestines. The pictorial backdrop of the wallpaper was designed as an extension of the characters, acting more like a prosthetic device than a background. The boxes did not prescribe any one circumstance but alluded to many: museum display cases, doll packages, coffins, shipping containers, store front windows. All of these factors contributed to an aesthetic formed around multiplicity, with colourful possibilities spilling over every edge.

The text of the work, eight original songs¹⁵, is also laden with excess. My singers and musical director often commented and joked in rehearsal about how many words were stuffed into each line (I made my singers work hard on their enunciation). The lyrics range from banal statements of anxiety to mouthfuls of nonsense. For example in *Sex*, the character sings: *I'm so fucking insecure / I*

¹⁵ Sheet music of all eight songs are included in the appendix of this paper.

can't hold a good conversation for sure / when I drink a bit I guess I'm OK / But after a while it all just slips away away away away. In *Prick Prock Prickety* on the other hand the character sings: *Slick slick ticker tickety lick flick flicker flake / Prick pricker pick pock pickety tick trucker tucker take / Slot slit slot slot sluttery plip plop ploy p(ah)late / Blip bit bitter bibbety bop bottery berate.* Drawing from the flash and glitter, the beeps, rings and sound bites of the Myspace environment, I wanted the fears and doubts of each character to be manifested through multiple layers of careful fabrication.

Beauty and excess, however, always dance in relation to the grotesque. Riding that fine line between the elation of a heightened experience and too much. Within the songs, for example, I juxtaposed pleasing melodies with gritty lyrics, laden with visceral metaphors and dark desires¹⁶. Furthermore, our gesture sequences were in constant play between beauty and grotesque. Our director, Adriana Bucz, helped us to incorporate both gentle playfulness and grotesque pronouncements of pain and anxiety into the pallet of gestures we developed. These gestures transitioned slowly or in jolts, expressing rapture or joy, pain or anxiety in quick succession. The fickle nature of the gestures, and the random emotional implications that they brought up, showed them to be outside of *naturalized* experience. They were meta-natural, brushing up against recognizable emotions, yet just outside the familiar.

¹⁶ Unfortunately during the premier performance of *Muck* on May 10, 2007, our crew did not effectively account for the sound challenges of the space, and the audience had trouble clearly hearing the lyrics. In later performances these difficulties were reconciled.

Concluding Comments

The production of *Muck* was an attempt to explore the public display of identity in a contemporary context as it relates to our interdependent, and sometimes isolating, relationships with one another. My attention to proximity (the navigation of distance and closeness in both the physical and psychological sense) allowed me to engage the audience in an uncanny dance of mimesis. As Michael Davis states,

[m]imêsis involves a framing of reality that announces that what is contained within the frame is not simply real. Thus the more “real” the imitation the more fraudulent it becomes. (1999, pg 3)

Through songs, bright colours, acute lighting and stylized gestures I sought to confront the viewers with a resemblance of themselves, attempting to trouble their perception of identity and its public display.

In the final analysis I would like to reassert that performance art and theatre are in fact the same medium. Through the comparison of rehearsal practices, structural forms and approaches to narrative it is clear that together they have spanned enormous territory to produce a varied and expansive oeuvre of performance strategies. By exploring my own development as an artist it becomes clear how influential the awareness of this breadth of strategies has been on my work. These multiple approaches will continue to inform my production of a work based on audience/performance proximity. As such, I am committed to proceeding with this line of investigation in an ongoing attempt to trouble the threshold.

APPENDICES

Appendix A:
Sheet music from songs from *Muck*

MUCK

Lyrics and Melody by Maya Sues
Arranged by James Coomber

Muck yuck stick it up I lost all my trains that car-go my
thoughts I found them all sca-tered in a va-cant lot and had
to de-fend my in-e-le-gant spot Shut up tough gut
Keep it all wrapped in a tight-ly bound knot Hide it be-neath an in-
cre-di-ble rot un-be-com-ing-ly caught on the pot Oooooo
oooo -ooo -ooooo my stock-ings are caught on a nail Oooo -ooooo -ooo
-oooo and li-tle tears come ru-nning I'm pissed off and pissed on the stench won't come
out and my fin-gers are raw from the plumbing Thick sick up chuck I stained
my new dress when I slipped in the muck A dress that im-press-es now
on-ly by luck so fa-shion can tread on my frock Tick tock tick tock A

Muck pp 2

2

Muck

li-ttle sli-ther -ing se-cret to take and hide deep be-neath in my piece of the cake e-
ven-tua-ly lick off a fine chi-na plate I'm the em-press of re-fuse I'm the queen of the
pile I'll have to stand high on your corp-ses yes ba-ro-ness mil-dew ma-de-moi-selle
mold I swa-llow the bile no re- cour- ses. If you think I am dirty, you smell me and wince
If you turn your head to the right I can't help if your cleanly disposition is shocked, that I'm scatologically erudite Kick shit
ou-tta luck that is my mo-tto for Mon-day Tues-day is bet-ter but
not by that much a li-ttle more fla-vour than Sun-day. Oo-zing, squee-zing, spilling
o- ver, tea-sing, plea-sing, just look what I'm brea-thing. Wheezing wheezing, no ho-ney or
clovers, cleaving cleaving, the dream must be o- ver Ooooo -oooo -ooo -ooooo
my sto-ckings are caught on a nail Oooo -oooo -ooo -ooooo and li-ttle
tears come ru-ning I'm pissed off and pissed on the stench won't come out and my knees are knocked raw unbecoming

Sleep, dream, nightmare

The musical score is written in a single system with ten staves. The key signature is one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 3/4. The melody is written on a treble clef. The lyrics are printed below the notes, with some words hyphenated across lines. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and bar lines.

Lul-la- by, say good- night, close your eyes on the
day-light. Feel your skin, thick or thin, float a- way on ----- the
air. It's all changed, re- a- rranged, things are not what they
seem. Here or there, a- ny- where, you'll a- ppear in your---
dreams. Sleep dream night- mare, sail a- way, on you
drift, sleep dream night- mare, please Sand- man make it
swift. Once I found my-self crowned as the queen of am-
ne- sia, laughing loud to a crowd who are ca- lling my---
name. Then it turned like a switch, first a friend- ly all
knowing, but then quick with a click, I was sha- ckled and----

Sleep Dream Nightmare pp 2

2

Sleep, Dream, Nightmare

chained. Sleep dream night- mare sail a- way, on you
drift, sleep dream night- mare, please Sand- man make it
swift. Lul- la- by, say good- night, close your eyes to your
trou- bles, rise and find that your mind has gi- ven life to your---
fears. All your past now re- cast back a- gain new and
vi- cious, psychic tracks in the grass closing fast on your---
heels. Lul- la- by, say good- night, wish the mor- ning would
find me, wa- king state comes to late, the night has ta- ken its---
toll.

Five Ten Fifteen Twenty

Five ten fif-teen twen— ty, a bushel and a peck of plen-ty but my bucket is al- most
emp- ty so my master and my keeper said to fetch a full one back. I am a sore one
migh- ty in my fresh-ly laun-dered nigh-ty but my spot and my lot just might be mis-guided and mis-cited and a
little more than slightly off track. My mama was wrong, oh stone dead wrong, thought I was fluff-ty and ph-cky and
white but her back was turned and I quick-ly learned, to sneak out each and e- ver- ty night.
I am a pound of cook- ies like a bribe for your dealer or book- ie but I crumble on whoev- er
took me fall a- way to the floor and hide be- tween ev- rey crack. Yes I in- fest your ev- rey
ar- ter- y clogging you with ev- rey part of me the more you take the more you start to be
moving ever quicker to- wards a heart a- tack. My doctor was wrong, oh stone dead wrong, she said that I would be
out like a lamp, but her perscription filled, I sold all the pills, and laughed at the lasting muscle cramps.

Prick Pricker Pick Pock Pickety pp 1

Prick Pricker Pick Pock Pickety

Drip drup dri-pper-y dra-per-y Clip cluck cli-pper-y cak-er-y

Slip suck sli-pper-y slap-e-ty Flip fluck fli-pper-y fla-pper-y My legs are long my legs are so long Too long for my bo-dy im-pecca-bly long My sto-mach is tight yes much much too tight too tight for re-lax-ing re-lax-ing is trite. My bo-dy is dough my bo-dy just dough pay dough for my body and I'll give you a show. Snow snow snow down on me show show go down on me blow blow the dust from my eyes slow slow slow-ly I'm go go-ing bli- -nd go go-ing blind. My fin-gers are red a bright grea-sy red Too red for a roo-ster just right for the dead. My arm-pits are warm far far far too warm. My glands are on fi-re lick flames down my arm. My bo-dy is cake In ve-tro it baked Sticky finger licke-ty slick slurp slu-ter cake

Prick Picker Pick Pock Pickety pp 2

2

Prick Pricker Pick Pock Pickety



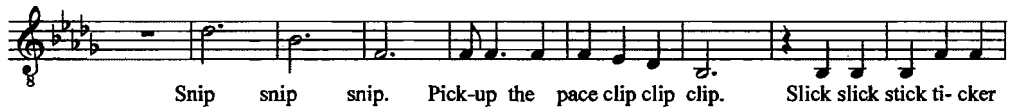
Snow snow snow down on me show show go down on me blow blow the



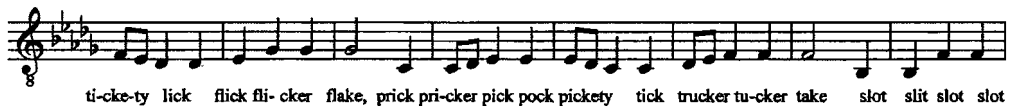
dust from my eyes, slow slow slow-ly I'm ea-ger to plea- -se



ea-ger to please. Slip slip slip. Is this the end of my trip



Snip snip snip. Pick-up the pace clip clip clip. Slick slick stick ti-cker



ti-cke-ty lick flick fli-cker flake, prick pri-cker pick pock pickety tick trucker tu-cker take slot slit slot slot



sluttery plip plo ploy p(ah) late Blip bit bi-tter bibbe-ty bop botter-y be- late Snow



snow snow down on me show show go down on me blow blow the



dust from my thighs, shaggy pups and bu-ttercups my buttocks and my flutter ups just go a-head and



pucker up I'm Fine. Fi- - -ne No rea-lly I don't mind.

Pirates Please Lick Your Plates pp 1

Pirates please lick your plates


The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. The melody is simple and repetitive, consisting of eighth and quarter notes. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The lyrics are as follows:

Last night I dreamt I was a tall tall ship with the sky at my mast and the sea at my
hip, my decks were scrubbed clean e- ver-y day by wa- xen men who worked for their pay
Pi- rate pi-rates please lick your plates clean, pi- rates pi-rates make use of my dream Soon I'll wake
up won't know where I have been It was hard on my hull, ri- ding those waves but proud and sharp I
spent all my days. They pi- laged and blu-dgeoned and bru- ta- lly raped, sli- tting throats in black
boots and red capes. Vi- cious yes they were make no mis- take. Mu- scles slick like the
cal- mest wave Un- du- la- ting bay by bay. Ta- king gold for their boo- ties and
hi- dden troves to their ship, yes to me, these pi-rates be- trothed. I ca- ried these brutes making
mis- chief in droves. And in the ga- lly the in- nards of li- zards and grape cured gi- zaards slipped
down the ha- tches of sai- lers and ba- tches and wan- ton en- zymes turned pro- tein to sea crimes and

Pirates Please Lick Your Plates pp 2

2


Pirates please lick your plates




ga- stric a- cids left my sai-lor men ran-cid. Take my heart, in this bo- dy it baked, soak




up what is left on your plate. Last night I dreamt I was a tall tall ship, with the sky at my



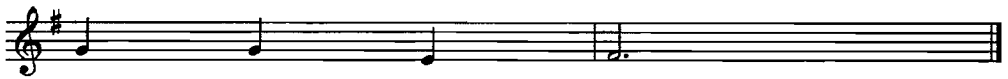
mast and the sea at my hip Pi- rates pi- rates please lick your plates clean soon I'll wake up won't know



where I have been Don't laugh if I tell you I woke with a start to dis- co- ver that pi- rates had



cut out my heart. And when my alarm rang at a quar-ter to eight with a rip in my night-gown I



al- most was late.

I Knead You pp 1

I Knead You

I knead you Like you can't e-ven know I knead you
your bo-dy my dough I knead you so you'll fit to a
shape where there's nothing more to con-tem-plate Me I'm no-thing spe-cial
But you you have po-ten-tial With a li-ttle mol-ding squee-zing
you could be a bo-dy so plea-sing. And with my ba-kers hands wor-king on your bones
in your per-fec-tion all of my sins I a-tone I knead you I want you I
form you I flaut you I call out for the feel of your ma-llea-ble skin I
tease you I hold you I stretch you I fold you and look for a new shape to
leave you in Your bo-dy could be my bread the nour-ish-ment that I need When I
lo-ving-ly shape you and bake you well it's my appetite that you feed I knead you I hold you ca-

I Knead You pp 2

2

I Knead You

ress you and mold you you could be the one of my dreams I tempt you I
I taunt you I hail you I haunt you cause your body is more than it seems But
what if I can't have you What if your dough won't rise what if I'm left to my-self all a-lone
what if there's no compro-mi- ses I'll crush you and burn you slice you and
spurn you You can't rise too far from my vice I'll fla-tten and roll you
Cut you con-trol you Cup-cake it's not a good price So please don't be
trou-ble or you'll toil til your ru-bble I pro-mise I'll cut you a slice Me, I'm no-thing
spe-cial but you you have po-ten-tial With a li-ttle mol-ding squee-zing you could be a
bo- dy so plea-sing And with these ba-kers hands wor-king on your bones in your per-
fec-tion all of my sins I a- tone All of my sins I a- tone.

Sex pp 1

SEX

I don't know where to touch my-self when I touch my-self I'll feel it right here When I
touch my-self I might rnan with dis-pair, No, I can't de-cdie there's too much pressure, I can't what if I dis-a-
-pear Va-nish in-to the thin-nest of air POOF SEX Ohhhhh yeah Sex Ohhh no no no
SEX Ohhh yesssss SEX please please please please do Mon-day caught me off guard a-gain with its
swaggered walk and that fine rear end. Tues-day is still my best-est friend and hasn't said yes or no
Wednesday again had its tongue in my ear Thursday walks til its vi-sion is clear and when we drink booze to-
-ge-ther we sink as if cement shoes are tethered to our an-kles Sillick. Muud. Can't take my eyes off you.
Priick. Thuuud. Up once and over two. Siick. Buud. I'm in for black or blue. Thick. Cuud. Just like I like to do.
Friday saturday and sunday are calling. Touch me touch me my days unenthralling, with nights too short for cat fights,
Scratch and scrape scuffle and bite. SEX Ohhhhh yeah SEX Ohhh no no no SEX

Sex pp 2

2 Sex

Ohhh yes. Sex please please please please do. Ohhhhhh, I don't know why Noooo, I'm far to stly,

crap, I think I'm done Shit i guess I can try a - gain. I'm really fucking insecure, I

can't hold a good conversation for sure, when I drink a bit, I guess I'm O.K, but af-ter a while it just all slips a-way a-

way a-way a-way a-way Phalluses, Phalluses, tossed in my salluses, dressed in my evening gowns, scraping my calluses.

Palaces, Palaces, draped with my prowesses, coveting evening gowns covered in malice... If in-ter-net porn'n could

keep me til morning, then saturday's phalluses would help me be born again, SEX Ohhh yeah. SEX Ohhhhh no no no

No. I said no. SEX Ohhhhh yessss. SEX please please please please do.

Detailed description: The image shows a musical score for a song titled 'Sex'. It consists of seven staves of music, each with a single melodic line in treble clef. The key signature has two flats (Bb and Eb). The music is characterized by frequent triplet markings (indicated by a '3' above a bracket) and a steady, rhythmic pulse. The lyrics are written below the notes, with some words like 'SEX' in all caps. The lyrics are: 'Ohhh yes. Sex please please please please do. Ohhhhhh, I don't know why Noooo, I'm far to stly, crap, I think I'm done Shit i guess I can try a - gain. I'm really fucking insecure, I can't hold a good conversation for sure, when I drink a bit, I guess I'm O.K, but af-ter a while it just all slips a-way a-way a-way a-way a-way Phalluses, Phalluses, tossed in my salluses, dressed in my evening gowns, scraping my calluses. Palaces, Palaces, draped with my prowesses, coveting evening gowns covered in malice... If in-ter-net porn'n could keep me til morning, then saturday's phalluses would help me be born again, SEX Ohhh yeah. SEX Ohhhhh no no no No. I said no. SEX Ohhhhh yessss. SEX please please please please do.'

Appendix B: DVD

This DVD contains two one-minute video edits of the works *Helmet Piece* and of Maya Suess' graduate project *Muck*.

It is NTSC formatted and can be played in any computer with a Quicktime player or in a standard DVD deck with accompanying monitor.

The Muck video is 222.8 MB on disk

The Helmet Piece video is 148.2 MB on disk

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