Lady/Applicant:

On The Lazarus

by

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Declaration

This is to certify that this thesis is my own work. Reference to the work of others has been cited and indicated throughout.

Chris Girard

Abstract

This research investigates the 'performativity' of the 'author function' through collaging the audio recordings of American poet Sylvia Plath. The 'author function' is a term by Michel Foucault to describe how readers attribute certain characteristics that they believe belong to the author and ascribe them to the writing. 'Performativity' is a term used by Judith Butler to describe a set of actions that ascribe and predetermine a set of attributes to a subject through his or her gender, age, timeframe, nationality and race. The 'performativity' of the 'author function' appropriates these characteristics and attributes them to the author. How the determination of an authorial identity translates to the interaction of the practice component of the project, which includes several components of digital collage, is through attributions that readers make in the creation of an author. The practice component of the project consists of the collage of audio and video recordings, the programming of video with Max/MSP/Jitter, 'performative' elements and collage poetry on Twitter. The audio component was collaged from two poems entitled 'Lady Lazarus' and 'The Applicant' that Plath read to the British Council in 1962 to form a new poem entitled *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus*. The video component consists of collaging recorded video clips of storefront and street signs in Camden, London, where she is associated with living and committing suicide at. A second video collage entitled *Shadows/Shadows/Tomb* takes place at a cemetery close to my residence in 2011 and documents symbols of death that reference my own authorial identity. The second set of videos run on a Max/MSP/Jitter patch that display four screens of filmed texts inscribed on tombstones that play four streaming poems through a systematic structure of boxes. The screens are displayed in each box and sourced from separate folders to display and play the film clips. The practice of collage and constraint-based poetry complicates the constitution of being the author when the collagist of Plath's poetry is a different gender than hers. This research then expands on how identity radically shifts in the text when the subject and the collagist have very different identities. The radical shift in a collage takes place within a predefined and generalized concept of the reader as determined by Stanley Fish, a prominent writer on the subject of 'reader-response criticism', who believes that one way a reader could be approached is through his or her relationship with the writing.

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Section One – Introduction

<div align="center">*Structure*</div>

This text has five primary sections. The introductory section is composed of research questions, methodology, practice production, constraints and a theoretical preface that concludes with a focus on my authorial identity in relation to the practice of collage. The theory section contains the main theoretical drive. I draw on a variety of theorists from a diverse range of subject positions and disciplines including critical theory, philosophy, literature and new media scholarship. The praxis section focuses on how the practice of collage poetry and artwork engages with visual and conceptual components of my project. The audience section considers the readers of the project through theoretical discourse and social media. The conclusion posits the importance placed on the relationship between practice and theory. Direct links to the practice components of the project are included in the appendices.

<div align="center">*Research Questions*</div>

Although there are several contextual and research questions pertinent to the practice, questions that are specifically investigated and contemplated upon include:

1. How does the shift of authorial intention and attribution through the collage process reconstitute the author via the 'author function'?

2. How does the embodiment of multiple authorial inscriptions complicate the 'performative' attributes given to a single author by the reader?

3. How does the dynamic of reading collage-based poetry on digital platforms contextualize the reader in 'reader-response criticism'?

<div align="center">*Methodology*</div>

The methodology of my project, both in practice, and in its contextual and theoretical analyses is built upon poststructural and feminist epistemology, in other words, theories and methods of knowledge. I am specifically exploring how authorial attribution and meaning wavers between authors recorded on the audio, video and images and myself through the practice of collage and constraint-based poetry. My interest in shared authorship through the practice that is centred on audio and video installations of

collaged poetry and my daily poetry production on Twitter calls for situated knowledge, and academic writing that locates the author, researcher, and practitioner and his or her own complicated subjectivity and biases within the project. The project explores my authorial identity through the positioning of my body with various methods of constraint-based writing, and how my interest in shared authorship complicates my own positioning as an author, when I collage variations of writing attributed to other sources. I believe that given my own interest in identity, as expressed through my autobiographical insertions, anecdotes, and examples of my collage poetry projects, this would be best positioned in the methodology of 'autoethnography'. 'Autoethnography', as posited by researcher Carolyn Ellis in her book published in 2004 entitled *The Ethnographic I: A Methodological Novel About Autoethnography*, is a method to avoid objective truth, as might be empirically claimed in the social sciences, by focusing on the individual experience. The focus on the individual experience helps to connect the personal, cultural, social, and political dynamics of the project as both the research and contextual parts of this project use anecdotes to better explain my relationship to the practice component. The creation and display of collage poetry explores the relational aspects of Plath's identity and mine, as a collagist to her poetry. The importance in establishing an authorial identity to Plath and myself, through methods of constraints used in the collage, is to consider how the practice of collage poetry, through my subject position, historically signifies a trajectory of contemporary poetics that come from the United States. The collage appropriates the representational form of Plath, whose distributive biography put forth by the culture industry manifests illness through Plath who is depicted as having an acknowledged state of depression and suicide, which relates back to gender roles and the historical subject position of Plath's authorship. The feminist and political implications of Plath's predetermined state of living past her death, implied as a willing rejection of her physical body in her poetry, becomes the dynamic of the collage of an authorial figure who has already acknowledged to have lived past her own body. The act of fragmenting a body of text by a collagist, a man who shares a ghostly authorial inscription of a woman, the history that the text carries within it, and challenges the notion of how constructs of a shared authorial body never quite resolve themselves.

Practice Production

The practice-production, as physically shown in a screen-based presentation or installation, is minimal and economical. The particular fragments of text in collaged audio and video clips in *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* are familiar in a literary sense. Plath is one of the most notable figures in the Confessional Poetry movement during the middle of the twentieth century whose writing suggests attributes to her name due to her depression and subsequent suicide. The constraints focus on the audio recorded within two poetry readings by Plath from 1962 and the proximity of the filmed texts to Plath's former townhouse. Two screens are used to allow the viewer to focus on the context and content of the audio and video poems. Both the audio and video installation loop in short intervals, less than six minutes each. The clips of the video poem begin to re-appear after three minutes. The video portions are projected in order to give the video a billboard-like quality and play with attributions of power that the author holds. The audio, which plays on another screen, follows a series of white text over a black backdrop to emphasize on the variability and density of meaning by presenting it in a simple and uncomplicated form. The audio, which is heard on headphones, allows for the options of hearing the collaged recording of Plath's poetry reading or the ambience of Camden, London.

Another component of the project includes an appropriated image of a plaque of Irish poet William Butler Yeats' name mounted to the townhouse that Plath committed suicide in. It was also the former home of Yeats. The photographs of the altered plaque of Yeats mark an authorial signifier and reference to place by linking the authorial presence through the play of transforming the plaque that was affixed to the townhouse Plath lived and committed suicide in. The writing on the plaque initially read as, 'William Butler YEATS / 1865-1939 / Irish poet / and dramatist / lived here' before it was changed from a mark of a historical moment to an instruction through Photoshop. The writing on the plaque now reads, 'EAT, / and / live here'. The alteration on Photoshop, like the collage process, enables the present moment to destabilize the authorial inscription through its process. While Plath is more notable with her relationship to the townhouse, Yeats, who lived in the same townhouse as a young boy from 1867 to 1872, was the figure who was historicized and attached to the townhouse by the London City Council, the local council who commissioned the plaques at the time. The structure of the project emphasizes on the collage process, rather than in its appearance. The method of constraints attributes my

own authorial intention into the process of collaging the audio and video recordings by using all the words in a body of writing or filmed words within the proximity of one location. A second video collage entitled *Shadow/Shadows/Tomb* is composed of texts inscribed on tombstones at the cemetery closest to where I live and encoded on Max/MSP/Jitter. The program plays a streaming poem that is grammatically arranged through a systematic structure of four boxes that constantly loop.

While I made audio and film collages similar to filmmaker Hollis Frampton and writer William S. Burroughs, I further used methods of constraint-based writing to unfold and highlight my established relationship to the collage of other prior authors. The audio and video collages of *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* are marked by constraints, focused on the primacy of Plath's writing and death, help to reveal the spectral embodiment of Plath, and also myself. The creation of a collage poem by using all of the individually sliced words spoken in two readings of poems, and filming within a proximate radius of where Plath lived, suggests the precursor that Plath is destabilized into an omnipresent recasting. Furthermore, it intertwines a spectral presence in the collaged voice-over, and enacts an authorial construction of both Plath and myself. Like the original poetry about the disturbance of Plath's physical body, the authorial construction of Plath that follows her poetry is prescribed within constraints focused on time, arrangement and place. The confessional poetry movement half a century ago correlates with theoretical writings that mark a shift from a structuralist to poststructuralist ethos and propels the reader to attribute an unstable identity to the confessional poet through the text. With subsequent poetry movements like L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E that challenged the materiality of the authorial signifier and emphasized that intention should be placed on the instability and constantly changing state of poetry, the interaction with the screen in new media poetics complicates the attribution of a single, fluid author by the reader. The collage process becomes symbolic of the original work's history and its process through its constraints. Both he audio and film collage poetry show how meaning proliferates through the 'author function' by ascribing historical moments to a multitude of representational constructs.

Constraint

The constraints involved in the audio, video and new media components of *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* and *Shadows/Shadows/Tomb* include the use of all the words from the audio and video collages taken from audio and film. The constraints hint at an obsessive nature with following rules based on proximity, structure and focus. The explicit cuts of text seen and heard throughout the duration of the installation reveal the process of collage making and show how the 'author' shifts and sways between Plath and the collagist who appropriates recordings of her poetry readings and the proximity of where she lived. The processes that constitute the constraint are unapparent throughout the installation because the constraints are based on the words used or their physical proximity. While the strict constraint-based project is less overt than other constraint-based literary movements such as 'oulipo', the adherence of a rule-based constraints like with 'oulipo' that underlines the necessity of rules in order for the reader to determine other interesting and unexpected variables in poetry. A notable example of 'oulipo' includes words that are composed of certain vowels in a poem, like 'a', for example. The constraint of creating a 'lexical anagram', which is a self-invented term, was used in the process of collaging both the audio and video poems in the project. If an anagram is the rearrangement of letters from a given word or phrase to another, then a 'lexical anagram' is the rearrangement of a lexicon from one given body of text to another. All of the words from the voice-over of Plath reading 'Lady Lazarus' and 'The Applicant' are used for the audio collage. Likewise, the proximity of all readable words recorded within a five-block perimeter of 23 Fitzroy Road involves the video collage. The proximate documentation of public signs that are filtered through the action of finding and filming nouns and verbs, for example, signifies a bodily or spectral presence that destabilizes the blue plaque that tags the townhouse to a specifically prior historical moment.

The act of constructing the project with constraints enhances the conceptual engagement with the project. The conceptual engagement includes considering a system of constraints that revolve around Plath's authorial positioning. The constraints suggest an obsession with the author, as much as with the constraint process itself, by closely following the author to her townhouse and using every spoken word from the two audio recordings of her poetry to create a hybrid poem. The project obsessively involves the adherence of rules, systems and structure that was directed in the construction of the

project. The process of collaging audio and video poems initially attempted to encompass one authorial presence to another by using every word of Plath's two poems to form the resulting collage for the audio and by documenting signs within the constraint of a five-block perimeter of where she lived for the video. Since I considered my own authorial presence in the acts of collage and filming, the results of the project suggest that a fluid authorial body would be present. The implications of the project suggest the 'parasitic' relationship I had to Plath, as observed in an essay published in 1977 by J. Hillis Miller entitled 'The Critic as Host'. Following her physical proximity, last steps in London, and the collage of the audio and film signifies the obsession of an author. Plath's spectral presence that writes and recites 'Lady Lazarus' and 'The Applicant' from her book posthumously published in 1965 entitled *Ariel* later shows the spectral presence of myself who collages the audio and video. Plath, who embodies a spectral presence intertwined with other authorial presences, as referenced by Jacques Derrida from his book published in 1994 entitled *Spectres of Marx*, becomes as audible and visible as the past.

It is established that many early avant-garde artists have used methods of literary collage, physically cutting up words, to subvert hierarchical power structures of grand narratives from newspapers, magazines and other forms of mass media. Some of the earliest and most notable examples of collage come from cut-ups made by Dadaists like Romanian-born French poet Tristan Tzara, who famously instructed how to cut out words from newspapers and shake them in a bag to create poetry in 'To Make a Dadaist Poem' in 1920. Collage may be one of many subversive acts in *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* as the bombardment of mass media, storefront and instructional signs an is uncommon sight to witness when the connection of collage to place and my own hand at arranging words take precedence. The reader reads, misreads, half-reads and ignores signs instantaneously while recordings simultaneously fade in, fade out, overlap, intertwine and converse with each other. My intentional placement and ordering of signs mark its subversive act from the method of appropriation. The collage sequentially orders language through constraint-based methods of filming with fragments of words that create a spectral inscription of authorial figures. The practice of constraint-based filmmaking investigates how the construction of a poem through multiple authorial sources from collage could reflect the reader's construction of an authorial identity through the deconstruction of the poetry.

23 Fitzroy

skips of detail worn
by a hill over the
sun

cycling to fire let
the private rise

close fire

let a dead ham
waste on an iron
row

sweet salt

fragile at the centre
star

chocolates in
suspension

grit hill both gas
and safety now
space down hill

a quick close feat

ten watches are
bound to a slow
radius

all hours interior
when in war

closed for get it

ton of paper

sweet clinic do
permit entry

toy to understand
son

one man drinks off
work

rubbish at art
studios

new grime

slow to rise

look out of service

walk out the zoo

let wood dump here

weight of the ammo

clear grove in to
arsenal

a gorilla fires back

dead beds house a
ductile bell

let the old cat in

walk to cycle

salt in magnificent
humps shall clear a
footpath

cameras rose

cunt and or ball

a slow vine to
garden

give way at a fine
fair

lane in pottery

space nor much
heart

more anger ate the
square crow

sold man on a low
ass

sing for food love
and sharp values

on & on in on

Lady Applicant: The Lazarus

The crowd will be
smiling on me
ladies my hands are
full and I am only
what I see
to you stiff in poultice
it's the image
of god in linen
scars unwrap
my bone the paperweight
of soap
breath is an accident
living in the grave
my home
it's there
a hair in false teeth
shut your air
then something's
missing there is
nothing here to show
not a place or the word
headaches
or a person
cake with filling like
gold we sew a bright
enemy of bone

Marry me
marry my hand
your wedding its breasts
brace for your
miracle
so flesh the ring can
open as to
fill the black they call
to me my heart
of gold is hearing
my shout same crutch
thirty stitches to hook
the silver skin
and face a walking
eye but soon the blood
they'll strip of you
is dying in it
salt this crunching foot
there she'll be
your hand
a pure hand naked
as a miracle
stark as naked
you underestimate my
clothes you eat
through roof and foot
willing to vanish
a second suit

Herr Lucifer
the ash of proof
is everywhere
you roll it
with fire a set
of eyes will empty
your time that
melts the rubber
flesh so valuable
and fit you rise to your
decade wear it
to die my lampshade
will face
the filaments and bombs
bury the start
nine identical ends
annihilate every
enemy that feels
shatterproof
but soon everything
is ash featureless
and broad like
teeth so waterproof
you are crying
to dissolve
it the eye from
sorrow our cave
will empty
it it it it it

Herr gentlemen
marry the Nazi
worms we poke a hell
of gold you stir it
in a new year
each day I number
them one ten
and fifty this first
day was exceptionally
red beware of a
comeback charge
the out back bring me my
nose it is not to concern
the eye so tell me
an excuse I say
nope come manage
the large brute all
three have big knees that
touch an opus of
glass how it shoves out
the cell to give me
real pearls
it's the same
fine art I am the same
sticky Jew a woman
to marry you
doktor it's a
boy can you believe
it oh no

Herr great baby
teacups so amused
and against
the peel do I terrify
or do I marry
it a same will I have
here for what
is there is nothing
else a closet for your
resort you may
guess it and call it like
a ticket or
an easy thumb and tease
me you bad cat I can
charge at first
notice now
beware there it
goes a guaranteed look
like rubber
you could cook
how I burn the stock
the hair was
off last time we charge it
a piece of trash
and shriek for twenty
years you stop
again eyeing the hole
in my paper
these times stay
rocked I am
off to marry a seashell
and pick at it

Herr theatrical sweetie
I do it like a right call
at the wrong
charge and I am not
five or ten million
men you have
my skin and I have
no crotch
come put it out
be it and do it well
a head I have
do enough to think
about as I sort
it and do a woman
that knocks you
out and what
I sort is really a shut
napkin here
it happened I talk
easy or can
I talk and talk away
a think or thing
do a done
doll feels the well
in whatever I make
I've had enough
to turn it and it works
the empty pits
are nevertheless ash
I meant it's very
sour I do it I do and do
it you ate my last
bit of peanut
a a a a a a a a a

bring me my
nose it is not to concern
the eye so tell me
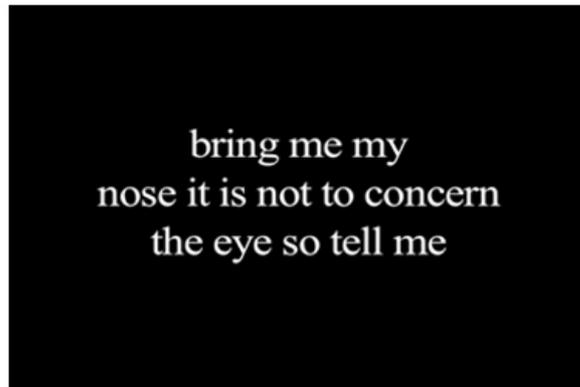
Figure 1. Above: Chris Girard, Text and Video of Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus, 2010
Figure 2. Middle: Chris Girard, Audio Poem of Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus, 2010
Figure 3. Below: Chris Girard, Audio Poem Slices and Audio Screen Caption, 2010
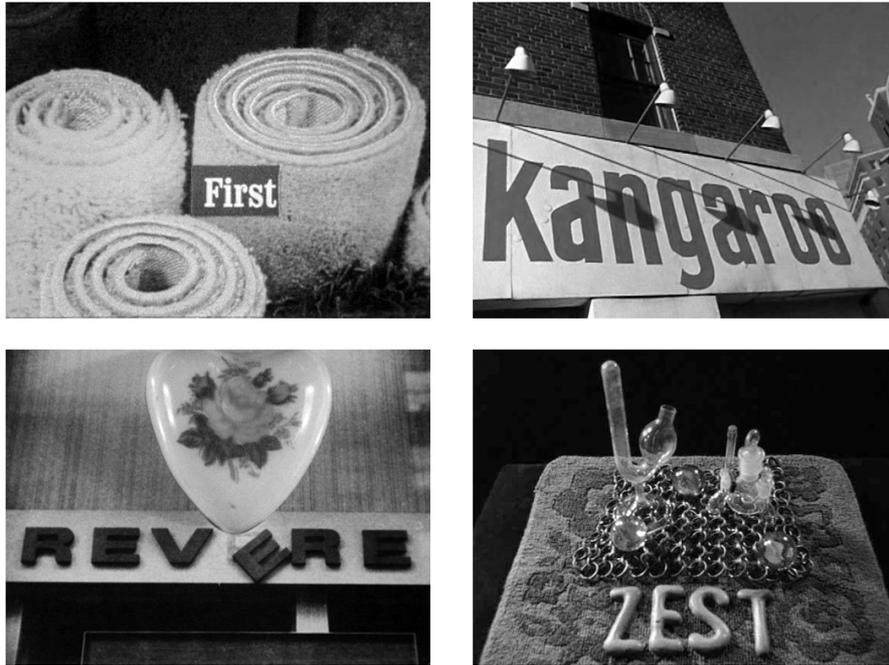
Figure 4. Above: Hollis Frampton, Selected Film Stills from Zorns Lemma, 1970
Figure 5. Below: Chris Girard, Video Detail of Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus, 2010

Theoretical Preface

The idea of appropriating Plath's audio poems into a collage comes from listening to two ex-lovers of mine, who had memorized her poems and recited them out loud in sync with her recorded readings while driving in a large sport utility vehicle north of

Portland, Oregon in the United States. I believe it was the devotion to memorizing and imitating these confessional poems of Plath, which observe an apparently tumultuous and melancholic life, that made me really interested in how authorial embodiment shifts when the pronoun of 'I' is spoken by different subjects who simultaneously say it. The personal narrative intertwines with fragments that have been reordered and remediated to reflect the continuity of my subject-position in relationship to collage. Rather than offering a coherent account of my identity, my arrival to London intersects with the arrival of Plath to London a half-century prior, who was also an American graduate student at a British university. The intersection is a form of self-inscription on the part of both the 'autoethnographer' and the cultural implications of Plath in the research, which is then the means through a reflexive method of self-inquiry, is produced. Personal narratives, which are controversial forms of 'autoethnography', 'propose to understand a self or some aspect of a life as it intersects with a cultural context, [...] and invite readers to enter the author's world and use what they learn there to reflect on, understand, and cope with their own lives.'[1] These personal narratives help illustrate facets of cultural experience that also work as academic analysis by being informed of the theoretical texts that explore a multi-layered gendered subjectivity between Plath and myself.[2] Layered accounts of my relationship to collage or to Plath within the fragment intersect at the point in which the few poignant commonalities of our biographical identities contrast with our difference. Plath's studies at Cambridge followed by her familial life and marriage in Camden reveals the cracks alongside my own biographical account of living at a converted living room in Brockley. The layered accounts of data, abstract analysis and relevant literature that constitute my studies at Goldsmiths evoke the intersection surrounding the personal narrative and research.

The construction of the video collage stems from my desire to imitate essential parts of a film produced in 1970 entitled *Zorns Lemma*, by Frampton, which reflects the filmmaker's dedication to film and systematically sequence the signs he found. Unlike other more visually stunning films of his like *Palindrome*, a colourful film composed of leftover emulsion on the ends of filmstrips completed a year earlier in 1969, I become nauseous watching this film in its totality. I was inspired to mirror the implicit act of

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[1] Ellis, 2004, 46
[2] Butler, 1991, 149-150

finding public storefront and street signs to film. The act of filming storefront signs, for Frampton, became a structuralist and systematic sequence to approaching words, mostly nouns, in alphabetical order. The approach to filming and editing words, for Frampton, forefronts my procedural constraint of filming nouns, verbs and prepositions within the parameters of New York in the late 1960s. The focus on an alphabetical sequence, a structural constraint of the words in *Zorns Lemma* leads the reader to a procedural engagement of finding meaning through the aberration of missing words, or symbols, that break from its systematic structure while my video engages the viewer with a semantic structure that connects the nouns, verbs and prepositions together like that of a poem. After the audio recordings of Plath's poetry were ripped from YouTube and the video of signs were recorded and uploaded, the poems were transcribed and collaged using a simple text pad. The poems collaged on a text pad function like a voice-over script that directs the audio and video recordings; and ultimately construct each multimedia poem.

The project comes in an indefinite amount of iterations. The first two poems that were completed have taken over one year to complete. And with so much construction involved in twelve minutes' worth of poetry, this production becomes obsessive in its attention to remaking two poems that are sourced from Plath and reveals the process of cutting and rearranging the audio recordings. Although Plath 'reads' the voice-over of the new poem through the process of collaging every word uttered and every sign recorded, the authorial identity re-enacts Plath with a ghostly body that is shared by my cuts and the collage of Plath's reading of her poems. The historical casting of the authorial body through the collage process becomes an omnipresent representation that always alludes to a ghostly relic as suggested by Derrida. Similar to the variability of my identity in the project, Frampton's authorial identity in *Zorns Lemma* is fluid and variable. Our projects reveal identity through the movements and location of the camera and the process of collaging of the film. However, this project succinctly compares Frampton with myself as a precedent for the project. Both the obsessive and imitative nature of the project diverges from a 'performative' resurrection. The haunting is reflected in the project that lives from recognition of the dismembered body. The chilling sensation that one can experience comes from the collage of Plath's voice-over that was cut, collaged and then resurrected.

Idiosyncrazy: Identity As Collage

The resulting audio and video collage in *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* emerges from within it the recognition of sounds and objects that are resurrected into their own enactment and movement. While my collage work is experimental and usually about the body and constructs of identity, the theoretical premise for my research begins with an explanation of my interests. I begin with an anecdotal lead about being forced into an outpatient program of a religious hospital as a teenager, feigning recovery to get out of being constantly monitored. This anecdote about my escape helps to situate my other writings as an author with a pathologized body and enable the writing to embody my own biographical description, the one I have written for myself. I link this memory of escape to how authors become pathologized in order to justify the anomaly of their embodiment against normative standards of authorship, for example, which was historically associated as a trait of power and dominance. The pathological assessments attributed to the author become collaged to explain a deviation of normative standards of behaviour.

My work explores poetic processes in collage poetry that reveals my process of self-reflection through informational websites. I have been writing one collage poem or disjointed thought a day on Twitter over the course of two years. Prior to using Twitter, I figuratively collaged the sensations of my body together and investigated my thought processes on Yelp. The power of the Yelp poem is carried in its expectation to deliver a substantive consumer experience of the establishment. The eleven-line poem embodies the review entitled 'Plein Air Cafe' and offers a 'soliloquy in place' of a substantive experience with the establishment of the same name. Eleven symbolizes the imperfect and yet is a symmetrical number that has a symbolic relationship with the exterior like an outsider, the spectacle of a crowd. The number eleven is derived from old English and means ten and one left or the base of one plus a second element. While 'Plein Air Cafe' is subservient to a number of lines, the poem is exposed to a wide general audience that seeks information about 'Plein Air Cafe' and becomes its intended audience. While my intended audience is ephemeral, most of my online audience I consider being American, as Americans appear to be more interested in my poetry of dispersal on websites. This appears to be expected since the practice of collage poetry and its dispersal is primarily rooted in America. The process of connecting of my sensations together through collage poetry creates a conflicting structure of sentiment for its ephemeral online audience.

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Figure 6. Above: Chris Girard, Yelp Review of Plein Air Cafe, 2008
Figure 7. Below: Chris Girard, Twitter Feed from February 15th to 20th, 2012

The thoughts and expectations wildly conflict and this confliction resounds in how the poem evokes a thought or emotion set in false pretences of the website. The best way to describe the conflict between the poem and its platform is through contradicting sensations that arise, like romantic uneasiness and fearful excitement. The contradicting and intertwining feelings clash from the conceptual components of poetry overlapping. Sensations that can physically manifest themselves in the heart, head and stomach collide with fragmented bits of each other and leave the aftershock of a chill. The physicality of feeling compensates an embodied connection that I am reconstructing, reconstituting and rebuilding an identity to embody my own person. My poems are a little romantic, a little confused and often very manic. There is an alchemic combination of taking emotional states like lust and melancholy and holding the two sentiments together to create tension, a wide gap, between words that embody them. The alchemic combination of sentiments like 'a little romantic, a little confused' references the poet Sappho's notion of having a 'bittersweet' sensibility in relationship to Eros, the Greek god of love. Mary Barnard, who translated Sappho's poetry in 1958, emphasized on the juxtaposition of vivid sentiments alluding to Eros in the way that the stanzas of her translation are compact:

> With his venom
>
> Irresistible
> and bittersweet
>
> that loosener
> of limbs, Love
>
> reptile-like
> strikes me down

Sappho, ca. 600 B.C., translated by Mary Barnard, 1958

Sappho believed that Eros was a contradicting and paradoxical experience of pleasure and pain. Sappho, who was purportedly lesbian and born in the island of Lesbos, Greece circa 630 B.C., reflects on a contradicting feeling of emotions in her poetry that applies a combination, a perception of an alchemic mixture of emotions that brings together a separation, a split of the mind in two. The split appears to be a third in-between state, that initially peculiar, queer-like, taste of the sweet and bitter. These contradictory and paradoxical components apply the ideas of split emotions in a queer literary tradition.

There may be several relationships that exist between sweet and bitter. The sweetness of queer desire suggests bitterness, the bitterness apparently embedded in the sweet and the desire, which could be forbidden, lust. Lust and melancholy hold a familiar resonance, often defined and categorized with a variety of traits. My body lacks a single definition as if it constantly slips into other identities, creating fluidity to compensate for one body.

Mental health professionals, like the psychologists, psychiatrists and therapists I have seen, help facilitate the act of weaving clinical assessments of mental disorders together. The act of being labelled is like the act of collaging an identity that embodies a persona in a pathologized state in order to escape it. These clinical assessments of mental disorders are often general characteristics of psychoses, like the encyclopaedia or clinical definitions that characterize someone, like myself, who is labelled as having ADHD and Bipolar Personality Disorder. The solution to the deviation of normalcy and the need to be corrected was a psychological intervention. It felt as though being trapped in a box and then told to escape it was to be punching through the walls that entrap me. The act of being given an anomalous or sickly body is to be in a constant state of explanation and recovery from it. The body is left static and the process of constantly moving is to escape the powerful sucking vortex of being:

> Turn fan turn
> clockwise on a world
> of bandages
> to close the matter
> though that boy pleads no contest
> pleas for melody

Chris Girard, excerpt from Idiosyncrazy, 2008

The way I resonate with poetry is like witnessing text become a signifier for a spectral body. The combination of words delivers a modifier that weaves a body with limbs. The turning fan in the poem I wrote entitled 'Idiosyncrazy', for example, embodies a moving presence that connects the fragments of time that interweave like stiches closing the wounds. The piecing together the fragments of text consummates the body and makes an identity like a jigsaw puzzle. In many ways, the inability to fit into a more normative and socially accepted role, a kid who likes the sports appropriate to his age, gender and nationality, led me to collaging identities when pathologized roles were later

given to me. My father is a fifth degree black belt in karate, enjoys sports, and values power through making money and holding high management positions. The first memory I recall feeling entirely different from him was my disinterest in sports when I was four years old. The moment was recorded on a home video during Christmas Day in 1987. The living room was inundated with gifts, which included a basketball stand, basketball, baseballs, baseball bat and a T-Ball stand, which my father desperately hoped would spark an interest in me since these were activities he primarily enjoyed. The video ends with me cutting flowers from a pattern sheet for sewing, a gift for my mother. I believe the cutting was a symbolic process of compromising the body that was given to me. This is why I hold an affinity to Plath, whose identity, like my own, eludes even her.

The encouragement of gender roles is more of a struggle for the parent than for the child. The biggest loss for my father, besides the amount of money he purchased on toys, was to have a son who was pathetic at sports. As a child, it felt ordinary to be pathetic. My identity was unlimited. Karate, playing with sports equipment and other equivocally male roles were less interesting than masquerading as the dolls I would speak for. I embodied several personas over the next several years. My younger sister, who was an infant in the Christmas video, received as many dolls and stuffed animals as I did sports equipment. I would create identities and personalities with these dolls and stuffed animals by enacting voices in them, while holding them. When I was old enough to fully distinguish gender roles, I gave roles that I attributed masculinity to teddy bears, roles I attributed femininity to rag dolls and androgyny to rabbits. Each of the stuffed animals held personalities within a conversational role to my sister who interacted with them.

While gender was elusive when I was younger, its importance developed when I developed an interest in sexuality. My interest in embodying several identities gravitated from using dolls to creating my own comic book characters. The identities of the comic book characters became more sexualized and centred on what I believed the concept of being female or male was. I became so engrossed with creating over eighty masculine and feminine humanoid characters, each with a first and last name. I drew a master chart of names and faces in order for me to track the names, physical features and traits of the characters. The benefit of drawing characters was to combine fragments of characteristics and attribute them to myself. The drawings became influenced by gender stereotypes in my early teens as characters had exaggerated genitalia, breasts, baggy or tight clothing.

A parallel exists between comic characters, personality defects and the signified text in collage. My own identity became a part of several identities formed through the enactment of personalities given to dolls and comic book characters. The varying traits ascribed to characters characterized my pathological assessment at 11 years old as the diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder described an ability to draw on a myriad of personalities. As I grew older, the diagnosis evolved while my condition remained the same. Once I stopped being diagnosed with ADHD, I was diagnosed with Bipolar Personality Disorder. The clinical assessments became a chart of suggestions to collage fragmentary parts and conclude with a multifaceted interpretation of who I am. The plea for a single body is to lack an escape. When I was admitted into an inpatient program at 18, I feigned recovery in order to get out as soon as possible. I calmly told the doctor that being locked inside of a monitored facility cured me. He let me go. Recovery enabled me to escape the dominant power. I was cured, which meant I was whole, which meant I was powerless. The rehabilitation from Bipolar Personality Disorder suggests the pathological assessments justify the need to escape. It would be a paradox for wholeness to exist without transgression. Somehow my identity is constructed as always being in process, the assessments I have to escape from, in order to escape the hospital.

The collage of pathological assessments explores identity that is embedded within its surroundings. In Foucault's first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, published in 1976, he suggests that the repression of sexuality encompasses the embodiment, the identity of a subject who is conditioned by a need for stability within the laws of the state that he or she is governed by. The fragments become a way to explain and somehow contain identity through the assessments. The collage process fragments the assessments that make it difficult to stand against representation and evokes a thought or memory that is believed to be true but set in false pretences. The stabilizing force moves in a fluid field of representation that is always in process. It constitutes layers of identity passed to and from these assessments as the source of the collage material, like text, moves away from the source of collage. How the play of identity works itself into poetics is hard to clearly articulate yet I believe there is a parallel between the formation of identity and the collage of assessments. These signifiers allow me to embrace an identity as a dissident within these labels because, like Plath, I am a contortionist in disguise.

Theoretical Overview

In order to reconcile the theoretical components with its creative practice, the critical analyses challenges more conventional forms of academic scholarship through the collage of critical theory quotes. The collage offers possibilities for 'performative' writing by the blending of writing and citations together. Each section of theoretical writing can relate to one concept pertinent to the research in which the primary source material is used. This source material is sequentially processed and the quotes are then collaged with other academic writing. As a result, the method of generating theoretical writing will emulate the method of generating the practice-based work. Specifically, the academic text reveals the collage technique as a critical writing strategy, while the footnotes suggest that the technique is rule-based. The 'performative' role of embedding citations and footnotes in the writing offers their 'self-disclosure, and self-reflection in the composition of' the historical relic of the writing that 'take[s] much of its impetus from the cross-disciplinary "break" into poststructuralism.'[3] The relationship of 'performativity' to the process of academic writing in context to a collage of citations and quotes 'describes a fundamentally material practice.'[4] The material practice of 'performative' writing emphasizes on the mental construction of critical writing. The contribution to contemporary experimental poetic practice reflects the 'performative' play with the limitations of a referential source in the critical analyses. This form of 'performative' scholarly writing helps to 'undermine its analytic flexibility.'[5]

'Performative' writing offers a discontinuous, unpredictable yet fluid rush of the analyses; it helps enable the analyses to move with the process of collage that 'operates alongside, sometimes through, rather than above or beyond.'[6] The collage of quotes, like individual words in the audio recordings, with my own subject-position embedded within the research process is '[r]eworking the self in its enunciation.'[7] The act of shifting and positioning of the selfhood of my subject-position in the process of collaging quotes 'articulat[es] the motive, shaping relations among selves in an ongoing process […] from

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[3] Pollock, 1998, 75-76
[4] Pollock, 1998, 74
[5] Pollock, 1998, 74
[6] Pollock, 1998, 81
[7] Pollock, 1998, 87

documenting "me" to reconstituting an operative, possible "we.""[8] 'We' could be shared between the cited researcher and the subject position of myself as the collagist. The collagist exercises a seamless structuring of quotes to emerge a self 'from these shifting perspectives is, then, a possibility rather than a fact, a figure of relation emerging from between lines of difference.'[9] The structuring of such a collage of analytic writing is through citations, which are 'composed in and as repetition and reiteration.'[10] The analyses reveal the footprints of their citations through their quotes. The analyses through the 'movement of quotation […] stages its own citationality, re-sighting citation, displaying it in accumulation of quotations or self-quotation or quotation from beyond the borders of academic prose.'[11] The repetition of these footprints shows the writing as re-writing. This repetition of citation, which is revealed through the footnotes, 'expose[s] the fragility of identity, history, and culture constituted in rites of textual recurrence.'[12] The repetitious overuse of citations as a form of 'performative writing throws off the norms of conventional scholarship for an explicit, alliterative normativity.'[13]

The rule-based framework of the critical analyses expands on the way that the texts and their citations waver through the overemphasis of another author's body of work and the collagist through its dedication to the prior author in the analysis. The theoretical component of the project constitutes a pastiche of critical theory quotes to enact the 'performativity' of critical theorists through the 'author function' as a model of creative practice. The montage of quotes by critical theorists presents how authorship intertwines with my critical reflection on the practice of collage through the collage of quotes. The quotes about the implications of collage undermine the role of their intended authors to intertwine my own critical practice through the collage process. The quotes collaged from the theoretical work combine more conventional academic scholarship with my own referential body that emerges between the cuts and frames. Derrida, Barthes and Foucault, who are three primary analysts of poststructural authorship, are dead and unable to speak for themselves. A difference between emphasizing on the existence of a referential body and a body of text on its own, in the context of critical theory, is in the

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[8] Pollock, 1998, 87
[9] Pollock, 1998, 87
[10] Pollock, 1998, 92
[11] Pollock, 1998, 94
[12] Pollock, 1998, 92
[13] Pollock, 1998, 95

acknowledgment of its citation. Within the citation comes a translation of the collaged quotes, the spaces or the supporting statements that I breathe in-between them. The disembodied states of collage coalesce the supposed intention of the primary authorial sources to the appropriation of critical theory quotes. However, these authors are sourced as primary authors in order to preserve the sanctity of the representational institution of this dissertation from plagiarism. Rather than dissociate myself as the collagist of quotes from the primary authors, the quotes reflect how the collagist breathes from the spaces between the disembodied texts. The critical theory section, as a model of creative practice, shows how the author similarly becomes shared like the role of Plath when critical theorists appear undeterminable, fragmentary or anonymous.

The critical component of the thesis originally hoped to show how the 'author function', the term of an action that was originated by Foucault in 1970, could be abolished through the collaging of two of Plath's poems entitled 'Lady Lazarus' and 'The Applicant'. What I essentially discovered was that the abolishment of an action by the reader was impossible but what was possible was the 'performativity' of the 'author function'. While the 'author function' survives through a violent act, the constitution of an author shifts and wavers from the creator, to the reader, to a multitude of other sources through the process of hearing, listening and watching the audio and video collages. In other words, I become the construct of the author for the reader and yet my relative anonymity enables the author to shift and waver between a multitude of sources that includes Plath whose embodiment destabilizes and refuses to disappear. The examination of the 'author function' as a construct of roles contextualizes it in relationship to the investigation of Butler's work on 'performativity' in determining who and what the author constitutes. The construction of roles ascribed to the author unfolds other work by critics such as Roland Barthes and Jacques Derrida. The practice of collage emphasizes the shifting and wavering of an authorial source by the 'author function' and further reveals its process, the way the audio is cut and video is filmed in both *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* and *Shadow/Shadows/Tomb*. Since much research and writing has been undertaken on poststructural authorship and 'performativity', the practice in relationship to the research reveals the authorial body from representational constructs in the midst of many signifiers. This dependence on the primacy of the author becomes the source for an indeterminate amount of meaning through ascribing and attributing roles to him or her.

The research is based on the premise that the author is a construct of the reader and the collage process fragments and layers multiple subjects onto a shared authorial body, rather than abolish it. These subjects who come from a multitude of sources construct the author, including myself, who foregrounds my project and position as an author. The construction of the author is based on a representation from biographical narratives and hearsay that the reader might have come in contact with prior. The author might be filled in with other general or representational characteristics unattributed to the author when there are holes in the reader's construction of the authorial persona. The reader primarily becomes the source or all inherent knowledge of the author through his or her own belief of who embodies the author. The author, therefore, becomes a fictional construct of the text while the reader becomes the explicit meaning-maker of the text. The project fundamentally exists on the premise that the author's death, as the title used in an essay written in 1967 entitled 'The Death of the Author' by Barthes, is already an old and well-received idea, and the analysis hopes to clearly present how the author is constructed through the perceptions of the reader. While it may be a contradiction to cite authors who raise issues surrounding the problems surrounding the importance of the author and the act of attributing him or her, poststructural critics like Barthes, Foucault, Derrida, and Butler will be sourced as authors to remind the reader how the 'author function' and 'performativity' become implemented when certain expectations and presumptions arise from mentioning these formal names. The attributions of these formal names adhere to the formal conventions of citation and plagiarism in order to substantiate a relationship to other authors to my art practice as an author to this writing.

The research component of the project relates 'performativity' to being the author as a specific subject in the collage process. These roles that become attributed to an author are a construct of the reader. The term 'performativity' is specifically considered in relationship to how the reader enacts a constructed identity that is attributed to the author by the 'author function' in reading and viewing the audio and video collages. Plath is continuously referenced as an authorial figure in the research component of the project, as the source of her poetry, and could share the author role with other subjects that are embodied in the poetry of Plath and the collage process involved in *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus*. As a 'performative' role of Plath could be formed in her poetry, other representations of historical figures that are referenced to a similar time period that she

lived in could combine with and become interpreted as a life that was Plath's own. The subject of Plath therefore represents other subjects created by the reader. This process of reading Plath's writing, for example, fragments referential allusions to the author in the construction of an identity for Plath. The primary references to questioning the interpretive function of the author come from two essays, one essay from 1967 by Barthes entitled 'The Death of the Author' and the other essay from 1969 by Foucault entitled 'What is an Author?'. While Barthes believes that authorship hinders readership, Foucault associates the 'author function' as a function of meaning making, power and attribution. Barthes argues against the reliance of the author because limiting one's interpretation to concrete ideas ascribed by the author constrains meaning. This identity of the author becomes an unnecessary construct of the reader when referencing an author to a body of text. Barthes calls for the elimination of the authorial tag and a heightened awareness of the reader in order to widen the gap between the constitutions of an authorial body to the reader's reliance for interpretation. This whole interpretive process and attribution to the author comes from the reader. The function of the reader is to attribute meaning to a text that is filtered through the 'author function'. It is impossible for readers to solely rely on an authorial identity so a reader must allow language to proliferate meaning because interpretations could change when associating meaningful language with authorial identity. The tag of the author is always flexible but through the process of collage, the flexibility of the author becomes more overt. Readership therefore becomes a function of social practice when an interpretative attribute, fragmentation, is presented for the reader to more openly explicate. The reader more overtly ascribes meaning to the author when the construction of him or her heavily depends upon the reader. This poetic readership could be achieved through collage. The construction and reconstruction explores the 'performativity' of an author through the 'author function' as the practice of collage fragments the author by enabling the reader to connect his or her own interpretations to roles ascribed to an authorial construct.

The ghostly embodiment of Plath becomes a focal point for constructing a dialogue between the text and what is implied and filled in by the multiplicity of biographical accounts and interpretations of how she lived. The biographical accounts become further complicated through the process of breaking up and reassembling her audio. Plath, as the author of her poems 'Lady Lazarus' and 'The Applicant', relives a

historical moment as a textual ghost whose authorial attribution constantly shifts and wavers in a resulting collage. The ghost motif is contextualized within the historical moments of the body's presence and materiality explored in Derrida's book published in 1994 entitled *Spectres of Marx*. The biographical representation of Plath becomes intertwined within the historically normative roles circumscribed to women during the time period in which she lived in. Not only did it become important for the reader to justify who the author was, but also how she suffered:

> Dying
> Is an art, like everything else.
> I do it exceptionally well.
>
> I do it so it feels like hell.

Sylvia Plath, excerpt from Lady Lazarus, 1962

The process of dying in Plath's poem entitled 'Lady Lazarus' encourages the historical constructs of illness in order to justify a deviant behavioural pattern of an empowered woman writer in popular culture. Plath's association to 'dying' as 'an art' embodies a conscious aspect of equating the process of dying to self-exploration. The motivation of dying in the first person, and then revealing the act of dying to be an acquired skill by describing the action in the form of a recollection becomes a dedication to perfect it like a game. The subject position of Plath as having lived through dying becomes a fixation to become reborn to die again. In her confession of dying, the writing of 'Lady Lazarus' pursues a projection of being a martyr that is raised from the dead. Plath's dying and impending death embody a multiplicity of actions and reference the subject's death as being previously observed and enacted by the reader. The canonical author acts as a disjointed and wavering presence shared between Plath's and my writing. The audio presents a fragmented collage of recordings of her reading her poems 'Lady Lazarus' and 'The Applicant' to The British Council less than a year before her death in 1963. The fragments of audio are sliced, extracted and rearranged from individual words of her readings to produce a seamless collage of poetry. The resulting hybrid, named after the titles of these two poems, destabilizes its source from referential themes like marriage and death; and detaches those historical moments through collage. Since the accent in the voice-over of Plath remains in the resulting collage, the inflection and tone of the poetry

reading is left to sound like a disjointed relic of the original.

The process attributed to collage in poetics reveals a way that meaning could be recreated by the act of collage and how the emphasized words and accent reinterpret the poem. In order to emphasize on the shift of the author, every word from the two original poems constructs a new poem. The process of collaging audio and video clips involved a structural, constraint-based and procedural method of writing that rearranges a lexicon from one given body of text to another. In other words, a 'lexical anagram' emerges from the rearrangement of the words from the original poem that are collaged to form the new poem. The constraint of using all of the collaged audio fragments captures the closeness of Plath and the collagist to the poem through the materiality of the audio clips of her reading the poems. The collage is composed of fragmented recordings of the place where Plath resided. The splices of recordings transgress her biographical identity connected to the townhouse in which she lived and committed suicide. While the video collage helps materialize the actual locality of her home to a new historical moment, the locality of Plath's home in the video becomes closer to myself. The importance of the location is revealed by the way that the filmed signs look and the words were spelled. Plath, an American who lived in England for the last few years of her life, spoke with a feigned English accent during her readings to the British Council. The feigned accent epitomizes her selfhood related to her living in London. The association of Plath to 23 Fitzroy Road in Camden, London is constructed from instructional and public signs filmed within a five-block perimeter of the townhouse she committed suicide in. The constraint of filming at a certain distance to her former home focuses on how Plath's relatively short stay has become historicized to a constant recasting. The sequence of instructional and authoritative signs are woven into a streaming poem that serve a primary purpose of transcending a historical moment while showing the fragility of a stable author. These woven clips, inspired by Frampton's film entitled *Zorns Lemma*, reveal texts that are arranged in a semiotic sequence. The texts lose their authorial tags of law and ownership that follow their visual surroundings and shift their meaning and intention to the reader and myself. The connection to London is made apparent when a reader discovers hints in the film like 'Centre' or a reference to the London Waterway system, for example. The importance of location becomes apparent through the repeated investigation of watching the audio and listening to the videos over an iteration of time.

Figure 8. Chris Girard, Activating Shadows/Shadows/Tomb on Max/MSP/Jitter, 2011

The act of fragmenting authorial references through the collage process enables the writing to open to more alternate interpretations and new historical moments for the reader. The process of reading collage embraces a relationship between the author, text, and reader that distances an exclusive association with a single author. The reader, as contextualized by his or her relationship to writing through 'reader-response criticism' as outlined by Stanley Fish, expands on the internal tumult in the writing that is attributed Plath's state of mind to my own state of mind through collage poetry. The project first presents the reader with collaged audio recordings of Plath reading two of her poems, video recordings of her residence in Camden, London and finally a Max/MSP/Jitter patch that generates clips of inscriptions filmed on tombstones at Nunhead Cemetery, which is closest to my residence at the time. The ghostly inscription of my arrival in London that intersects with Plath's arrival in London is revealed in the proximity of the film clips of the new media collage entitled *Shadows/Shadows/Tomb*. While the collaged video clips of *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* disassociate the attributions of Plath's psychoses to the materiality of the London townhouse, the authorial body of myself associates itself to London. The new media collage implicates the reader's construction of myself with the materiality attributed to our authorial bodies together in a similar space, yet apart by time. The power associated to the suicide of Plath in 1963 transcends the antiquated roles of psychoses that are circumscribed to the materiality of London. The imperatives of the biographical intersection of Plath and I living in London weigh heavily on its reception. The authorial inscription cultivated by the reader wavers immeasurably between Plath and myself throughout the film collages and constraint of their proximity. The proximal intersection of authorial roles reimagines authorial intention through the wavering and overlapping closeness of historical moments taking place.

Barthes and Foucault

As a writer who struggles with stabilizing his own fluid identity to a determined role, I became interested in the power of authorship and how identity becomes attributed to the author through his or her writing. The subjectivity of my own biographical identity helps the writing enact and embody its association to a fluid identity. I am interested in the fluidity and fragmentation of identity and how it can constitute, and also escape a multiplicity of normative traits and attributes. I am interested in the obsession and fixation that readers have in the author; and I also find myself fetishizing the fetish of authorship. I am fascinated with how the author holds attributes of power and ownership, which transgress normative roles assigned to subjects who are supposed to be passive. Since I worked with Plath's poetry in my collages, my interest in the authorial roles of women of the past reflect their historical separation with the power assigned to men as authors, the woman must somehow escape being a woman to become an author. With this historical system, the representation of the feminine becomes associated with illness and hysterics to justify the need to transgress domestic implications and become an author. The historical feminine author cannot recover and must die crazed, manic and ill. While these roles inaccurately depict such authors as tragically ill, their construction around an embodiment of illness justifies this aberration. When an identity refuses to embody more hegemonic or normative traits, it becomes embraced by pathological assessments. The embodiment drifts into predetermined and static surfaces that constitute attributes of pathological assessments that one must embrace in order to escape.

The construct of the author alludes to the 'author function' from the reader's constitution of a shared authorship by the collage process. The theoretical components of the project situate the reader's reception of writing to the author. The author's further complicated by the collage process relates to the reader's reception of him or her as a fragmentary body. Barthes and Foucault will be presented as historical precedents that support the perception of the author as fragmented and attributed to a fluid and variable set of traits. Barthes believes that authorship is problematic for the reader, according to his criticism in his seminal essay 'The Death of the Author' from 1967, while Foucault believes that the implications of having an author is problematic. Foucault considers the author to be a function of attribution, power and meaning making in 'What is an Author?' from 1969. As Barthes and Foucault both believe the reliance on a single author is

problematic, Barthes criticizes the prestige placed on the author while Foucault explains how the single author is an inaccurate representation of what he or she says.

Foucault argues that the importance of writing is diverted to who writes what instead of the writing itself. The author plays the role of the regulator characteristic of industry in capitalist society and ascribes the established notions of property and ownership with the author to a body of text.[14] The author is a favoured individual that makes the author's individuality problematic when he or she has been accepted to a hierarchic position. The acceptance of an author convolutes the resonance of what is said or left behind as being part of his or her own work. Writing comes from many sources prior since it is presumed that the author reads many books by many other authors, too.[15] The presumption, also a construction and attribution of the author, is a projection 'of our way of handling texts: in the comparisons we make, the traits we extract as pertinent, the continuities we assign, or the exclusions we practice.'[16]

Reading is centred on a need to explain who writes what to deliver confidence to the reader. The reader is conditioned to look to the author for interpreting text and is also conditioned to require following the author because of the prestige placed onto the author as the proliferator of meaning. The omnipresence of the reader has somehow been taken for granted by the physicality of the author's presence. The author's presence subsumes a role in consumer culture as a marketing object for measuring the quality of texts. The placing of prestige onto the individual author is a fabrication created by society and this is proven by the author's name and precedence in literary discourse.[17] While some quotations and proverbs exist without an author or with a collective author, anonymity is still ascribed an authorial identity. The necessity to ascribe the quotation or proverb to an anonymous source implies historical representations of hierarchies and power that come with the state of being anonymous. The appropriation of anonymity contradicts the act of being anonymous since anonymity enacts certain sets of traits attributed to the author. The gender of the anonymous author, for example, becomes important and determines whether power that eludes an identified author is attributed to a need to escape his or her identity, which would imply different reasons. Similar to gender, the proper name implies

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[14] Foucault, 1984, 119
[15] Foucault, 1984, 102
[16] Foucault, 1984, 110
[17] Barthes, 1975, 142

a set of attributes that precedes the subject matter in the book. The discourse that attributes meaning making and authorial intention to anonymity, for example, 'was not originally a product, a thing, a kind of goods; it was essentially an act – an act placed in the bipolar field of the sacred and the profane. [...] Historically, it was a gesture fraught with risks before becoming goods caught up in a circuit of ownership.'[18]

Foucault further argues that text would proliferate if writing operates in a state that puts reading at the disposal of everyone, enabling readership to develop without passing through a necessary or constraining figure.[19] One constraining figure is the precedence of the author's name and picture on novels and books to denote the author's precedence. An all-encompassing headshot of the author's smiling or contemplative face on the front cover of a book published by Green Integer in Los Angeles, for example, becomes the focal reference point for the reader. As clichéd as the maxim of judging a book by its cover is, beneath the smiling or solemn author's head is the author's book with certain attributes and implications of him or her bestowed upon the reader.

While the author's name is equivalent to a description and indicates a sign or a finger pointed at someone, the author's name raises more concern than that of other names. The particular difficulty of the author's name is that unlike other proper names, the author's name characterizes a specific mode of existence in discourse.[20] The name refuses to pass from the interior of a discourse to the exterior individual who produced it. Instead, the author's name becomes omnipresent, marking off the edges of the page as the name reveals its manner of existence. The division of the author's name to other names establishes a relationship among the name to published texts. An author's name assures the classification of texts by grouping them together in order to define and differentiate them in contrast to the other author's texts.[21] The author's name carries an identity that is non-transferable unless the author alters his or her name so to be unrecognizable to the reader.[22] The name that is ascribed to an author who is famous for writing poetry, for example, could write a cookbook that somehow becomes justified according to how the types of food or cooking methods alludes to his or her own identity as a poet.

Authority is reconstituted by the posing of questions about an author in the space

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[18] Foucault, 1984, 112
[19] Foucault, 1984, 119
[20] Foucault, 1984, 105-106
[21] Foucault, 1984, 107
[22] Derrida, 1994, 73

of reading.[23] Writing that enacts language takes precedence over a single hegemonic author and diverts meaning to embody the multiplicity of language. Language only knows a subject, not a person, so the construct of the author behind the writing becomes the historical embodiment of his or her own writing by pre-existing it. Though the author's life and genius encompasses the textual composition, it was only in the recent past that the modern author has been simultaneously born with his or her text.[24] Texts required attribution of the author after a period of time when texts, like the bible, were accepted, put into circulation and valorised without the question about the identity of the author. The anonymous publication of these texts after the invention of the Gutenberg printing press highlight the acceptance of anonymity in regard to early publications from the fifteenth to eighteen centuries. The writers' anonymity caused no difficulties since their existence, whether real or imagined, was regarded as sufficient to their status at the time.[25] While anonymity was always frowned upon by governmental structures, specifically those that wished to reprimand and imprison writers, the criminalization of heretic writing and the increasing commodification of the author's proper name forced authorial identities to be ascribed to books. This led to the act of being anonymous as a defiant, elusive and subversive act; and made the state of anonymity embody such a role.

Discourses of literature are only accepted when endowed with an author. Questions often arise about where the writing comes from as if the answers of who really wrote it would finish the writing.[26] Historically, the empirical role of an author is synonymous with ownership and power. The concept of authorship was created when a hierarchical system of ownership for texts came into being as strict rules and strict punishments concerning the relations and rights of the author and reproduction were enacted.[27] When a text is discovered in a state of anonymity, there becomes a need for reassurance by the reader to identify the author. If the author is anonymous, it becomes a cause to find him or her as if the presence of the author will complete the text. Even if the author is known to be an assumption or guess, the assumption or the influences of an anonymous writer, for example, will validate the body of writing. The state of anonymity constructs an author as it wavers in a transitory space between where the writing is

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[23] Foucault, 1984, 103
[24] Barthes, 1975, 143-144
[25] Foucault, 1984, 109
[26] Foucault, 1984, 109
[27] Foucault, 1984, 108

inscribed and to whom it is inscribed to. Graffiti that can be read, for example, has a writer but lacks an author when he or she remains anonymous. In the video portion of *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus*, inscriptions on a public wall are anonymous and act as a tablet of written text but one that still constructs a story of how and why the writing is specifically there. In this regard, the references to the author who presumably refuses to be identified alter its potential meaning because the writer is unconcerned about the formal tag of expression and meaning behind his or her identity.[28] The act of identifying the tagger can enact the writer to become an object of appropriation, which subjects his or her punishment to being an accolade as a recognized author. Being an author, like Plath, implicates his or her subject position to play an important role as the meaning depends less on what the author wrote but who he or she is perceived to be.

Methods of comparison are often used to construct the role of the author as different classes of individuals can occupy the position of Plath's authorial body in the text. Text therefore refers to a representation of Plath since it can give a simultaneous rise to several selves and subjects.[29] The author of the respective text becomes compared to another author, constructing his or her identity based on this predecessor, even when little is known about his or her life at that very moment. The excerpts that I have acquired from Barthes' 1967 essay entitled 'The Death of the Author' establish that the reader's interpretation of the author is essential in acquiring knowledge and understanding in a body of work. The reader is the source of any and all literary connections because the reader holds gathered information from all paths of a single body of text. The reader's connection to the authorial identity of Plath or myself in the film portion of the collages materializes throughout the poem from his or her familiarity of street signs, ambient sounds and utterances. These artefacts point to previously observed historical moments and memory. Barthes believes that the reader 'know[s] that a text does not consist of a line of words [...] but is a space of many dimensions.'[30] These dimensions, which constitute and build the writing by the context in which it is interpreted from, 'are wedded and contested various kinds of writing, no one of which is original: the text is a tissue of citations, resulting from the thousand sources of culture.'[31] The authorial source

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[28] Foucault, 1984, 104
[29] Foucault, 1984, 113
[30] Barthes, 1975, 146
[31] Barthes, 1975, 146

is often an emblem of power that produces cultural references. The reader's presence is all encompassing in the book, the text and subtext including annotations of the author's hand in the book. While classical criticism is concerned with the subject of man in literature as being the one who writes, the concept of the reader was different in oral societies, or societies without books, because the author and the book are both ideological and historical constructs. The reader, rather than the author, is the source from where a text of multiple writings is collected and united without annotation.[32]

Barthes argues that the author hinders the reader because the author can never fully determine the meaning or value of a text until a reader is able to play an active role in determining the range of meanings derivable from text. The problem is giving a text an author 'impose[s] a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing.'[33] While Barthes considers the closure of writing to be detrimental to the process of meaning making, the deconstruction of meaning after reading allows the reader to create a multifaceted interpretation of the text. The writing depends on the author to valorise the reader's confidence of the body of text by shifting the subject position of the author to the reader. The interpretation of a body of writing varies to a great degree because of the context of how it is read, where it is read and why it is read.[34] The imposition of the author on a text creates a subsection of historical meaning ascribed to the text. Historical meaning refers to a specific place and, more importantly, a specific time of where or when the author lived and wrote, a space that the reader is presumably unable to be a part of. The difference between time and place of the author and reader illustrates and example of how the author's identity can never be fully reiterated by the reader. The reader constructs the authorial identity to be perfectly attuned to what the reader sees. The division of time and place between authorial intention and reading a section of text distinguishes the writing as fluid in its interpretation. This opens texts to a range of meanings and interpretations by allowing the reader to become the explorer who advances meaning in order to expand upon it and better understand it.[35] The writing can be unearthed and deconstructed without suffering from the refusal of an overlapping

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[32] Barthes, 1975, 147
[33] Barthes, 1975, 147
[34] Mercer, 2005, 364
[35] Barthes, 1975, 146

theme to indicate the ingenuity of the source.[36] The writing evolves, as it will inevitably continue to be critiqued and edited in the future by readers. When the reader puts the book down, the reading is only suspended in its time of exploration.[37]

Writing in its entirety is a fragmented process because the writer imitates the non-linear nature of discourse, which is often broken up and incomplete. The expressions enacted by the reader are themselves a translation from a lexicon whose words can only be introduced and explained by other words in the reader's lexicon.[38] The strength of readership lives in its ability to deconstruct and combine new writing. Although the deconstruction and combination of writing creates writing that appears unoriginal, the connectivity of texts is essential to the expansion of meaning. The text combines with a multitude of sources and results in a tissue of citation. The text, in turn, strengthens the notion that it exists as a space of multiple dimensions that rules out the existence of a single omnipresent author. The writer contains a lexicon within his or her own psyche, which references his or her passions, humours, sentiments and impressions. Life can only imitate the writer's book, which is a collection of signs from an imitation of writers.[39] Despite the imitation, the author could be defined as the basis for explaining the relative location and presence of events in writing. The author could also be defined by various alterations of the written text when it is unconcerned with questions of authentication.[40]

The author consists of a myriad of different sources and therefore, the omnipresence of the author becomes an indistinguishable and inauthentic presence.[41] The text, which is defined by Barthes as a 'writerly' text, serves a perpetual present upon which any language can be superimposed and offers a plurality of entrances enhanced by its ideological curves.[42] The process of poetic readership begins when the origin of the text is lost and the author enters his or her own death. The predecessor to the death of the author is found in primitive societies with narratives undertaken by a group, rather than a single person.[43] In a first-person narrative, the pronoun of 'I' and the present indicative suggests that it refers to the writer and the event he or she writes for but it is ascribed an

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[36] Barthes, 1975, 146
[37] Lyotard, 1988, 17
[38] Barthes, 1975, 145
[39] Barthes, 1975, 146
[40] Foucault, 1984, 111
[41] Barthes, 1975, 142
[42] Barthes, 1977, 5
[43] Barthes, 1975, 142

alias that vacillates throughout the course of the text.[44] The 'I' present in the poetry of Plath, for example, holds a distance to the author that is filled in with speculation.

With copyright laws enacted by institutions to preserve authorship, Plath becomes a separate subject to all other individuals and reinforces the belief that meaning endlessly burgeons from the preservation of her legacy yet, in a paradoxical way, the opposite is true. Since the biographical reception of Plath, rather than her actual identity, alters the production of meaning in 'writerly' texts, the idea of the author as a construct of the reader should be considered in the reception of Plath's poetry.[45] In order to proliferate meaning that a reader ascribes the first person of 'I' present in the work of poetry to Plath, the reader expands the space which writing is inscribed for. An example of readership is the participation and activity in who or what constitutes the first-person pronoun of 'I'. The act of meaning making for the reader is the creation of broken text on two-dimensional surfaces to depict or represent three-dimensional objects.[46] According to an analysis of text that was conducted by Barthes, the structure of text is dependent on the reader to correspond to the metonymic qualities of the text. In other words, the substitution of a name or attribute implies what can be read cannot be written.[47] The reader gathers his or her own understanding with what is presented with Plath's poetry as revealed in the collage. The audio and video collages offer texts that are arranged in a specific order but proliferates multiple interpretations never in a specific order.

Performativity

The complication of an author through the collage process helps to further liberate the author from an exclusive association with his or her body, which complicates authorial signifiers. The ambivalence to gender and sexuality reflected in the collage shifts the authorial embodiment to include a constant state of explanation and pathology. The anomalous contradiction of authorial embodiments conflicts with the normative state of conforming to the gender role one is ascribed to. The 'performativity' of the author is seen as a fluid variable that shifts and changes at different times and is dependent on the subjectivity of the reader. How 'performativity' is determined is through the set of

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[44] Foucault, 1984, 112
[45] Foucault, 1984, 118
[46] Barthes, 1977, 15
[47] Barthes, 1977, 4

actions that are ascribed to the author and determined by his or her subject position. In other words, his or her gender, age, nationality and when or where they lived become an influential part of the work. The 'author function', or the construction of the author, is shaped and influenced by the reader's interaction with the author, the poem and through historical narratives. While fabricated experiences inevitably construct and shape the authorial persona in a poem, the authorial persona is an attempt to clarify the connection between the reader and an identity that is implied by the lifestyle and actions of the subject.[48] The reader determines an author to create a whole body, as the separate and distinctly functioning bodies of Plath and myself in the collage.

The authorial embodiments of Plath or myself depend on the construction of representational sources consumed by the reader. Looking at the legacy of Plath, she becomes known for the internal dialogue that constructs her mental state in her poetry. With the authorial framework of Plath ending at the last moments of her suicide fifty years ago, she subsumes the role of a melancholic poet who eludes the roles constructed from normative representations of women, like depictions on television shows in the 1950s and 1960s. Plath's living situation and lifestyle is ascribed to a prewritten part in a play that Plath is cast as, to escape the normative role of a meek housewife and mother during the time period she lived in. The body projects roles that constitute normative representations of its gender. The fragmentation of these roles escapes the limitations of representation from what is read and appropriated by them. The embodiment of an author formed by the reader in *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* suggests that the chronically unstable body will never fully realize a normative representation. The way that Plath is circumscribed to always resist normative roles becomes a 'deconstruction of constructs that are always already a kind of violence against the body's possibilities.'[49] As the authorial body manipulates the text, the text tears the body apart and becomes a textual violence that resists the role it is paradoxically supposed to conform to.

Confessional poetry underlines the necessity to attribute a fictitious identity to mark the pronoun of 'I' that begins the first-person poems. The identity that is formed by the authorial signifier becomes associated with the historical representation that is static and sitting in its place. The attribution and constraints connect to the obsessive emphasis

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[48] Butler, 1991, 25
[49] Butler, 1991, 126

of Plath's identity in the project that references the surveillance and exhausts her existence to a multiplicity of actions that are previously observed and enacted by the reader. Plath becomes the focal point for constructing a dialogue between the text and what is implied and filled in by the multiplicity of biographical accounts and interpretations of how she lived. The assemblage of an author through the 'author function' is like a mirror that reflects the reader while it is a window that is self-reflective; the reader is able to see constructs of intimacy of others that the reader sees his or her own body under surveillance. The embodiment becomes interwoven, non-linear and fragmented and forms a fictitious authorial signifier implying that individuals fall into distinct categorical representations of different roles. While the authorial signifiers of Plath and myself transcend into a multiplicity of roles that shift, connect, and combine constructs of identity, the identity resembles normative patterns of recognized behaviour. The identity is sustained in 'the 'coherence' and 'continuity' of 'the person' [with] [...] socially instituted and maintained norms of intelligibility.'[50] The author that is constructed from the 'author function' cultivates from the fragment the language of patriarchy and hegemony that 'swerve[s] from their original purposes and inadvertently mobilize[s] possibilities of 'subjects' that do not merely exceed the bounds of cultural intelligibility, but effectively expand the boundaries of what is, in fact, culturally intelligible.'[51] The authorial signifier of a woman prescribed to historically normative roles transcends these predetermined roles in the case of Plath and the authorship of her poetry. The reader's familiarity with Plath implies that the author is based solely on representation, there are variables that sway Plath from a normative prescription render her embodiment unstable. Plath is first introduced as an author by her biographical identity and is circumscribed to resist the authorial role. Plath's authorial inscription is compared to gender roles that strengthen historical and societal values of womanhood that the reader objectifies Plath to resist. The reader involuntarily sets normative and representational standards for gender roles like that of a passive housewife and mother that becomes a cause for Plath to resist. The passivity implied by her gender reinforces an authorial subject position whose fate is cast in madness and mental anguish. The process of collage further complicates the implied presumptions of Plath. Plath's authorial body

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[50] Butler, 1991, 17
[51] Butler, 1991, 29

'is abstract[ed] to the extent that it disavows its socially marked embodiment and, further, projects that disavowed and disparaged embodiment.'[52] Plath speaks for herself as an author through the fate cast from illness because her own body is out of control. She passes it. The fate implied from mental suffering reinforces a resistance to the historically ascribed roles of defencelessness and lack of autonomy.

Plath removes herself from her physical body, which she describes the body shutting down like 'a seashell' in 'Lady Lazarus.' Normative representations of Plath become an active resistance to assimilation since they are conditioned to meet a set of standards and can only stay static. The distress and disability of the closed seashell that Plath describes her passive body to be 'shut' in 'Lady Lazarus' begs the reader to explain its affliction. There is an implied presence of others, a dominance of finding it, calling at it, trying to open it and pick the worms off it 'like sticky pearls' that implies bringing the body back to the realm of the living, which the subject refuses to. The purported mental illness of Plath, being in a closed seashell, implies that there is an intention in the shift of its embodiment; the feminine body becomes the representation of illness:

> The second time I meant
> To last it out and not come back at all.
> I rocked shut
>
> As a seashell.
> They had to call and call
> And pick the worms off me like sticky pearls.

Sylvia Plath, excerpt from Lady Lazarus, 1962

The 'performativity' of Plath destabilizes the body that is circumscribed to her gender, by undoing it through mental illness as a source of empowerment. These deviant behavioural patterns such as attempts at committing suicide justify the aberration of transgressing a set of standards of normative behaviour and encourage illnesses, mental disorders to overpower the body. While the mechanism of rejection represents being cast off from society, the manifestation of illness, suicide and the feminine body expresses a desire to escape hegemony and patriarchy. These 'acts, gestures, enactments, generally construed, are performative in the sense that the essence or identity that they otherwise

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[52] Butler, 1991, 11

purport to express are fabrications manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means.'[53] The rejection of normative representation is similar to the rejection of the body. It is presumed that Plath somehow manifests this rejection through illness. The construct is further complicated when this body is fragmented and collaged with other authorial variables in the project. Degradation and suffering that come from internal difference reinforces the rejection of the body through illness, yet through illness, Plath also reinforces the empowerment attributed to her authorial identity.

While the feminine body becomes emancipated in an anomalous state of conditioning its gender to incorporate a ghostly presence of mania, the gendered body that is always suggested to have a body may lack one. The male body is less associated with its bodily presence than with its actions. The actions of an authorial body become associated in terms of its representation since the 'association of the body with the female works along magical relations of reciprocity whereby the female sex becomes restricted to its body, and the male body, fully disavowed, becomes, paradoxically the incorporeal instrument of an ostensibly radical freedom.'[54] The radical freedom implied with being a 'male body' comes with its terms of its possessing qualities it lacks, especially if the body is mentally ill and sexually attracted to its own gender. If physical attraction to other men implies an aberration, collage could be an attempt and desire to transgress other authorial associations. The complication of authorship is a solution to both predicaments of Plath and myself as the struggle for claiming and reclaiming our own bodies transcends the framework of representation. Standards of sickliness and pathology that attempt to explain a deviation of normative behaviour that imbues the reader with the aftermath that stems from our internal conflict in its representational form. The solution to free the body that is in constant tumult from the hierarchic constructions of authorship is to liberate the poems that unfold tragedy and turmoil from a hierarchic subject position to becoming part of the pathology. The reader reinforces normative roles from the construction and perception of the gendered body that reinforces the fetish of death and suffering from disease when the subject tries to escape these roles.

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[53] Butler, 1991, 136
[54] Butler, 1991, 12

Host and Parasite

The relationship between that of a 'host' and a 'parasite', as described in J. Hillis Miller's essay from 1977 entitled 'The Critic as Host', particularly exemplifies my relationship to Plath as the collagist. Plath, who is the subject of appropriation, and I share a symbolic relationship of the 'host' and 'parasite', as I am figuratively feeding off the 'host' of Plath when I perform the parasitic role of the collagist. The relationship we share lacks reciprocation because Plath is acknowledged to be dead. The implication that she cannot speak for herself but speaks for the reader as a historical recasting of a ghostly presence foregrounds a ghost motif in Derrida's *Spectres of Marx* from 1994. Plath as the ghostly 'host' feeds the reader and makes my project possible but Plath, in the sense of a continuous proliferator of meaning, is killed by it.[55] What is left is an omnipresent recasting that results in the attribution of authorship that leaps from a single word or two conjoined words to the breath or space. The breaths come from the silent stops between individual words that form strings of stanzas in the resulting collage poem.

The perpetuation by the sale and distribution of Plath's book of poems published after her death in 1965 entitled *Ariel*, for example, holds Plath to an omnipresent casting, an identity that is subject to numerous interpretations by means of mass-production. The predetermined notion of Plath complicates the parasitic rearranging of the recording in the audio collage but the collage maintains the spectral presence. The altered recordings with their variations of disjointed pitches in the resulting poem imply that the author is invariably static and that the reader and I are aiding meaning. The referential subject of Plath's selfhood proliferates meaning from the long historical legacy that constructs and reconstructs her subject position after her death. The act of cutting recordings and altering them to sound coherent the point of atomization also shows the violence of this appropriation. The parasitic relationship that references *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* centres on my parasitic relationship to Plath. However, a parasitic relationship also emerges the audience and readers who gather the subject position of my selfhood as an author and inscribe meaning into the space between Plath's words. The 'host' and 'parasite' emerges a relationship between the acts of reading, the collage of the project to the reader's relationship with the authorial construct. The deconstruction of the poetry follows the reader of poetry's deconstruction of the collage. The identification of the

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[55] Miller, 1977, 439

constraint in the dissolution of Plath's text and between the multitudes of cut audio in the voice-over, for example, reveals its structure and how the poem functions.

The writing is reread, reinterpreted and collaged by the 'parasite' that creates a cyclical and symbiotic exchange with the 'host'. The reader, as a 'parasite', processes a fractured narrative into an understanding of the text through other authorial 'hosts'. The parasitic relationship that is primarily concerned with my poem formed from Plath results in the disjointed poetry reading in the audio collage. The 'breath' or the space between words, line-breaks and stanzas follows the standing poem with its allusions taken at the surface value of individual words. These words from the voice-over collectively have a plethora of readers with possibilities for other parasitic relationships. Any poem has the potential to be a 'host' and 'parasite' from its excavations of future poems and allusions to earlier ones. They may contain earlier poems or the earlier poems may contain later ones as this shows the perpetual reversal and continuity of the 'parasite' and 'host'.[56]

The poem is 'performative' in the sense that structural procedures are involved in collaging the new poem. While the collage involves listening and re-listening to the sounds of the reading and minds the movements of the video, the process of using a constraint documents this process. Plath embodies no new traits in the collage but is referential from the point of the individual words, the ruptured utterances, in between my breath and the process of collage that constitutes space. The referential point of Plath being within the fragmentation of the recordings and the fragmented breath attach to my excavation of the space between words. I become referenced within this space between words through the glue, the connections of the words together between each stop. Rather than altering the words or the intonations of the original reading to emphasize on how the reader would likely read the poem, the cuts and rearrangements of the recordings lack additional edits or filters. The act of using filters to alter the recording would hide the process of collaging the recording. The raw editing without a filter reveals the violent textual deconstruction through the crude and raw edits and reveals the minutia involved with the cutting and editing process. What remains is the unsteady and ahistorical recording with its variations in pitch and tone. Perhaps the transparency of the editing process reveals as much about me as it does Plath. The 'breath' and stops between the cuts that follow the rhythmic line-breaks and stanzas of the new poem, however, are my

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[56] Miller, 1977, 446

own parasitic 'voice' that assembles and haunts the reader with an appropriation of Plath's recordings. It is in the breath, the space between words, that the reader identifies my own 'voice' intertwined within the recordings of Plath in the new poem.

The emphasis of Plath who is partially revealed through the literary constraints that uses all of the words in the resulting poem and the rawness of the unedited audio recording between the cuts. This preservation process refuses to fully translate back to the reader because there is no indication of the process of creation that could make the reader fully aware of it although the process is hinted through the way the resulting audio poem was edited. While it could be impossible to determinably tag a historical reference to reading, the audio poem continues to live without the spread of the parasitic references embedded in the poem and in its constraints.[57] The deliberate cuts of the recordings are a parasitic rendering of the voice-over that reconstitutes the body. 'Lady Lazarus' and 'The Applicant' are the previously read poems that are 'both the ground of the new one and something the new poem must annihilate by incorporating it, turning it into ghostly insubstantiality, so that it may perform its possible-impossible task of becoming its own ground. The new poem both needs the old texts and must destroy them.'[58]

The reconstitution process of the audio pursues an epistemological practice that builds upon the historical implications lifted from the grounds of the texts that are being read by the voice-over. Otherness manifests itself in the fragment of the voice-over and in the word 'parasite'. A 'parasite' is devoid of meaning without the counterpart of its 'host' because both parts connect together. The shared role of the 'host' and 'parasite' emerges a reciprocity that 'both word and counter word subdivide and reveal themselves each to be fissured already within themselves. […] Words in "para" [as in parasite] […] have this as an intrinsic property, capability, or tendency [to embed another word within itself]. "Para" […] indicates alongside, near or beside, beyond, incorrectly, resembling or similar to, subsidiary to, isomeric or polymeric to.'[59] The voice-over embedded in the word directs the reader to another word like that of the 'host' in its root meaning that indicates otherness as there is no 'host' without the 'parasite'.

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[57] Miller, 1977, 440
[58] Miller, 1977, 446-447
[59] Miller, 1977, 441

Voice and Otherness

Every text is a tissue of citations from other texts. The collage of Plath's voice-over becomes my own 'voice' that addresses a gap between the discursive construct of the author and as an embodied speaker that, for example, hinges around the subject position of 'I' in the recording. The 'voice' that's initially revealed in the voice-over attributes the interior monologue of Plath to the recording of her poetry reading. The 'voice' of the feminine poet is then called upon to reveal her own posthumous state in the collage process. The fragments of the feminine voice-over operate 'with remarkable precision' for the 'voice' of the presumably male subject, the collagist.[60] The 'I' is explored as a relic of the collage, separate from the 'I' in the voice-over. Embodiments that surround 'I' travels from Plath to myself and reconciles the 'voice' as being an embodied subject within the poem. The 'voice', apart from the construct of authorship, is referential to myself throughout the collage. The collage of the voice-over of Plath appears to turn the referential body of Plath inside out to reveal the internal monologue of myself as the 'voice' even for just a brief moment. The embodiment inherent in the 'voice in question functions almost like a searchlight suddenly turned upon a character's thoughts; it makes audible what is ostensibly inaudible, transforming the private into the public.'[61] The voice-over of Plath that is subject to the framing of my 'voice' is audibly confined to the interior monologue, the involuntary or constrained modes of its process. The effects of the collage reflect the remoteness of the internal monologue of my 'voice' 'from the […] space functionally inscribed by the disembodied voice-over.'[62]

The open-ended pronoun of 'I' reflects the relationship between the self and other as a dialogic work. The dialogic work or a 'dialogism' is a term founded by Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin to describe how a body of text, like that of *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus,* simultaneously conveys a dialogue with a multiplicity of authorial subjects. Bakhtin explores the notion of 'I' through 'dialogism' by approaching 'I' in relationship to otherness. If the 'voice' is representative of selfhood, otherness is seen in relationship to the voice-over that inhabits the state of being 'I'. 'I' forges a relationship between the voice-over and the reader while verbs being read like 'marry' indicate a historical moment that attributes its former meaning to a newer action. Words that appear most

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[60] Silverman, 1988, 80
[61] Silverman, 1988, 53
[62] Silverman, 1988, 53-54

often in the voice-over of the poem include pronouns like 'I' and 'it' that indicate the presence of otherness that eludes and simultaneously references the author, whether the subject of 'I' is the author or not. Since the pronouns of 'I' and 'it' in Plath's writing, for example, already exist in an institutional state that imprison the author, the implication of these words becomes complicated through the process of collage. The 'I' begins the creative activity of reading and expresses an anonymity that references a multifaceted body and creates a historical recasting of the author.[63] When the author is complicated, the 'I' that is spoken by Plath and the collagist's use of the 'I' is subject to become 'an autonomous object meant to signify property which is collective.'[64] The 'author function' complicates and casts both Plath and myself to a rendering of the collaged text. If Plath and myself are identified to be authors of the collaged poem, we become referenced through the way in which Plath emphasizes on slices of individual words. The 'voice' that constitutes the process of the collage work as it was presented in 2010 is separate from its reference point of the voice-over, the reading to the British Council in 1962.

The relationship I have with Plath, the dialogue between self and the other is one of simultaneity.[65] Bakhtin begins by making a case that the self, the 'voice', is a construct of the other, the 'voice-over'. 'In 'dialogism', the very capacity to have consciousness is based on otherness.'[66] More specifically, the concept of 'dialogism' 'argues that meaning is relative in the sense that it comes about only as a result of the relationship between two bodies occupying simultaneous but different spaces, where the bodies may be thought of as ranging from the immediacy of our physical bodies, to political bodies and to bodies of ideas in general.'[67] The physical bodies of Plath and myself are separated by 50 years of time and Plath's body, which is presumably decomposed now, is a relic, a voice-over that is separate from the self but is a construct of the 'voice'. The collage is continuously informed by the previous work of Plath and my collage process. This awareness of the cuts of individual pronouns in the audio collage, for example, shows how there is never a definitive point to Plath that marks her recording to the 'I' being spoken. The cuts of every recorded word subsequently reveal the 'I' through the attribution of its process.

Bakhtin's idea of 'dialogism' works closely to the concept of 'intertextuality'.

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[63] Barthes, 1977, 35-36
[64] Barthes, 1977, 27
[65] Holquist, 2002, 19
[66] Holquist, 2002, 18
[67] Holquist, 2002, 20-21

'Intertextuality', although vaguely defined as such, is suggested by Barthes essay in 1967 entitled 'The Death of the Author', when he describes text as being 'made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation.'[68] Julia Kristeva identified the concept of 'intertextuality' in her essay on Bakhtin entitled 'Word, Dialogue, and Novel', published in 1980, and believes that every text is a response to other texts; and these texts connect to the identity of their author which renders them unstable, since the identity of the author is too. Kristeva believes that all identities are unstable and explores the notion of 'I' in what she conceives as being a 'subject-in-process' to describe this destabilization.[69] The identity being modelled through the 'author function' is precisely the dichotomy of Plath's and my existence. The identity becomes the contradiction and comparison of a queer collagist and a dead woman. The dialogue between her and me is built from 'the opposition between a time and a space that one consciousness uses to model its own limits.'[70] Time becomes a factor in deciphering Plath as death concludes the time that the subject lives and re-lives for and after her death. Since the self and other exist in separate spaces and times, Plath and I can never share the same time and space. My perception and reference of Plath exists separately as a relationship between my selfhood and the otherness of a dead woman and that gap between our positioning is the space 'between two coordinates […] each serving to differentiate the other.'[71] While 'dialogism' suggests that my relationship to Plath forms a singular identity, our bodies are physically separate. The death of Plath that reveals a varying approximation of our physical separation shows how the unfinished nature of identity becomes a space for creativity. The relationship between Plath and I as self and other 'does not obliterate the split between subject and object, but it complicates that distinction in ways that make it productive.'[72]

Plath's recitation of the pronoun of 'I' multiple times during her reading of 'Lady Lazarus' to the British Council in 1962 suggests that Plath is the subject of her poem, although 'I' still remains an indistinguishably vague subject. The collage references the vagueness of the pronoun of 'I' that juxtaposes a historical moment of the voice-over 'I' to the collage. Since the 'I' that is read aloud becomes a point of reference to its time and

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[68] Barthes, 1975, 148
[69] Zarranz, 2009, 20
[70] Holquist, 2002, 22
[71] Holquist, 2002, 26
[72] Holquist, 2002, 26

space in a historical moment, the recording of Plath 'fills "I" with meaning […] to calibrate all further time and space discriminations […] [and] "I" marks the point between "now" and "then", as well as between "here" and "there".'[73] While the subject of 'I' eludes the eye, the space and time of the self that the 'I' occupies becomes the object of appropriation.[74] The 'I' is dependent on its existence of the 'other', and refers to the space that it inhabits by carrying the weight of the narrative within the relationship between author and reader.[75] The appropriation of the 'I' 50 years later in the collage of *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* suggests that Plath is omnipresent and anachronistically occupies the present moment from the past. She is allocated to a different space and time that is occupied by the space I created between her words in the edited poem. In other words, the 'I' is spoken by Plath and directed by me. This shows the changeability of the space the pronouns occupy and that 'the pronoun 'I' marks the point of articulation between the pre-existing, repeatable system of language and my unique, unrepeatable existence as a particular person in a specific social and historical situation.'[76] The references that occupy the 'general slot of the first person pronoun' can never be fully visualized as 'I' can inhabit multiple subjectivities and may never be empty.[77] Although the references it names may be multiple, they can figuratively point to nothing as the self is relative and could have no absolute meaning in itself. 'The non-referentiality can be understood by analogy with the non-referentiality of "I" as the first person pronoun in natural language.'[78] Although the 'I' is constructed to embody referential personae with the emphasis of the author, the reference is made with the introduction of the author through attributions that the pronoun of 'I' may lack.

In *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus*, the self begins through a relation between the construct of the author and the reader from both Plath and myself who share the 'I'. This relation is variable and in a constant process of construction or deconstruction as the generation of a self in reading the author is visualized as 'a centre, a not-centre, and the relation between them.'[79] The relation is perceived using the time/space of both the self and the time/space of the other which can be gauged by varying degrees of perspective

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[73] Holquist, 2002, 23
[74] Holquist, 2002, 27
[75] Holquist, 2002, 29
[76] Holquist, 2002, 28
[77] Holquist, 2002, 28
[78] Holquist, 2002, 35
[79] Holquist, 2002, 29

from the outsider looking inside.[80] Similarly, the self is a variable activity and can be conceived as constantly in motion. Bakhtin offers a metaphor for the relationship between self and other as a dialogue that he describes as 'the simultaneous unity of differences in the event of utterance.'[81] What Bakhtin describes as a 'surplus of seeing' could particularly translate to the reader who sees images and narratives that are concealed from his or her field of vision and perception in the poetry.[82] Furthermore, a reader that endeavours to deconstruct the collage achieves it by the struggle between the self and other. The struggle of 'dialogism' thus makes it 'a stern philosophy.'[83]

The 'I' in the collage is dialogic because the 'I' is referentially variable; the 'I' guarantees existence that is part of a larger narrative.[84] The dialogue can be arranged in a structural composition of three elements with regards to poetry. The elements include an author, a reader and the relationship between the two. More specifically, the dialogue constitutes an utterance of writing or the voice-over, a reply of the reader or the 'voice' and their relationship. This relationship 'is most important of the three, for without it the other two would have no meaning.'[85] The references of dialogic elements of poetry like time and space are proportionate to other coordinates that fill the present with 'a mass of different combinations of past and present relations.'[86] The fragmentary segments of the dead or alive author that surrounds the inscriptions of Plath and I can be perceived as a whole through a fragmentary lens 'within the context of a complete narrative having a beginning that precedes our encounter and an end that follows it.'[87]

The applicant, who is the subject in Plath's 'The Applicant', is part of a recipe to be boiled into a stew and then dressed. The applicant, like the poetry that Plath reads, conveys subjective information that could reconstitute or disrupt an autobiographical identity.[88] The quality of the audio suggests her historical presence in the middle of the twentieth century, being reused as an applicant in the collage poem. The similarity between the applicant in 'The Applicant' and the applicant in the collage of 'The Applicant' is in the description of the poem's materiality:

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[80] Holquist, 2002, 35
[81] Holquist, 2002, 36
[82] Holquist, 2002, 36
[83] Holquist, 2002, 39
[84] Holquist, 2002, 37
[85] Holquist, 2002, 38
[86] Holquist, 2002, 37, 145
[87] Holquist, 2002, 37
[88] Holquist, 2002, 61

To thumb shut your eyes at the end
And dissolve of sorrow.
We make new stock from the salt.
I notice you are stark naked.
How about this suit –

Sylvia Plath, excerpt from The Applicant, 1962

The peculiar emphasis of words like 'stark naked' and 'salt' in 'The Applicant' describes the way a body is being prepared for consumption. The words resound in a fabricated accent from Southern England that suggests Plath having conflicting views about being an American Expatriate. These historical attributes to the English accent become an applicant to forming the resulting poem in the collage. The listener concludes with an interpretation of how text was conveyed as values are enacted in Plath's reading 'through the process of scripting [her] place and that of our listen[ing] in a culturally specific social scenario.'[89] With the text that is conveyed, Plath's identity exists within the listener's perception and duration of the reading. Thus, the identity of Plath becomes an invariable attribution to the time period, as well as the place, in which she speaks. This identity emerges from the inclination of listeners and readers to attribute invariableness to an author 'while tracing [the author] without a break in the span of attention, through a variation in time.'[90] The pathological characteristics and attributes of Plath, for example, become invariable through the clash between the inner speech and outer speech in her poetry that implies an 'overdetermination' of her inner speech in the poetry.[91]

The collaged voice-over implies that a dialogic event is formed between the collage and its transition to a different reading. The British Council recordings of Plath reading 'Lady Lazarus' and 'The Applicant' before her death in 1963 suggest her presence is static and foretelling of an impending death of which the listener is able to be aware that it already happened. The collaged text itself suggests that the death of its original source is already apparent in this moment. Bodily violences like 'flesh' and 'blood' mix with historically powerful words like 'Nazi' touch on the textual violence of the collage and also the implied violence in the original source poem. The reading is manipulated and redirected by how the words are reordered and the stops between

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[89] Holquist, 2002, 63
[90] Holquist, 2002, 158
[91] Holquist, 2002, 52

stanzas and line breaks are devised by another source. The event of listening to the new reading shows a co-relation between the speech and the collage as the collage reveals an alternation in time and space through its process. The process reveals a comparison between the obvious edits, alteration and breaks through the recognition of another speech. 'As soon as co-being is recognized as an event's necessary mode of existence, we give up the right to anything that is immaculate, in-itself, for everything will depend on how the relation between what happens and its situation in time/space is mediated.'[92] The collaged audio suggests that there is a spectral haunting which points to other historical moments of the audio's recording and the process of writing the original spoken poems. The spectral haunting of Plath in the collaged audio poem distinctly reveals to the listener that there is simultaneity between the collagist and author. The simultaneity shows a need 'to specify relations between individual persons and particular entities as they constitute a simultaneity.'[93] The simultaneity in a collage is in its objects of appropriation.

The subject that the language embodies imparts a plurality in which the subject is established between static and variable aspects.[94] The reader that occupies the collage poetry 'makes an entrance into a matrix of highly distinctive economic, political and historical forces – a unique and unrepeatable combination of ideologies, each speaking its own language.'[95] The reader embraces the poem as a construct of a larger body of readers that he or she is a part of as the constitution of the text connects to lived experience that determines a large majority of reading text. There is also a group of more obscure and 'unspoken assumptions about the coordinates of […] experience so fundamental that they lie even deeper […] than the prejudices imposed by ideology.'[96] The proliferation of pronouns 'I' and 'it' depends on the particular language in question, the constructs of the author and the self. Identifiable aspects of Plath surround the individual words; their syntax and punctuation offers complicated rules for precipitating pronouns that the identifier embodies. The pronoun of 'I' expresses with it a static historical moment of the varying subject. The distinction that could made in the pronoun of 'I' depends on how the pronoun is formally structured and distinctively individualized in its reading.[97]

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[92] Holquist, 2002, 116
[93] Holquist, 2002, 150
[94] Holquist, 2002, 169
[95] Holquist, 2002, 167
[96] Holquist, 2002, 142
[97] Holquist, 2002, 163

The collage poem shows a consistently sliding relation between the self and other in the voice-over and the 'voice' and reveals a dialogic relation that potentially spans 50 years between Plath and the collagist; and perhaps another 50 years between the collagist and another. The dynamic aspect of collage shows the subjectivity of the author never being completely in the text. The definitiveness that can be encountered in collage is in its relational aspect between self and other. The variability of the space between 'voice' and voice-over appears to be in 'levels of conflict between stasis and change, there is always a situated subject whose specific place is defined precisely by its in-between-ness.'[98] The peculiarity of the 'in-between-ness' of the voice-over as a 'voice' that isn't speaking for it reveals a distinctive point-of-view of the technique 'which language drives through ceaseless slippage from static to dynamic, formal to semantic, to produce the subject.'[99] The peculiarity of the diction and expression varies in the collage on top of its authorial determination. They are 'apportioned between a different pair of eyes, each of which sees things from a different vantage.'[100]

Identity and Memory

Barthes equates the state of language as being an institution and how Barthes own writing becomes 'a sign of [his] own prison' implying that 'an ideally free language never could function' that suggests the author's imprisonment is embedded in the writing. Although the imprisonment reveals no history about the author, the writing to which Barthes entrusts himself 'already exists entirely as an institution; it reveals [his] past and [his] choice and gives [him] a history, it blazons forth [his] situation, it commits [him] without [his] having to declare the fact.'[101] This identifiable trait, which imprisons the author, is constructed from memory, is unstable and often enacts the historical moment that recreates the static representation of the author's life once he or she dies. Adriana Cavarero, a contemporary theorist who is interested in feminist poststructuralism, believes the story, perhaps of the author, 'can only be narrated from a posthumous perspective of someone who does not participate in the events.'[102] The posthumous subject that becomes an authorial body marks the last page of the author's story and

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[98] Holquist, 2002, 181
[99] Holquist, 2002, 169
[100] Holquist, 2002, 164
[101] Barthes, 1977, 27
[102] Cavarero, 1997, 2

becomes a topic for narration and representation.

There are similarities between Foucault's 'author function' and the narration that contributes to creating the life-story of a subject. As the reader offers a biographical narrative to accompany the author, the reader constructs 'a life-story [that] […] turns a narrator into a simple biographer. He [or she] is limited to comprehending the story that the actor left behind, and to putting it into words.'[103] The similarities between the function of the reader and that of the narrator diverge on 'reveal[ing] the meaning without committing the error of defining it.'[104] Both the story of the author and a narration become mythic fabrications to a subject that has an infinite amount of entry and exit points, and leave an indeterminate amount of references made from other references or hearsay that construct this narrative. These historical references are subject to become representations that are familiarized and constantly reconstructed, by the reader as 'even before another [reader] can render tangible the identity of someone by telling him/her his/her story, many others have indeed been spectators of the constitutive exposure of the very same identity to their gaze.'[105] The attribution of Plath's suicide to the allusions of the art of dying in 'Lady Lazarus', for example, becomes a narrative that could kill the author in this particular occasion. The reader, who recognizes Plath's body, politicizes her subject position in the writing by the reader. Plath actively reveals herself 'to others, with words or deeds, [and] grants a plural space and therefore a political space to identity – confirming its exhibitive, relational and contextual nature.'[106]

When the identity of the author is hidden in a narration, the identity of the subject is revealed to others 'when he or she acts in their presence in an interactive theatre where each is, at the same time, actor and spectator.'[107] In this instance, the reader enacts an identity and therefore constructs the acting while also watching the event unfold. In order for an identity to be enacted, there needs to be a reader present. This relational status of identity always suggests the necessity of a reader 'whether this other is embodied by a plurality of spectators who see the self-revelatory actions of the actor, or whether this other is embodied by the narrator who tells the story from which these actions result.'[108]

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[103] Cavarero, 1997, 24
[104] Cavarero, 1997, 3
[105] Cavarero, 1997, 20
[106] Cavarero, 1997, 21
[107] Cavarero, 1997, 21
[108] Cavarero, 1997, 24

A reader depends on the echo of Plath to reveal her narration and purported actions. This possibly made Plath popular and widely known because her autobiographical accounts are predetermined by herself. The actions of her suffering and the suicide that followed attribute herself to a role that concludes as self-awareness, from the vantage point outside the patriarchal tradition. Cavarero points out that 'the patriarchal tradition tends to synthesize within the catalogue of feminine qualities that reduce the who to the what: a mother, a wife, a nurse.'[109] The subjection of woman as author to a patriarchal tradition, would lead her into hysterics. The agony of depression and internal suffering, in the case of Plath, who leaves her body after her suicide, suggests her authorial identity as being or leading to an action. The action of death, like constantly being dead and being in movement for Plath, eludes patriarchy. The bodiless author 'continues to astonish us – if not trouble us – by [her] love of death.'[110] Since patriarchy continues to exist and ascribe roles to the body, Plath appears to always be in resistance and always in action.

The confrontation of death, like that of a gladiator or a warrior, represents the hero who 'is excessive in all of his actions. He places emphasis on both action and autobiographical narration.'[111] Perhaps how Plath became famous was through her championship of living and through the fame that survives her mortality in her writing. The challenge of confronting death and taking control of it through poetry reveals a desire and virility that appears to be homage to the patriarchal tradition that could also explain the power attributed to a feminine author like Plath.[112] In this instance, memory also enacts the prestige of Plath by producing a self that is capable of being narrated and informs her personal story and familiarizes the reader in an involuntary way.[113] The self that is subject to narration finds its home in the spontaneous narrating structure of memory, which is more complicated than an exercise of remembering. The familiar experience of otherness is essential to the narration of the self 'even when we do not know their story at all.'[114] The active reader presents an involuntary impulse of memory that is captured in the text and produces a narration that Plath coincides with. In other words, Cavarero describes the other to 'always [be] a narratable self, quite apart from any

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[109] Cavarero, 1997, 61
[110] Cavarero, 1997, 29
[111] Cavarero, 1997, 29
[112] Cavarero, 1997, 29
[113] Cavarero, 1997, 33
[114] Cavarero, 1997, 34

consideration of the text. It does not matter here if the text is written or oral, if it comes from a tale or from gossip, from direct knowledge or from the imagination.'[115] Since the reading of Plath's text is interpretative like other texts, the discontinuous and fragmentary nature of the author fills in with a historical narrative beginning from the text. The author 'becomes, through the story, that which she already was.'[116]

Plath's poetry is written like a dirge that documents her suicide for the reader. The eulogy is the rite of passage for the recently deceased and foregrounds Plath in 'the age-old conviction that the dying man reviews, in a single instant, his own entire story.'[117] The death appears written before her death as the poems, like 'Lady Lazarus' and 'The Applicant', that constitute her last book published in 1965 entitled *Ariel* aid in concluding her life story. 'Lady Lazarus' suggests rebirth from death and 'The Applicant' suggests the body being reused. Therefore Plath's life becomes more comprehensive through the documentation of her life that concludes with a suicide and inevitably references it. The poems written about death and dying from *Ariel* exemplify 'the conviction that there is a moment in which one's entire destiny, or rather one's entire story can be summarized.'[118] The desire for unity with the narrated self demonstrates its confirmation through Plath, whose subject in her poetry 'gets doubly satisfied by death – whether as the final chapter of the tale, or as the summarizing gaze that watches the story.'[119] The reader observes a construct of identity unfold into a film and become biographical because it has an ending.

How Can a Dead Woman Speak?

The poetry readings of Sylvia Plath materialize into a self that is subject to narration and reconstitutes the identity of the author, whether the American poet is familiar or unfamiliar to the reader. In both my audio collage entitled *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* and Plath's published poems entitled 'Lady Lazarus' and 'The Applicant', the recording is posthumously speaking about her own death. Plath left an elegy of her death by reading poems that became referential to her suicide. The poems that discuss suicide and death become referenced to the very act that killed her and suggest that she somehow wrote her poems retrospectively after death. Almost fifty years later, through

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[115] Cavarero, 1997, 34-35
[116] Cavarero, 1997, 35-36
[117] Cavarero, 1997, 44
[118] Cavarero, 1997, 43
[119] Cavarero, 1997, 44

the collage of *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus*, the referential embodiment that alludes to the spectre in Jacques Derrida's book from 1994 entitled *Spectres of Marx*, reads the collaged poem encounters the ghostly utterances of the words spoken from the reading, which associates the historical moment of Plath with the new poem. The entirety of the collage of the audio poems 'Lady Lazarus' and 'The Applicant' invoke an authorial inscription on the text that share the embodied state of the poems with Plath. The embodiment of Plath who is left in an omnipresent state in her poetry circumvents her life into her death. The state of dismantling and reassembling the recording of Plath through the collage eerily points out the uncanny omnipresence of an author that attaches an authorial identity to the poetry:

> soon the blood
> they'll strip
> of you is dying
> in it like salt for this
> crunching foot
> there she'll be your hand
> a pure hand naked
> as a miracle stark
> but naked

Chris Girard, excerpt from audio collage of Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus, 2010

Plath, who lived in the same townhouse as Yeats did as a child from 1867 to 1872, channels her poem 'Lady Lazarus' through his poem published in 1936 entitled 'Lapis Lazuli'. The poem begins 'with a rejection of what "hysterical women say".'[120] The poem 'Lady Lazarus', which the title oddly has the same syllabic structure and same alliterative sounds as 'Lapis Lazuli', was written over thirty years after Yeats' poem was published and could pay homage to Yeats' poem. 'Lady Lazarus' begins with the line 'I have done it again.' The subject of 'I' could be acknowledgement of the tragic passing of the hysterical subjects that rise from the dead in 'Lapis Lazuli' 'again'. Plath could potentially be writing about the implications of Yeats' hysterical subjects through his death and rebirth. The hysterical subject that is observed in Yeats' poem and embodied in Plath's poem then becomes part of a posthumous relic in the timespan when the process

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[120] Raymond, 2006, 3

of dying occurs. Yeats, who is a poet that died in 1939 and Plath could have revered by willingly living in the townhouse he grew up in, can potentially embody the underlying inscription of the hysterical subject that Yeats wrote about, that embodied the pronoun of 'I' or the first-person of a feminine subject that is an authorial embodiment of Plath. The poem refers to the hysterics that are attributed to her 'formal displacement of grief' through evading the feminine attributes of passivity and helplessness that are embedded in the historical and normative role of Plath.[121] The poem 'Lady Lazarus' is read like a posthumous text of the hysterical feminine subject that is enacted by the reader considers her separate from the 'poets that are always gay' in 'Lapis Lazuli'. Yeats, who was almost dead at the time of the publishing of 'Lapis Lazuli', becomes emblematic of the historical reference of death before he was even dead. The theoretical implications of such a reader response suggests a universal reader, as determined by Stanley Fish who is a writer on 'reader-response criticism', who incorporates ideas of reading through his or her relationship to the text. The reversal of the pronoun of Yeats' 'I' speaking for the hysterical women turns 'the trope of irony to stage and reverse[s] a feminine speaker's interdiction from the masculine discourse of the traditional elegy.'[122] Both Plath and Yeats commence their poems with the first-person pronoun of 'I' that acknowledges a subject that is already dead. The 'I' as a motif of the 'ghost' is expunged and erased 'as a speaker in patriarchal culture, and from this elided status returns to the very place of public oratory, which she then ironizes by performing her own elegy – her self-interruption in which she points to her illicit, culturally given "death".'[123] Both Plath and Yeats embody the pronoun of 'I' at the very beginning of their poems 'Lapis Lazuli' and 'Lady Lazarus' that emancipates their authorial identities as referential subjects. The same 'I' that embodies Plath in 'Lady Lazarus' references the omnipresent spectator that speaks for the feminine subject in 'Lapis Lazuli':

> I have heard that hysterical women say
> They are sick of the palette and fiddle-bow,
> Of poets that are always gay

William Butler Yeats, excerpt from Lapis Lazuli, 1938

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[121] Raymond, 2006, 3
[122] Raymond, 2006, 4
[123] Raymond, 2006, 4

If Plath's empowerment comes from a place of a posthumous recasting, then she speaks for her acknowledged suicide. Yeats' poem 'Lapis Lazuli' constitutes a poem that is spoken by a man about women and sustains male dominance. Since the death and burial of the woman's body after death escapes the purview of male dominance, the dichotomy shows that 'the elegy spoken by the dead woman for herself places itself precisely in this blind spot of patriarchal discourse.'[124] If this particular poem by Yeats was an inspiration for Plath's poetry, the effect it has on the poem is precisely the attribution of Yeats to the poem that justifies or predicts Plath's behaviour as a 'hysterical' poet. It is in this regard that 'Lapis Lazuli' follows the legacy of cultural reproduction of a woman being manipulated in a man's poetry and 'the male poet [who] hush[es] the "hysterical" feminine voice and the woman poet [who] claim[s] the hysteria as a poetics.'[125] However, 'Lazy Lazarus' outlives 'Lapis Lazuli' through the legacy of hysterical women as observed by Yeats.

The death of Plath always arrives before the reading of her poetry because the writing reassures the reader that she is dead. The poem 'Lady Lazarus', for example, underlines the arrangement of events that omit Plath's ability to fully pre-exist her utterance in a dialogic sense as foregrounded by Mikhail Bakhtin of there being another utterance when she is speaking.[126] The poem offers her account of the anonymity of her suicide yet the description of her death appears 'written after her suicide.'[127] The 'I' in 'Lady Lazarus' posthumously constructs the subject at the place of the disappearance of the 'I' that situates its power after death.[128] The poem 'Lady Lazarus' situates its authorial positioning as an example of 'prosopopeia' that conveys its authorial presence by speaking as a second embodiment after death. Plath referentially speaks as 'Lady Lazarus' who could dramatize herself as a biblical figure named Lazarus of Bethany who was raised from the dead and has 'an ability to undo death.'[129] The return of Plath as 'Lady Lazarus' could be described as a resurrection of her embodiment, while acknowledged to be a posthumous embodiment, is that of 'the body of a smiling, still

[124] Raymond, 2006, 4
[125] Raymond, 2006, 10
[126] Raymond, 2006, 6
[127] Raymond, 2006, 9
[128] Raymond, 2006, 8
[129] Raymond, 2006, 9

young, woman.'[130] The embodiment shows that while Plath is posthumously remembered, she is attached to a certain timeframe and a place where she was during this state. The question of where becomes a key part of the issue surrounding a posthumous authorial inscription that elucidates her poetry. Plath uses objects that attribute death through the active reversal of domesticity like the association of the subject's face to 'a featureless fine Jew linen' in 'Lady Lazarus' that associates the skin of Jews being used as lampshades during the Holocaust. Plath subsequently writes about the hysterics that bring the body into a state of posthumous living and speak through it.[131] Feminine writers have foregrounded critical discourse about the significance of the body as central to authorial positioning. The perpetual posthumous body of Plath, whose martyrdom is reversed by giving the corpse of the poet an attribution, is like my own body in a constant state of collaging. The attribution of Plath after taking back her own body through suicide 'adheres to a rejection of the domestic scene of the corpse, the corpse as the edge of domesticity.'[132] After the body of Plath disappears and after the kitchen oven and bedroom linens are hauled out of the London townhouse, the ghostly reference of Plath conveys its hysterics though the destabilization of its domestic implications.[133] The materiality of her body and the domestic implications suggest the posthumous embodiment occupies a domestic space and from the domestic space, a tangible body attributed to Plath is summoned. This body, however, is fragmented and representational.

The referential body of Plath appears in many places. While the materiality of her corpse has been obliterated, the gravesite references or summons the biographical identity of Plath as if the poem was buried without the body.[134] The 'ghost' is without its corpse and evokes the body inherent in the metaphor of the infliction of death that is generated by the materiality of the walls, doors and pipes of the townhouse in which she once lived in and subsequently aided in her suicide. Her burial, the symbolic disappearance of Plath, forces a posthumous body to sustain and adhere the gestural resemblance of a feminine mourning poem.[135] The lack of Plath's physicality provides the reader with a sense that it 'is death as this space of incompleteness, a sort of radical homelessness or bodilessness,

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[130] Raymond, 2006, 9
[131] Raymond, 2006, 9
[132] Raymond, 2006, 10
[133] Raymond, 2006, 10
[134] Raymond, 2006, 11
[135] Raymond, 2006, 11

that the posthumous voice tropologically indicates.'[136] The decomposition and burial provide a substitution for a body that conveys within it the presence of a spirit that is scripted to a repetition of actions and historical moments to a present place. Plath, who writes poetry that supposedly takes place after her death, positions herself as an 'outcast from the canon and [is] able to overturn that outcast status.'[137] The lack of a physical body becomes the place where the authorial body generates her self-awareness of her status as being dead. The dialogue between the poetry of Plath and the reader 'presents a lyric that addresses [the reader] cryptically about those very terms of a death that must stand as metaphorical, insofar as the speaker survives her death as voice.'[138] Since the poem is presented as a text and offers a constant instability like a text, Plath's own reciting of the poem is presented in the emphasis of the 'voice' stopping at the line breaks of 'Lady Lazarus' and 'The Applicant' that are written and structured on a page.

Since the primacy of the poem is presented as a text, the reading of the poem arguably attends to the way the poem is structured through the beginning words in the line breaks. The stops between new stanzas or transitions that are marked in the poem emphasize the mark of the collagist as taking a new breath. The collage of Plath's poetry reading in *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* sustains the second breath by showing the emphasis and variability of the randomized pitches and tones of 'what I see to you stiff in poultice.' The words 'what' 'I' and 'see' are emphasized in the original verses that Plath reads from the old poem presents the collaged posthumously speaking through its disjointedness. The subject in the collage is posthumously speaking for a text that is 'always already text self-aware of its presence as text – anticipating readership, invoking readership.'[139] To further illustrate this point, the variance of pitches and tones from Plath reading her poems to the British Council in 1962 become oddly enunciated from the collage of the voice-over in 2010. The text without the audio would take precedent and readership would enact the poem quite differently to the response of the collaged recording with its varying tones reading it. The audio recordings of Plath and that of the collage poem evoke similarly the omnipresence of a timeframe and a place. Rather than summon a feminine 'bodilessness', they use 'a feminine vernacular of the bodiless to

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[136] Raymond, 2006, 12-13
[137] Raymond, 2006, 31
[138] Raymond, 2006, 38
[139] Raymond, 2006, 34

recuperate the audience and ground of woman's writing for a canonical performance.'[140] The implications that summon Plath's bodilessness in the poems suggest speaking without a body and speaking without a body suggests the elegy of the dead author. The author who is summoned from the collaged text positions Plath to be referential but a nonexclusive authorial source. The referential body reads the collage to reveal a dissimilarity of both Plath and myself who 'mourn the silencing of her voice by commanding the terms of inscription.'[141] Both the collage and poem are physical parts of the same textual body but evoke a different response through the authorial inscriptions invoked in the collage process. In the case of the pre-collaged writing, the narrative of the text suggests an imminence of death and dying in her speech. However, in the collaged writing, Plath is embedded within the tone of her 'voice' that suggests changes have taken place with the body of Plath and that of the original text. The body of Plath is dead and the acknowledgement of death cannot be altered in the collage. Death differentiates Plath's physical body and mine; the attribution of authorship becomes a collage in itself that escapes the materiality of our bodies, both dead and alive. Both Plath's poetry and the collage that follows underline a posthumous attribution that transcends a breathing body as a way of escaping and playing with the constructs of a hierarchical author.

The violence attributed to the affliction of the poet's body in the poetry uncannily comes soon after the event of Plath's suicide when *Ariel* from 1965 appears in print. The posthumously published body of work including 'Lady Lazarus' and 'The Applicant' 'mark[s] that work with sincerity' and subsequently 'made Plath famous as a suicide.'[142] *Ariel* embeds Plath in the violence that afflicted her body before her death and becomes an elegiac script that well-publicizes her suicide two years after it happened. The violence that is implanted in the poem from the referential death of Plath affects both the speaker and the audience as the audience and becomes 'forcefully engaged, drawn into a dialogue that the speaker has commanded as a terrain she will not cede.'[143] Plath's mentioning of and speaking for the violence to herself asserts a representation of her selfhood and becomes 'implicitly necessary to counter the male canon's dismissal of the feminine

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[140] Raymond, 2006, 38
[141] Raymond, 2006, 50
[142] Raymond, 2006, 59
[143] Raymond, 2006, 53

speaker.'[144] The male canon that subjects and manipulates the anomaly of a woman who is considered empowered is taken out of the male dominion. The violence empowered by Plath's selfhood ascribes Judith Butler's concept of 'performativity' to the hysterics and pathology as acts of empowerment in her posthumous embodiment. In the confessional poem of 'Lady Lazarus' and the collage of the voice-over, the posthumous 'I' positions itself with authorial signifiers that are simultaneously embedded and separated in the poems.[145] Both the poem and the subsequent collage assume the 'I' 'from the perspective of the prey […] and presents the difficulty of the feminine speaker as such in the place of elegy.'[146] The collaged recording could compare with a passive author whose inability to physically communicate in the present suggests that the speaker 'whose voice has been torn off' loses his or her own speech.[147] The violence embedded in the metaphor from the word 'dying' in Plath's 'Lady Lazarus', illustrates the removal of Plath's 'voice', while other words that exemplify its resonance like 'stark', 'shut' and 'empty' 'structure a geography of constriction, a threat of voicelessness that the poem overcomes.'[148] The word 'dying' implicates the first person pronoun of 'I' to incorporate an acknowledged willingness of the 'I' with Plath reading the 'I' to practice it:

> Dying
> Is an art, like everything else.
> I do it exceptionally well.
>
> I do it so it feels like hell.

Sylvia Plath, excerpt from Lady Lazarus, 1962

The 'performative' interpretations of the author that ascribe attributions to Plath's identity through Michel Foucault's notion of the 'author function' have a way of encountering Plath through the 'I' being read in her poetry. The holes of the 'I' in her poetry, which are further torn by the violence inflicted to them, are 'also the gap[s] through which the poem reaches [the] audience, the self-elegy inscribing an always unfinished metaphor.'[149] The recognition of 'I' as a subject offers a similarity between

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[144] Raymond, 2006, 53
[145] Raymond, 2006, 43
[146] Raymond, 2006, 188
[147] Raymond, 2006, 194
[148] Raymond, 2006, 194-195
[149] Raymond, 2006, 197

Plath's reading undergoing the collage process by my hand and that of the reader who listens to the accent in the reading of Plath's poetry. The 'performativity' of 'I' as a posthumous attribution of Plath speaks as if 'the author's voice torn off is the text of the poem.'[150] The 'I' is heavily referential and embedded within the holes of it is the violence that the poem causes to it. The 'I' repeatedly forefronts 'the trauma of tearing away the writer's voice [and is] given a place of honour.'[151]

Within the violence embedded in the 'I', trauma represents both clear and evasive indications of the 'posthumous voice' and death represents 'the last scene of the loss of self, but unlike confessional post-traumatic narratives, the trope of the "posthumous voice" does not present its narrator as having come through trauma and survived.'[152] The authorial reference of Plath positions the pronoun of 'I' having survived through writers who have died and have had a supposed effect on Plath during her lifetime, like Yeats. The 'I' in Yeats' poem becomes a source of Plath being observed from an omnipresent state of Yeats' death. Plath is identified more generally within Yeats' poem as she transitions from the state of being to the state of being observed. Yeats plays with the notion of the pathologized and hysterical woman from within a male canon and Plath reverses it by speaking for the referential subject with an elegy that writes itself into canonicity and a place in literature. The trauma repeatedly references an elegiac mould that is sourced from the 'performative' qualities of overcoming victimhood, which overlaps an awareness of being cast in a state of subjection. The experience of trauma for Plath is untranslatable as an omnipresent and 'persistent voice, her ability to persist despite her death as voice, frames death as a legible topos.'[153] The variability of what 'I' could stand for annihilates the sense of the self that is written into the encrypting structure of the narrative. 'Unlike biographical writing, the speaker's death stands for a trauma that persists as residue in the trope of a posthumous voice: the effect of the persistence of the speaker's trauma unexpectedly allies itself to inscription.'[154] The speaker is destabilized and evoked by the trope of the 'posthumous voice'. The 'voice' prematurely inhabits 'a death that comes in fact before its speaker speaks, making text the

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[150] Raymond, 2006, 199
[151] Raymond, 2006, 199
[152] Raymond, 2006, 219
[153] Raymond, 2006, 219
[154] Raymond, 2006, 219

ambiguous site of the speaker's erasure and self-preservation.'[155] Plath summons the construction of a body with a bodiless 'voice' that speaks from within its disappearance. Plath engages with the poem that has an ability to speak in the present with 'a complex interaction between the passive, dead narrator and the active, spectral voice.'[156] The ghostly presence of Plath resonates a presence within it that functions as a metaphor the body. The bodiless body shows 'the unthinkable space of the annihilated self to the public space of the published lyric.'[157] The body of Plath retreats as the reader constructs a text of the body from the introduction of her name to the reader of the poem. The authorial body of Plath 'places together the fragmented pieces of traumata' to construct the body.[158] The construction of the body from the fragmented pieces of traumata becomes '[t]he posthumous voice [that] assumes a history of the body's fragmentation, its dismemberment.'[159] The meeting of several pieces of the fragmented body happens when the trope confronts 'the violence embedded in the cultural iconography of woman as death' through its prescription of trauma 'that acknowledges and linguistically repairs that violence.'[160] In the case of referencing Plath to Yeats' poetry, the violence from the words of the text references the trauma of 'the narrator's earlier death, a death that takes precedence' and that occurred outside of the text.[161] Both the voice-over of the poetry and the collage that follows it intercept the author and enact an event of an interdiction or authoritative prohibition of Plath who poses 'herself delivering her self-elegy after its interdiction.'[162] The 'posthumous voice' embodies a construct of its interception after death both in the observance of Yeats' poem and Plath's subject of 'I'.

I reflected upon Plath's uncanny ability to become a renowned 'diva' as an author and poet when other authors and poets go unnoticed after an academic panel posed this question during the presentation of my project in an examinations upgrade for Ph.D. in 2011. I consider Plath's ability to be a 'diva' to be true because her empowerment with regards to the reception of her writing and biographical identity stands to be one of the most notable for poets of her time. There is a lot of romanticism attached to the writing of

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[155] Raymond, 2006, 221
[156] Raymond, 2006, 224
[157] Raymond, 2006, 224
[158] Raymond, 2006, 225
[159] Raymond, 2006, 225
[160] Raymond, 2006, 225
[161] Raymond, 2006, 227
[162] Raymond, 2006, 227

her own realized death that I believe played an important role in empowering herself in a historical male canon that ascribes the author of a feminine poetics to a binary between that of a passive or hysterical subject. Her authorship resonates from within her death that subjugates referential allusions to her living body. She describes her death in her own terms posthumously while poets like Yeats, for example, describe the hysterics of women who wander away from their domestic implications and write poetry. The reader constructs the body of Plath from the grave, as it is Plath who is describing her identity removed from the masculine gaze. The masculine gaze leaves a 'posthumous voice' to position itself as her corporeality away from a dominant male canon. Plath's embodiment is shown through the pathology of her 'posthumous voice' as a reaction against the male canon that speaks for a selfhood even when she is absent.

Queer Desire

The desire to escape the body, like the triumph for Plath, is to embody the appeal that is attributed to her ability to escape her own body and write about her own death. It is her speech and my words that fabricate an authorial role in *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus*. The memory I have of reading Plath haunts me and I am possessed by her words. Plath and I, who both symbolically function as an author, overthrow the stability and power ascribed to 'an omniscient divinity, that looks from above and hands out destinies like a great puppet-master.'[163] Listening to the disjointed audio reflects how violence inflicted onto the body in the construction of the collage and shows how its intentionality could be read through the process of cutting it. The overtly disjointed sound of the audio suggests that the body is trying to escape it and enables the listener to construct ideas about escaping through the process. The sound of weaved words is muddled together within the space between words before the stopped breath after every stanza. Both the perception of its disjointedness and ability to share this perception outside of the words show how the disjointed feeling of listening to the collaged poem reference Plath through the audio recordings and the constraints in making the collage. Part of the framework of *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* is a commitment to follow the author by securing a proximity, closeness and ghostly presence of Plath to the collage. The constraints of collaging every word that she had spoken during her readings and filming signs near the

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[163] Cavarero, 1997, 140-141

last place she lived in reveals how this excessive documentation of physical and bodily proximity to the author becomes political 'through [its] obsession with commitment.'[164] The collage is embedded with references to its process that speak one name and then imply another name through a silent commitment.

The influence and desire of an embodied state of writing by embracing the words, sounds and images that meet in the gaps between the encounter with Plath and the state of being possessed by her. The breaths of each new stanza, which are contrived and mechanical in *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus*, are 'concepts of the spiritual sphere […] including the concept of spirit […] [that] must be "understood in terms of concrete political existence".'[165] The breath, my intention to create a new breath, cannot be neutral. The contrived breaths are always in conflict with the embodiment of Plath as 'they are "pluralistic".'[166] Plath and I are separated; she is left with a representational identity of a grandiose but dead celebrity and I am left with my breath of desire. This desire to resonate in the breath of the dead celebrity empowers the role of an author in the sense that Plath is in the same realm as the feminine and challenging a legacy of femininity and the roles that women are supposed to assume.[167] My playing with the posthumous body by intertwining myself with the recurrent theme of Plath's death establishes a rhythm in the collage through the familiarity that Plath embodies. Between each fragment of the recorded utterance is my own voice. I feed off of Plath's recording by sharing the breath and the authorial attribution through the collage process involved. The identification of my breath and Plath's embodiment as sustaining a posthumous authorial body by writing about it reflects the bodily violence of the poem and the violence at its representational level, within the cuts of the audio. This type of violence shows the potential resemblance implicated in the feminine role through the cuts in the reading of Plath that resonate in the collaged audio poem. The 'performative' attributes of a shared authorial role, of a possible gender-queer femininity reflects a type of act in which the continuum of man or woman 'in our society, is radically disrupted.'[168] The collage becomes a dichotomy between a woman's reading and a man's breath. The recording that is historically attributed to a woman is subjected to the cuts that happen

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[164] Barthes, 1977, 28
[165] Derrida, 2005, 125
[166] Derrida, 2005, 125
[167] Zarranz, 2009, 28
[168] Zarranz, 2009, 20

decades after. The breath or the space between words subsumes an authorial identity between a recording of Plath and my breath:

> The crowd will be
> smiling on me
> ladies my hands are
> full and I am only
> what I see
> to you stiff in poultice

Chris Girard, excerpt of Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus, 2010

As Plath's 'ghost' becomes older, the 'ghost' becomes less transparent than the 'ghost' I was not. This glowing and perceptible quality of Plath becomes subject to responses that radiate in the breath between the author and the collagist, which underlines the qualities of Butler's concept of 'reiteration'. The dilution of any essence of Plath's corporeality, through Butler's notion of 'performativity' 'must be understood not as a singular or deliberative "act," but, rather, as the reiterative […] practice by which discourse produces the effect that it names.'[169] When I became interested in collaging Plath's poems, I was unaware that the collage was a type of shared embodiment of our authorial positioning. The collage poem engages the audience with a disturbing sound of the collaged recording that transforms the wavering bodies between Plath and myself into an epitaph in the form of a dirge. The effect is eerie because the collage of the recording of Plath's uncanny poetry readings heightens her strange enunciations. 'The crowd will be / smiling on me / ladies' begins the first stanza of the collage and acknowledges the 'crowd'. The recording that beckons the 'crowd' invites readers who are familiar with Plath's work to ruminate on her ghostly presence after her suicide. A reader who may be unfamiliar to the poet and her poetry is presented with the words of an evocative sound piece that addresses the 'crowd' by the collaged audio recording. A gay male 'gaze' that presides over the poetry may be an object of sublimation with the woman's utterance that addresses its faithful acknowledgement. The 'crowd [that] will be smiling' specifically addresses the 'ladies' in the present. The future audience that is 'smiling' appears to be a general one in comparison to the ladies that she confides to. Her playing the role of dying is acknowledged when she mentions that her 'hands are full' and can only be seen 'stiff

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[169] Butler, 1993, 2

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in poultice' as tethered to a body mummified in bandages. The image of the subject as dead as a stiff body contradicts its agency with a moving mouth that it communicates from. The space or the breath between each of the cuts constructs this ghostly echo that is recorded from the past. The collaged recording that addresses the future audience reveals it in the present as a presiding ambivalent 'gaze'. As a collagist, I am breathing for the audio recordings of Plath as an embodiment in the breath that becomes a type of friction and transforms the notion of subjectivity.[170] The audio recording of Plath with my breath in the collage of it introduces a multi-layered and multi-gendered authorial embodiment from the beginning to end of the collaged recording. While the authorial embodiment is within the recording, the embodiment is also within the breath and its process, how the recording is structured. The breath carries the resonance of the words as a collage that sounds violently disjointed. The recording of Plath's reading carries a powerful tone and resonance; and masters a musical rhythm in her poems that were recorded by the British Council in Cambridge on 30th October 1962. The construction of words within the breath that carries the poem sounds very arrhythmic, inhibited and tense like mine. My own 'voice' that exists in the poem represents the breath and if the breath spoke, it would also be full of stuttering, flaws and humility.

The compulsion to collage a literary marvel like Plath is in her subject position that begs for appropriation. She is a popular mythical figure with the virtue of constructing her presence in the realm of representation that identifies in it being borrowed. My poetry similarly is identified in the realm of representation by it being identified in the subject position of Plath. The attributes of Plath, like in her formal name, are canonized in their prescriptive labels within the name that 'preceded their encounter.'[171] Plath, in just her name itself, could indicate generalized yet conflicting attributions. The role of an economically stable yet mentally unstable woman who is in a westernized society is a precedent to suffering from depression and other mental illness. The realization of Plath's suicide manifests her haunting a role that her body was circumscribed to. The role of the body, as an object of collage, echoes the fragmentary roles of her body that the readers 'have become attuned to.'[172] The collage of Plath resembles the tumult of her material body, mummified in 'poultice' after her death. Her

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[170] Zarranz, 2009, 20
[171] Derrida, 1978, 251
[172] Derrida, 2005, 138

intention of dying and the attribution of depression and psychoses are so understandable, so reachable, that the process of reliving her death and re-reliving her death becomes a myth that is intertwined with the floating fragments of her body. Plath is recast as a mummified body that lives during and after the moments that the death of the physical body sets in. The substitution of the body for the wraps in 'poultice' could reference the covering of the discarded parts of the body that have been removed from it. These removed parts of the body, like limbs cut off to preserve the body from a plague-like infestation become embodiments of Plath severed from the implications of her gender. The depression and disease is scraped off into fragments of a 'ghost' that emerges after the death of the body. The fragments become an elegy about the pathologized roles to compensate for a physical body. Plath is in a state of dying within her self-awareness that floats without a body in *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus*. The floating body, which is composed of fragments of personality disorders, becomes a space of being cast away from the physical body, like being collaged from the textual one. The presence surrounding the textual and physical bodies become difficult to differentiate. The relic of Plath's embodiment surrounding my 'voice' in the collage 'is the tormented experience of the inversion of signs.'[173] The collage possesses the phenomenon of the ghostly presence. Plath's life and resurrection, her readings that reference her life of dying that was breathed by my own collage and that of the reader causes her to be a phantom who manipulates the notion of imprisonment in an ideologically constructed subject position.[174] The reader constantly transforms like Plath, however she appears as the 'ghost' of the readers' past, including his or her 'memory, the silhouette of the ghost who not only appears to [him or her] […] but an invisible past, hence a past that can speak, and speak to us in an icy voice. […] And if there were never anything but spectres, on both sides of all opposition, on both sides of the present, in the past and in the future.'[175] The intrigue of the authorial resonance through a constantly dying subject that lives past her death as separated from the body leaves a mythological presence. The presence in the poems of Plath is perpetuated by the primacy of my own 'voice', the breath I create that becomes part of my omnipotent haunting through the 'ghost' of Plath.

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[173] Derrida, 2005, 138
[174] Derrida, 2005, 287
[175] Derrida, 2005, 287-288

Posthumousness

A similar process for every project documented and undertaken after
Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus has been through the words that are created and structured
with constraints. The constraints of proximity and preservation direct the primacy of an
author as the space between words and breath between stanzas that are left unconfined to
a formal structure. These spaces are self-determined by the variable lengths of time that
echo my own authorial intention and inhabit this space. The space points to the collagist
with fragments attributed to Plath that reveals the difference between the voice-over and
the collage. It is an overt impersonation and recasting of an author who is acknowledged
dead that the reader knows is dead. Slavoj Žižek, who argues that the 'voice' always
belongs to a ghostly presence, believes that 'it never quite belongs to the body we see, so
that even when we see a living person talking, there is always some degree of
ventriloquism at work: it is as if the speaker's own voice hollows him out and in a sense
speaks "by itself", through him.'[176] Parts of speech that have been previously heard, the
familiarity of a woman's voice become a construct of language that Plath uses. The
analogue technology reveals the period of time when the reading was recorded. The
intonation of these words brings an established set of guides for the listener to recall; the
sound of breath, its space between words, becomes part of the utterance. The breath
essentially changes the utterance and it makes the way that one speaks recognizably
human. I believe there is an attachment to the breath, similar to an attachment to the eyes
that connects people to each other. The process of dismantling the composition of the
voice-over and replacing the breath with my own space becomes recognizable, too.
Assembling an audio collage that breathes through the newer technology implemented
with it reveals how this convergence becomes an authorial attribution.

The collage depends on the breath; the space between words that holds a universal
resonance and directs a particular identity experienced through the subject position of a
fragmented author.[177] The breath becomes a crack in the body, the edge of fragmentation
that forms the body and becomes a screen of violence that 'confines violence to a single
place or position.'[178] In *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus*, the breath sacrifices the body for
symbolism. Plath's breath is taken out of her. The breath transforms 'Lady Lazarus', an

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[176] Žižek, 2001, 58
[177] Oliver, 1993, 19-20
[178] Oliver, 1993, 40

elegiac poem that has become a biographical representation of Plath's suicide, recasts Plath after the historical moment of her death. She becomes omnipresent as I breathe for her words. The redolence of violence in the breath 'shows how representing that violence [embedded in the spoken words] is enough to stop it.'[179] The collaged voice-over reveals an obvious rearrangement of a prior recording that pulverizes an exclusive association with the prior text and spreads the authorial inscription across space and time. Plath's observance of the prior text solidifies an omnipresent gaze and the breath emerges long after her impending death in the audio collage.

The breath appoints associations of her writing to a new historical moment. The breath serves as 'a specific kind of negativity […] as the logical and material operator of signification. Rejection is the separation of matter, one of the preconditions for symbolization.'[180] The breath functions as the 'voice' of the living that is channelling the dead. An example of the symbolic relationship between the living and the dead is the psychic medium who speaks for the dead by arranging symbolic objects like tarot cards and characters on Ouija Boards to resurrect a dead subject and breathe symbolic and ahistorical meaning into the arrangements of cards, letters and sticks. The reconstitution of the words, like the arrangement of cards, letters or sticks, is cushioned by the breath of the symbolic and 'is a relationship to a boundary.'[181] The separation of the words with the breath of the audio represents the violent deconstruction, reconstitution and cushioning process with space. The breath overlaps the primacy of historical moments and illustrates the possible unification of the abject separation of its process. The breath reunites the fragments that are '"jettisoned out of that boundary, its other side, a margin".'[182] The process emerges as a breathing machine that embodies methodically arranged words. This insertion of empty space becomes symbolic of an ahistorical presence, similar to the manipulation of an Ouija Board as a temporal device put in place to represent the body.

Plath symbolically outlives her maternal body and speaks after her death in the poem 'Lady Lazarus'. The maternal body is heavily subjected to laws that sustain values enacted in a masculine canon. The masculine canon enacts a set of rules, actions and traits that govern the body and act as an extension to the woman's body, a phantom limb.

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[179] Oliver, 1993, 41
[180] Oliver, 1993, 43
[181] Oliver, 1993, 56
[182] Oliver, 1993, 56

The limits to the body suggest that Plath kills the maternal body to escape them while also killing then resurrecting herself and outliving the maternal body. The imperative of her posthumous existence is in the recognition of her symbolically leaving her maternal body behind. Her last actions in biographical accounts are motherly; they are of her protecting her children from inhaling the gas that kills her by covering the cracks in their bedroom doors. The act of 'matricide does not ward off suicide. For women, matricide is a form of suicide.'[183] Biographical accounts have left her representation of motherhood historicized in the townhouse she raised her children in and the objects she used to kill herself; objects that are symbolic of the maternal – the oven she used to kill herself and the towels she placed under the openings of doors surrounding the kitchen to keep the gas in it. The association of Plath to maternal objects and the townhouse that is implicated in her death is surrounded by a historical moment that is nearly impossible to alter. The relationship of Plath to her language is associated to the maternal and was once bound to the repressed maternal until she died. Her death becomes 'the sacrifice, but also the 'truth' upon which the unity of the Symbolic order is maintained.'[184] Plath's suicide becomes matricide by contextualizing the language after death since, in life, it 'is nearly impossible for a woman to be a revolutionary poet who can renovate this language.'[185] The body sustains rigid values and the act of leaving the body behind is to break it apart, which fragments the laws of it. Plath's writing about her death speaks from an autonomous voice that also includes the body that it speaks from.

When Plath committed suicide, she came into possession of her body by killing it. The materiality of the deceased body slowly separates and fragments from the maternal bind that possesses the body, as Plath moves away from it. The posthumous construct of Plath is non-linear and anachronistic in its refusal to hold the body together. Breathing the words through the collage of the voice-over refuses to rectify a historically unstable body. The act of collage unravels an exclusive association of Plath as a pathological figure passing from her death. Kelly Oliver, a writer on Julia Kristeva, believes that being in an embodied state of their own expression forcibly becomes an option for women writers like Plath to identify themselves with men or in a state of pathologization as a source of empowerment. Oliver quoting Kristeva has further argued that 'women can

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[183] Oliver, 1993, 63
[184] Oliver, 1993, 107
[185] Oliver, 1993, 107

enter the Symbolic – language, politics, time, culture – only by identifying as men, or they can withdraw into their silent bodies as hysterics.'[186] The problem with writing attributed to women is how the determination of meaning identifies 'with the values considered to be masculine [like] […] the endorsed communicative word that institutes stable social exchange.' In other words, authors must be 'able to serve or overthrow the socio-historic order by playing supermen […] Others, more bound to the mothers, more tuned in as well to their unconscious impulses […] hold themselves back […] in a permanent state of expectation punctuated now and then by some kind of outburst: a […] "hysterical symptom".'[187] However, Plath manages to break away from the boundaries of the masculine by inscribing herself away from that structure, identifying herself with the masculine through her suicide.[188] She manages to openly perform from the on-going psychosis after her suicide. Plath prolongs the outburst, the hysterical symptom, by becoming an identity that is ungraspable and fragmented. The bits of the body that identify with the play of psychosis and suicide are distanced through the intervals of my breath, its stops that reconstitute other possibilities of the recording.

While the recording becomes a relic of the living, the breath becomes the timeless space of dissolution between my hand and the posthumous state of Plath. The breath is placed into the realm of intention with the poetry that 'is characterized by an attention to the materiality of words, their rhythms and tones, which connects them to the repressed semiotic.'[189] The repressed semiotic becomes apparent in the alteration; the overt unevenness of the rhythm and tone of the recording that places an emphasis on the displacement of the breath, an eerie lack of breath. This breath or space between the recording enables the poetry to call 'into question all that is central to representation […] Poetry pre-alters representation by showing the process of representation itself.'[190] The process becomes a determining factor in sustaining a relationship between the disjointed reading and the breath as a second inscription appears to be contained within the breath, the space between words. The separation of words, isolation of each individual word is considered to be within the realm of the '"language of abjection" [and] […] has its source

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[186] Oliver, 1993, 108
[187] Oliver, 1993, 108
[188] Oliver, 1993, 110
[189] Oliver, 1993, 98
[190] Oliver, 1993, 99

in the repressed Unconscious.'[191] The words of Plath, which are cast by the language of abjection from the fragmentation of her body after death, become part of a collage. The collage process demystifies its authority by revealing the process of how the new poem was created 50 years after the initial poems 'Lady Lazarus' and 'The Applicant' were inscribed. *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus*, the poem that was collaged by a gay male from a woman, is part of the legacy of Plath's abject literature. These abject poems imply that the breath of a hysterical outcast, Plath, is replaced with my own breath. The breath is the space between words that is sourced from a greater derivative of feminine hysterics. A collage of Plath's poetry reading as a hysterical act comes from the fragmentation of an authorial body. The process becomes apparent through the intention that is carried from the space between the utterances. The 'language of abjection points to the lack of meaning and only through its own beauty does it have meaning.'[192] The beauty of Plath's poems is that her flesh, her text, breathes for her, a breath that is apart from her body. Julia Kristeva romanticizes about the suicide of women, as does the reader.[193] She romanticizes about the notion that while 'women are victims of our society, elsewhere [like in death,] they might not be.'[194] The body of Plath struggles to express transgression and breathe away from it, an act that becomes part of a larger narrative of suicide. Plath's suicide denies that this historical act comes '"without a cause", "without drama", "without tragedy".'[195] There is a determinative force, a transgression that becomes 'the natural result of this process of fighting the mother in order to enter language.'[196] The splitting from the mother breaks down the boundary between identity and difference with the maternal body; Plath becomes separate from her pathologized role as a depressed mother and wife when she lives after her death.[197] Part of the struggle in Plath's poetry is to breathe without the subsuming roles of a maternal body, the harm that is inflicted as 'slowly, gently, death settles in.'[198]

Plath's powerful resonance in the collage necessitates the autonomous breath that transgresses her body after her death. The body is fetishized through the force of laws on

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[191] Oliver, 1993, 102
[192] Oliver, 1993, 102
[193] Oliver, 1993, 110
[194] Oliver, 1993, 110
[195] Oliver, 1993, 110
[196] Oliver, 1993, 110
[197] Oliver, 1993, 183
[198] Oliver, 1993, 110

the body; there are restrictions and boundaries withheld within the law that constitutes the differences in roles between men and women. The law that women are named in could be interpreted as that of a masculine force. 'The Whole of the Western tradition, with philosophy at its base, become Man's field of self-representation.'[199] The empowerment of Plath is a challenge the basis of 'Western tradition [as] a patriarchal, androcentric, and phallocentric culture […] destined to survive into the second millennium.'[200] This law is internalized in the body, specifically the body of Plath, like an airborne virus, and becoming mentally ill is a type of 'fetishism [that] appears as a solution to the depression over the loss of the mother.'[201] The law cannot be expunged from the body and holds an arbitrary, if not, a detrimental role like an airborne virus, as the body becomes subject to fetishism when roles transgress. An external law that regulates the body, like through the expectation of a mother, becomes internalized. 'The law is turned inside out; it is within the body. In other words, there is no need for an external law that insures a social relation.'[202] There are plenty of roles that Plath has played and the point of writing this is to reveal how Plath became autonomous by leaving her body yet being acknowledged of once having a body as evidenced by her breath. This perhaps becomes more apparent in the audio collage when the breath of her voice-over is taken away and replaced with an empty ambient space. If other solutions to recovering the body and expunging the laws that regulate the body without suicide are necessary, then assimilating parts of the fragmented body is a solution. 'Kristeva suggests that if we […] bring about multiple sublations [or assimilations] of this other that ha[ve] been excluded, then we won't need to kill it. If […] we acknowledge the death drive, then there might be fewer deaths.'[203]

Hauntology

The audio and video collages create a frame of reference of how and where Plath lived and wrote. This signifier connects her authorial presence to a multitude of other historical subjects and occurrences within the film. The ghostly presence from the collage of the film suggests an authorial signifier with the reader who creates the shifting and swaying of variables. The variables represent a mix of different events and processes that

[199] Cavarero, 1997, 49-50
[200] Cavarero, 1997, 49-50
[201] Oliver, 1993, 137
[202] Oliver, 1993, 185-186
[203] Oliver, 1993, 189

construct meaning through the reader's familiarity with historical representations. These representations form an authorial identity that reference circumscribed roles for Plath and myself by what is said, written and collaged. The materiality of the signs and ambience surrounding them reveal a confluence of wavering shifts and embodiments of historical enactments embedded in the film collage. These enactments occupy the sequence of signs filmed in Camden, London and point to the resonance of a myriad of ghostly presences weaving and overlapping with one another. The historical moments embedded within the signs in the film collages of the project reference the history that the objects and artefacts, like the materiality of bricks underneath the aluminium sheets that the street signs are composed of, carry within them. The composition, colour and wear of the ceramic and mortar in the bricks, for example, could denote the time period of when the bricks were laid. The setting and condition of the acrylic text within an aluminium sign, for example, suggests its function as an instructional object that serves its importance in the area it is actively present in. What is individually filmed and the overall process of recording the sequences of scenes in the collaged video condition the awareness of the reader when the body of text is read in the context of its materiality and ambience. The ambience that inhabits the space around the signs historically suggest struggle, war and economic turmoil but the text in the foreground implies and acknowledges its oblivion to the past. The film recordings of signs filmed in Camden, London in 2009 suggests that the convergence of space and time is perhaps how the reading of the signs comes together. The spectral presence is constant while texts point and direct the reader in different directions. The readers see a different Camden from a similar set of scenes. 'Even if these languages seem to converge toward the same end, they could not be retranslated into each other, and their heterogeneity, the divergence or gap, the distance that decentres them, renders them non-contemporaneous. In producing an effect of irreducible distortion, they [...] submit themselves to a ceaseless recasting.' [204] The constant existence of an object, a body of text spray-painted over advertisements plastered over the brick edifice of a 200-year-old building, divulges a history recast from multiple points of entry.

The architecture that constitutes the structure of London creates an inescapable, multi-layered and spectral presence from the constant building and rebuilding over spaces. The spaces have served through different functions and conditioned the masses in

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[204] Derrida, 1994, 35

the past. The reader who channels the historical presences that haunt the London borough of Camden, in particular, is made aware of the socioeconomic changes from a state-run exodus which began to clear the population in the late 1890s, eventually removing nearly half of its population from 376,500 in 1891 to 202,600 in 2001 according to Camden's demographics. Camden, which was described as an overcrowded slum in city documents during its population peak, appears to now be a gentrified relic after an incentive by the city passed to clear half of the population a century prior. Camden manifests a ghostly presence like a town built over a ruin with its freshly painted frames, commemorative plaques of famous historical figures, lottery billboards and bistro signs. The reader unearths the politics that channel the path of the landscape with a story of how the path directs the text and embellishes it.[205] Meaning is attributed to the spectral presence as the reader articulates meaning into the embedded text of Camden through the text's servitude of the subject.[206] Although speech flourishes by the reader, it becomes more directed. The landscape stays constant with the changing of signs that the reader provides a passageway for.[207] The authorial inscriptions of the text embody the attributions of a historical yet omnipresent London with 'the dividing line [that] passes between a mechanical reproduction of the spectre and an appropriation that is so alive, so interiorizing, so assimilating of the inheritance […] that it is none other than the life of forgetting.'[208] The inscriptions of signs partially fill erasures to the historical 'spectres' of London.

The 'spectre' as described by Derrida betrays its history by foregrounding a presence of overlapping historical moments among many, and constantly borrows and appropriates those historical moments in the present. When the reader ascribes meaning to a historical foundation that the text embodies, the reader inherits the simulacra of a 'ghost' that enacts a body without property.[209] It makes the body of the ungraspable visible and speak from and around the storefront signs it haunts.[210] Death embodies its historical moment as an inescapable and omnipresent weight 'on the living brain of the living […] [that] must then have some spectral density. To weigh is also to charge, tax,

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[205] Derrida, 1994, 65
[206] Derrida, 1994, 67
[207] Derrida, 1994, 70-71
[208] Derrida, 1994, 111
[209] Derrida, 1994, 42
[210] Derrida, 1994, 7

impose, indebt, accuse, assign, enjoin.'[211] This historical representation proliferates meaning that the spectral presence could potentially expand by incorporating the text through a field of spectral prescription.[212] When the reader's awareness of a historical omnipresence is active in the film collages, meaning runs from within the text and every exit from the text is made from within it.[213] The signs, the fonts, materials, sounds and colours embed a code of historical reference that animates the spectral existence and, in the example of the film collage, haunts London.

Figure 9. Chris Girard, Photographic Détournement of Yeats Plaque, 2010

The photographs of a shiny blue plaque that were included in the installation of *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* as four by six inch matte prints scattered on the floor show a transformation of a historical moment to an instruction, which was digitally altered on Photoshop. The plaque originally commemorates Yeats, having been a young child between the ages of two and seven at the time he lived at the townhouse, adorns the building to indicate the historical presence and denote where a part of his illustrious past has taken place. Although Plath has a more vivid provenance to the house, only the plaque of Yeats is shown next to the front doorway. The London City Council, who commissions the plaques, apparently decided that the historical moment of Yeats' life should be historicized and memorialized at this specific location. Because of this physical emphasis of Yeats' presence at 23 Fitzroy Road in Camden, London contradicts the primary historical attribution of Plath's suicide, the plaque attached to their former residence shifts the historical moments of Yeats and Plath into an overlapping and intertwining spectral presence. Since the plaque represents the young life of Yeats,

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[211] Derrida, 1994, 109
[212] Derrida, 1994, 72
[213] Derrida, 1994, 76

growing up becomes attributed to the man in the same townhouse that death is attributed to the woman. The townhouse inevitably links Yeats to the walls that his painter father nailed his portraits to, the same enclosures that aided in the suffocation of Plath. With Plath's asphyxiation by gas from the kitchen oven comes the premeditation of death through the use, physical structure and materiality of the home by blocking off the openings underneath closed doors to enclose the walled room and seal it with gas. Another implication of the townhouse's physical presence is by the supposed secrecy of her actions from family members who are physically away, divided and protected from the gas by the blocked doors and walls in other rooms. With Plath's vivid and tragic implications connecting her death to 23 Fitzroy Road, a blue plaque that marks her historical presence is mounted at another former residence of hers about 500 feet away at 3 Chalcot Square. The plaque on this particular residence, which reads that she lived at the location from 1960 to 1961, begs the spectator to take precedence of a spectral presence to a place that she temporarily lived at and left, over the more notable one. The choice of attributing Plath to a former, more obscure, residence and Yeats to the townhouse that Plath was significantly connected to exemplifies that while historical moments are subject to mediation and linear storytelling, there is a myriad of overlapping spectral presences that occur and simultaneously occur in the attribution of place. While the primary emphasis to the townhouse in the film clips attributes the suicide of Plath almost half a century before it was filmed for *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* and almost a century after Yeats lived there, the direct tie to the historical moment of Plath that links the walls, and doors to her suicide also intertwines with Yeats and other past and present occupiers of the household. Although both Plath and Yeats are symbolically attached to the materiality of the home, the symbolic attribution of the structure of the townhouse and the blue plaque to the author references an ephemeral historical moment that simultaneously intertwines actions with other historical moments attributed to the objects.

After Heart

The resonance of Plath constantly acknowledges a previously embodied persona that is shaped and figured in a male canon that cracks and fragments in my collage. Although the fragmented recording can pose a confusing resonance, it throws itself against the conventions of representation, the incongruence of poetry and gender. The

section initially became the 'hall of mirrors' of theory as it includes a multidirectional assemblage of writing about Plath and how this corresponds with my own collage that blends with the theories of Plath. The assemblage of my own assessments with those of Plath and the theoretical components are clarifying my stance of Plath as an iconographic source for information and resource in context with the readings I have made. Plath plays the role of the author, which is historically an empowered role, and how the role relates to Plath is through her subject position in her poetry via the author function, as termed by Foucault. The portrayal of Plath and other historical women authors preserves a role, a duty, which embodies the iconic figure to justify an authorial role that she is up against. Plath, for example, is historically presented and assembled as an object of presumption in her writing; the general roles and presumptions of a housewife, mother and sufferer of mental illness form Plath's identity. The process of becoming an icon causes an erasure of Plath's actual lived history. These particular details relate to roles as a housewife or mother, for example, that she strays from but as a body with governing roles attributed by her, a body indescribable without her writing. This iconizing process paradoxically forms an erasure as it implies a presence that the feminine subjects occupy the subordinate position of justifying her place amongst an empowered role. The privilege that comes with being empowered comes with it a justification. The justification for the woman author is the being of an icon, that the iconized Plath triumphs over, by resurrecting herself, writing about her death, and establishing herself as fluid after the realization of her death. The ghostly roles, which are gender neutral, have features that present the author in a swaying embodiment, dependent upon how Plath constructs herself. Neither does the author, an icon of her authorship, write her story, nor is she the primary attribution in her story. Plath serves the subordinate role of being iconized in writing as the icon written by others.[214] Plath incorporates the complexities of a subject that assimilates the icon of womanhood from the realm of death. If she iconizes herself, it is in the act of writing about her death that is fluid, and then writing the eulogy about the body that it left behind.[215] The process of becoming an author in the realm of death makes the non-static positioning of her selfhood fluctuate because the 'ghost' is entirely dependent on the author, while she holds a static and iconic position.

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[214] DuPlessis, 1990, 43
[215] DuPlessis, 1990, 55

The author becomes an iconic figure that Plath herself creates and within the 'ghost' are other embodiments and iconic sources that have been written by Plath. If Plath iconized herself, it may be the writing that takes on a ghostly omnipresence, the suggestion of it being written after her death. The process of becoming an icon emerges with a 'ghost' figure that comes from the writing. If the 'ghost' is identified as having a body that once existed, the 'ghost' acknowledges its containment of a previous history of the body. If there is a sense of an impending death that could be realized, the writing is then inscribed from or after the death. Everything about the subject of Plath as being a dead writer recounts her life in the past. The dead writer becomes powerful and energetic as with it comes recognition of her having an omnipresent past. She grows around the writing that iconizes her, a marionette that pursues and accounts for her. Plath covertly expresses what has happened to her and what is the cause of her mental state before she becomes 'absorbed and accounted for when she enters the propulsive economy of sexual desire.'[216] Plath expresses the allegory in her poetry as she is interpreted in a bordered chasm of 'shifts, contraries, negations, contradictions; linked to personal vulnerability and need.'[217] Plath's depression, which precedes an imminent death due to the suffering, is inevitably quieted after death, which brings the past into focus. The depression also becomes a historical moment that suggests an end to it after death, and the pathologized body, the control of the body by pathological assessments, after the body is lost in death. The death, in many ways, becomes an embodied area that precedes the writing. Plath embodies the sense of an omnipresent wisdom as she transforms language between deadness, living and desire that she emulates in the living transformation.[218] Plath writes about a state she is living in, as if she lived there for an eternity. It is familiar, the state that she writes for and is interpreted as a place of familiarity. Plath's awareness of the multiplicity of women allegorically translates to the 'pursuit of women, metaphorically as a field of flowers.'[219] The gaze directed to 'a field of flowers' encapsulates a resonance that speaks for her and by her. The powerful transformation aspires to represent and articulate her own body in the writing of her death. Plath's 'ghost' is also absorbed in the icon, however it is herself who writes that which becomes her icon.

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[216] DuPlessis, 1990, 62
[217] DuPlessis, 1990, 6
[218] DuPlessis, 1990, 65
[219] DuPlessis, 1990, 64

Any prior or subsequent alteration of Plath's poetry, whether by means of collage, engages this history and holds the social and formal implications of gender. The establishment of a gender and a gendered poetic 'voice' is embedded in the history of the poet in a 'female, or a neutral-yet-gendered voice [that is] not necessarily confessional of their lives.'[220] If a woman writes in a cultural space that is active with a concentration of previous poems, poetics that involve women, she becomes a mediator in relationship to the writing. Thus, she becomes partially cannibalized and neutralized.[221] While the poem holds its content, other sequential and structural changes follow in the collage. 'A woman, [...] muted or in danger, or bold and unheard, or admired but forgotten [...] is mostly a cultural artefact in many of the traditions of meaning which [she] draw[s].'[222] The collage reveals its history embedded in-between the letters and below or above the words. 'So all in all, even with exceptions, the institution of gendered poetry and the male-gendered poetic voice are embedded in the history of poetry.'[223] The creation of poetry includes the process of creating and recreating collage poetry. Collage poems that are reconstituted affect the single author whose history and relationship to writing hold with it circumscribed events that iconize and sustain representations. The iconic imagery sustains the preconceived notions that are obtained by the reader as the writing is filled with attributions, icons and roles that allude to and historically precede Plath and then are circumscribed to her subject position.

The collage process acquires words and creates an embodiment that is present with the collagist. The engagement with the former body of writing creates a shared body between Plath and the collagist. Embedded in the collage is the iconic fragment of Plath who reads the poem with a muttered English accent that alludes to the poems she read within it. In terms of gender, the composition of the individual words that constitute the collage is gendered, both masculine in appropriation and feminine in its subjectivity. Neither the use of language, which could be considered feminine, nor the acquisition and appropriation of it, which could be considered masculine, are necessarily faithful the roles circumscribed to them, and perhaps would be less of a question if the role were given to a woman collagist to a male subject. The importance is in the language in the

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[220] DuPlessis, 1990, 141
[221] DuPlessis, 1990, 141
[222] DuPlessis, 1990, 141
[223] DuPlessis, 1990, 141

words that are embedded gendered roles deep, or perhaps not so deep, within each of the prefixes and letters. Besides gender, the words, like the author, are imbued with cultural values, as the social and hierarchical status of the author that wrote the utterances become an important part of determining the words. The icon becomes part of the utterances between two or more subjects, the collagist and the collaged. The objects and their signifier by the collage become iconized even when an actual addressee is absent.[224] The words present multiple layers of history from the author, the collagist, the reader and objects as icons. The layers of words, objects and icons embedded in them, show how 'the capacities for cueing, status, power, and the interconnection of social and verbal realms [...] have been self-consciously accounted for in the understanding of poetry.'[225] The icon becomes the wordless rock embedded in the unearthed layers of fragments.

Even canonical texts, like the individual poems that Plath wrote, become iconic objects. Because of how canonical texts are continuously reused and transformed, Rachel DuPlessis argues that canonical texts, like the writing from the poems 'Lady Lazarus' and 'The Applicant' by Plath 'are culturally used especially by literary criticism, as objects, as if final or fixed, with no sense of historical movement.'[226] Plath's two poems represent restriction of movement for the author; a need to break, and the process of breaking away with the realization that Plath has carried this out. The poem iconizes Plath and could propose her as a sacred object. Through the sacred icons of authorship and its objects, the complication of collage becomes a subliminal part of the poem and resists the familiarity of any possible predefined notion of the icon. DuPlessis, who is also a poet, resists the familiar representation of the icon by 'want[ing] to invent works that would protest or resist this process, not protect it.'[227] A lot of contemporary poetry is rooted in embracing and resisting the iconizing process of an author. The icon exists in its resistance as if the 'whole poetic tradition is made up in great proportion of lyrical/social statements which produce women in various ways […] produce them as the objects of regard.'[228]

With the collage of Plath, and her writing for her own body, the focus on Plath semantically and linguistically in allusions and images, becomes a representational object over and over again. Plath, in life, has little literary control of other signifiers and then

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[224] DuPlessis, 1990, 141
[225] DuPlessis, 1990, 143
[226] DuPlessis, 1990, 147
[227] DuPlessis, 1990, 147
[228] DuPlessis, 1990, 150

represents this helplessness as detached in her death. She writes for the helplessness, as she confronts being in a conundrum of playing an active speaking role, the subject for her own work, that is subjected to external processes, which in itself, death becomes a role that is determined and realized by her, a cultural artefact, she is able to change from her iconic position to other positions, and play with her own body like a collage. It is in a fluid body that Plath exists or inhabits her writing, inside and outside of it as 'a cultural artefact or object in the thematic and critical traditions on which she, perforce, draws.'[229] Plath is part of a subject-object and scrutinized position that is embedded in the writing. The way she acknowledges a position and plays with the inflexibility of womanhood is by killing it off. This, in turn, translates to a realized death, a body that she eulogizes and becomes separated from her in her writing. Plath also challenges the traditions associated with modernism by making flexible the 'attempt to take various permutations of 'new women' and return them, assimilate them to the classic Western idea of woman as […] static, inflexible.'[230] Through death, Plath destabilizes the static positioning of her own body, and the associations to it. Instead of being completed as an icon, the qualities of being able to be separate from the body, from being completed in a historical sense by others' hands like the iconic images of angels, monsters or other representations, she acted in herself as an emblem of the flexibility of her own bodily positioning.

On Fantasia

Pathological terms need to be reconsidered for writers, specifically women writers and more specifically Plath. The disproportionate overuse of prescriptions becomes a weaving of pathological terms to justify authorial embodiments. The review examines the how the persona of Plath invokes, and encourages the problematic appropriation of predetermined patterns and concepts when attributed to identity. In an interview with Peter Orr, who worked for The British Council in 1962, which was a year before her suicide, Plath told him that she believed 'poems immediately come out of the sensuous and emotional experiences' she has. She further explained that she 'cannot sympathize with these cries from the heart that are informed by nothing except a needle or a knife.' In saying this, it appears that she is trying to express that there needs to be contextualization

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[229] DuPlessis, 1990, 150
[230] DuPlessis, 1990, 152

and depth to the first-person narrative, further stating that 'personal experience is very important, but certainly it shouldn't be a kind of shut-box and mirror looking, narcissistic experience.' She further believes 'it should be relevant, and relevant to the larger things, the bigger things such as Hiroshima and Dachau and so on.' The events surrounding World War II were relevant and occurred about 15 to 20 years prior to Plath writing her poems. The post-war trials and news stories about bombing victims and former bombing sites alluded to its ghostly presence that had an impact on Plath throughout the 1950s and into the early 1960s. The pervasiveness of these new stories resonates as much of an awareness and familiarity to her as those who also listened to and watched the news.

Plath's ego, represented in her poetry through the pronoun of the first person, is an internal crisis that is expressed throughout, perhaps more clearly in her last set of poems that were published after her death. Writing is an experiential catharsis, an event of trauma from the past that ends and then begins as a ghostly presence when Plath commits suicide. The ghostly presence of Plath reflects the ghostly encounters of her past like the events surrounding World War II. The writing embeds Plath's life and selfhood in the pronoun of 'I' and 'celebrates linguistic fragmentation, the disintegration of her gendered body after she dies.[231] Her death makes her poetry a continuum for the persona to embody a 'ghost' and be omnipresent in a historical or spiritual sense. Plath became iconic after committing suicide in 1963, which was almost exactly 50 years before this body of writing has become written. Ted Hughes called the iconography that surrounds his late wife 'fantasia', and wrote for *The Guardian* in 1989 'that the Fantasia about Sylvia Plath is more needed than the facts.' The biographical 'facts' of Plath's life and existence are a phantom of the pre-existing iconographic image that Plath holds. The iconographic image envelops the narration of Plath's life. Plath is deconstructed with a psychoanalytical bent that examines why Plath has such a fractured historical identity. The morbid fascination with feminine icons, and the conceptions of women in the public eye allegorize cultural anxieties around feminism, sexuality, violence and the desire for violence. The poems that were published and edited after Plath's death epitomized her legacy, which reproduces her as a marked woman in the writing who sways between sanity, madness, and suicide. Any familiar or uniform image of Plath has been atomized by biographical readings with psychoanalytic foundations of the 'marked' woman.

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[231] Rose, 1997, 26

The way Plath reshaped and intertwined her body to purportedly aggrandize herself and trivialize history is an intention of turning her accounts into a large-scale document of the world and to relate her body in a powerfully historical way. Plath's authorship is criticized in 'the way she weaves her personal mythology into historical moments and events, notably fascism and the Holocaust [and] taking advantage of such horror by using it as a metaphor for [her] [...] discovery and expression.'[232] Plath's utilization of the Holocaust to emphasize the sadism of her father and husband in her poem entitled 'Daddy' has become a topic of controversy but it has also been argued that being Jewish is an enviable state that grants an origin and divine paternity.[233] The line in Plath's poem which espouses 'I think I may well be a Jew' in 'Daddy' gives possibility to taunting the male figure she addresses, further exhibiting him as a sadist, and herself as his victim. As her conception of the Jewish persona 'escape[s] the burden of historic guilt […] the total innocence of the Jew, for the one who is not Jewish, turns into a form of guilt.'[234] The historical representation of the Jew during the Holocaust becomes a figure, for which Plath embellishes the atrocity of the event and evokes 'that piece of collective memory which it is hardest for the culture to recall, hardest for those who did not like through it, hardest often […] for those who did.'[235] Plath's resonance and connection to the Jew becomes a process of locating the mechanisms of writing as 'the question remains of the relationship which holds between the writing and the life.'[236] The process of connecting a familiar but distant identity to those unrelated to being Jewish in the Holocaust becomes a process of collaging and re-collaging the voice-over, to deconstruct and distort perceptions of the author, but frame the Jew in a way that he or she is invisible to the audience. The poems in *Ariel* that were published in 1965 are well-known poems for being written before her death and become haunted by the death of Plath, similar to the fate of many Jews. The way Plath weaves personal mythology into historical events like the Holocaust subjects her to accusations of 'trivializing history, and aggrandizing herself, of turning real horror into fantasy, of taking advantage of such horror by using it as a metaphor for the discovery and expression of [her].'[237] When Plath alludes to the

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[232] Rose, 1997, 7
[233] Rose, 1997, 217
[234] Rose, 1997, 218
[235] Rose, 1997, 8
[236] Rose, 1997, 4
[237] Rose, 1997, 7

Holocaust, she evokes a familiar memory that becomes 'hardest for the culture to recall, hardest for those who did not live through it, hardest often […] for those who did.' The familiarity that the images conjure up is how it interacts with assumptions of an event, similar to how images that allude to the author interact with assumptions of him or her. The images find a 'way back into memory, it then appears like a return of the repressed – a fragment of the cultural unconscious that will not go away.'[238] The repression becomes the unconscious desire to explain it, to somehow cure it, or justify the event that lingers.

The predetermined diagnoses of Plath that associate her with the symptoms of psychotic illness and the troubles of the unconscious mind make her guilty of being ill. She is freely diagnosed as schizophrenic or psychotic as 'her writings [are taken] as symptom or warning, something [the reader] should both admire and avoid.'[239] The idea of Plath as being a fantasia comes from the iconographic qualities of the famous author that Plath holds. The fantasia is unnecessarily a 'purchase on, or even interest in, the truth' as Plath is presented as fantasy in her books.[240] 'But, rather than seeing this as a problem, it asks what her writing, and responses to it, might reveal about fantasy as such.'[241] If overcoming trauma is the intent of Plath's poetry, the focus becomes on the writing rather than Plath's life because she is already dead. The expression of writing inevitably dichotomizes how it could be construed to Plath's life, which a connection is inevitably fragmented, so the writing is what is left of it. There is no objective position possible for writing about Plath. Plath exists independently of her lived life by the 'extra-textual mind', which is a formation of the texts from the reader and a predetermined persona conditioned by the texts. The life and establishing the biographical facts about the lived existence of Plath come secondary to the writing, 'because accounts of the life […] nowhere ha[ve] been demonstrated more clearly than in relation to Plath [and] base themselves on a spurious claim to knowledge.'[242] Plath's eminence is left with qualities and characteristics attributed to biological 'facts' in which the details diverge from there. The persona fuses into the texts with the predetermined nature of the author behind them.

The division that is internal to the language, the difference of text from itself, reveals how the difference in how the poem is written to the intention or identity of the

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[238] Rose, 1997, 8
[239] Rose, 1997, 3
[240] Rose, 1997, 5
[241] Rose, 1997, 5
[242] Rose, 1997, ix

person who produces the writing.[243] The first draft of a poem suggests the unconscious motivation and the subsequent drafts reveal the way that Plath altered the text.[244] The reconstruction of Plath's thoughts during the writing process is problematic for a reading that purports to be only a textual examination; it has moved to the realm of authorial intention and the author's mind. The thoughts of the author are sifted, suggested and challenged when the drafts of the poems are analysed by both her critics and the masses in a culture that the poems are part of.[245] The rereading of the poetry by critics become reinvigorated and altered as if Plath 'were almost rewriting it, we could say, against or in anticipation of the readings to come.'[246] The drafts attempt to reveal the writer behind the text, and follow the structuring of her mind, the drafts function differently than that of the texts. This proposal conjures up the author, suggesting why she wrote what she did rather than what the writing independently can do, and asserts the importance of the woman behind the text. Plath is able to express the depths of lived life reflected through her poetry, inspired and controlled by the ghosts of her own past. The referential past of events surrounding World War II imitates the conditioning of Plath's authorial presence, which appears to be 'a ghost of our culture, therefore, it is above all because of what she leads that culture to reveal about itself.'[247] Her persona, as with her work, creates meaning that transcends its original time, place and context that becomes subject to contemporary cultural understanding. The persona for almost any authorial figure could be argued to be inherently transcendental. Plath stands out as being one of a few authors as having achieved this specific realm. Plath is an exceptional circumstance because she 'has been made into an emblem for the flight of poetry – poetry as the expression of a transcendent selfhood, poetry as rising above the dregs of the culture which it leaves behind.'[248] Plath is living as a transcendental grey spot between predetermined notions of her life and the active, changing body of the poem. She inhabits sperm, invades the egg. The sperm, encapsulated by Plath, critiques patriarchy in her poems by leaving her relationship to it unresolved and conflicted. Both the masculine and feminine are asserted in Plath, which reveal the embodiment of characteristics that are associated with both

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[243] Rose, 1997, 5
[244] Rose, 1997, 141
[245] Rose, 1997, 10
[246] Rose, 1997, 142
[247] Rose, 1997, 6
[248] Rose, 1997, 8

genders. It is important that Plath, as a woman, be able to be left in a state of conflict and irresolution, like her poetry, as it will never be resolved, perhaps even when the problems and inequality of gender could one day become so. Gender plays an importance in Plath's poetry. She is able to sway in relative terms between masculine and feminine. The dichotomy of gender in Plath's poetry suggests that the anxiety of being indecisive could be how she is left in a transcendental and ghostly state. Plath, as an author, 'is neither one identity, nor multiple identities simply dispersing themselves. She writes at the point of tension – pleasure/danger, our fault/my fault, high/low culture – without resolution or dissipation of what produces the clash between the two.'[249] The characteristics of the female and male genders, which become important in understanding Plath, are left swaying in a binary. The characteristics lead to conclusions that could one day 'cease to exist; and human nature will have forgotten the "he and she".'[250]

The desire and futility for singular truth is demonstrated in the need for resolution and a tangible, and iconic identity. While the act of writing demonstrates a desire to express or produce, the madness it reveals could also suggest a method of explanation. 'Writing may be a revelation of character, it may even be a form of madness but for the one who writes, it can equally be a way of staying sane.'[251] Plath had sinus infections in London; the illness Plath had spoken of in her journals 'seems to be diluted from acute, physical reality […] as if, therefore, the text was somehow disembodying itself, or as if illness […] should not express itself.'[252] The illness, which is already predetermined, becomes part of a collected body of assessments, similar to how biography functions in authorship. The extremism of Plath's subject position as a white educated woman serves as 'the last bastion against a general cultural mediocrity' and allows her to challenge conventional roles attributed to her subject position.[253] The persona expressed in the construction of the poem's author reveals the conflicts that she has with womanhood, as well as the writing that allows for the reader to have insight into the Holocaust. The identity gives Plath a transcendental status, since her subjects evoke similar sentiments to someone who was a victim of the Holocaust. 'If, therefore, the Holocaust appears as historical reference only in the last years of Plath's writing, the delay is coincident with

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[249] Rose, 1997, 10
[250] Rose, 1997, 116
[251] Rose, 1997, 4
[252] Rose, 1997, 79
[253] Rose, 1997, 21

the memory of the survivors themselves. Her tardiness mimics, or chimes in with, their own.'[254] References and allusions could change and vary within one's knowledge of the Holocaust and cultural relationship to its references. In this regard, '[w]riting finds itself in the space of the body only to be immediately arrested there – whether by "inevitable" constriction […] or by an act which can be only referred to as wicked, which cannot in fact be named because it is the ultimate taboo.'[255] Plath transcends a stable entity between her own body and that of the written language; she is 'occupied by body and language together – between public and private space.'[256] The public space, in which the reader presumes the author is invisible, refers to the biography and events inherent in language. The private body could be dead or alive, buried or hidden from view. 'What matters is […] the distinction between those writers who live through the responses they give rise to, and those who – for want of such attention – fall into oblivion and merely die.'[257] The importance of Plath's suicide to the writing shows that death is an action. Its biographical predetermination could be written about and for death, like a grim reaper that embodies Plath hovers and taps on her own shoulder.

Section Three – Praxis

Art and Authorship

The act of attributing an authorial source in other forms besides writing can be delivered through discourse that is attributed to the author in contemporary artwork. In order to associate conceptual meaning to an authorial figure, the comparison between the artwork of Sophie Calle, Matthew Buckingham, and my positioning and play with an authorial figure will be explored through the film portion of *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* and *Shadows/Shadows/Tomb*. The 'performative' roles of the subject and the author, who are given a shared identity and place in the artwork, offer interpretations as a more visual praxis to collage writing, for example. Calle records herself and other subjects in public spaces to document their actions while in public. Their actions are circumscribed roles as Calle attributes their 'loneliness' in the public sphere without the subjects ever talking to,

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[254] Rose, 1997, 216
[255] Rose, 1997, 30
[256] Rose, 1997, 40
[257] Rose, 1997, xii

interacting with or acknowledging the presence of Calle or other voyeurs. Calle uses herself to investigate ideas around fragmentation and isolation by following or recording people in the public space and intertwining her selfhood into the subjects she follows. The authorial role between her and her subjects destabilizes through the juxtaposition of intimacy and voyeuristic detachment. Similar to a relationship between Plath and myself, Calle closely works with her subjects from a detached perspective. In a project from 1979 entitled *Suite Venitienne*, she closes in on the distance between her and the subject who is unaware that he is being followed and photographed by creating a personal narrative during each recording of his whereabouts in Venice, Italy. A narrative occurs by selecting scenes of the man she photographed, for example, which inscribes a relationship between Calle and the subject. The authorial inscription delivers a construct of detachment and isolation between the man she is recording and her own body.

Figure 10. Left: Matthew Buckingham, Video Still from Play The Story, 2007
Figure 11. Right: Sophie Calle, Images of Subjects from Suite Venitienne, 1979

The intimacy involved constructs a proximal closeness between the author and subject. In the collage as in many of Calle's projects, the subject is oblivious to being recorded and appropriated. Both examinations investigate the constitution of identity from a detached perspective by implying a set of actions through texts attributed to an unwitting subject. Calle's isolation in the public space also becomes scrutinized in *Suite*

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Venitienne as the cameras that she photographs with fetishize and isolate her intimacy in the public space. The artwork that Calle produces is subjected to the same method of appropriation that Calle makes to her subjects by the spectators of her artwork. The state of isolation and subject of her selfhood attributes a level of intimacy to Calle without the viewers ever talking to or interacting with the artist. The voyeuristic following is further explored two years after *Suite Venitienne*, in 1981, after Calle asked her mother to hire a private detective to follow her. Calle hoped that she would be photographed as proof of her own existence in *The Shadow*. The narrative she produced between the detective who followed her and her in being followed attempted to discover an identity under the surveillance of the detective. The 'I' that constitutes Calle's authorial positioning in the narrative is shown with the images taken of her without her face ever being revealed in the photographs taken of her. The viewer reveals a representational aspect of 'I' as he or she comes in contact with something that is implied to be the subject of Calle but remains elusive.[258] The inscription of an author through the examination of embodiment of two or more isolated subjects shows 'performativity' as a fluid variable in determining meaning. While the artwork of Calle is considered disproportionate to the individual consciousness of her unwitting subjects, the implied attributions reveal the vulnerabilities of constantly being watched by an unseen spectator.[259] The way that her body is positioned in public and how she switches authorial roles by closely and obsessively focusing in on her subjects anticipates my play and positioning of Plath as a subject in my own artwork. The authorial inscription sways from the direction of the artist to the distant intimacy of his or her subject. The scrutiny involved in forging a connection between the artist and subject results in an uncomfortable closeness. The closeness that is created by an inscription of the subject by the artist who is both speaking and being spoken for.

Another contemporary artist who became closely involved with his or her subject is Matthew Buckingham. Buckingham looked at the authorial role of early feminist writer Mary Wollstonecraft in his installation entitled *Play the Story* from 2007 that plays with authorial attributions by presenting historical clichés or conventional characteristics of upper class and noble women who lived in Europe during the Georgian Era to represent Wollstonecraft. The setting of Buckingham's installation reflects a stage set of Georgian

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[258] Hopkins, 2000, 242
[259] Gaywood, 2005, 96

style decorum with panelled white walls, a large dark and polished wooden door. The scene is underneath an exaggerated crystal chandelier to reinforce the representation and stereotype of a conventional upper class lifestyle in the 1700s to conflict with her radical feminist beliefs. The attribution of her authorship begins with the audio recording of the reader who is dressed in a long white period gown and tied up hair presumably made to fit with the setting. She introduces herself as Wollstonecraft and reads assembled snippets of quotes by the eighteenth century proto-feminist writer, upside down.

The anachronistic and exaggerated elements of *Play the Story* represent the play with authorial representation by historicizing the speaker into a 'ghost' who is standing on the ceiling at the opposite end of the room. The reading is constructed of snippets from documents published during Wollstonecraft's life and after her death as the reader makes associations to the narrative within the room to issues that plague the present moment. Although the early feminist's authorial identity is constructed to fit into a historically normative role, her speech continues to manifest on contemporary issues. The snippets of writings that were read aloud detach the authorial identity of Wollstonecraft from a historical moment to a haunting presence that has agency to relay discourse on contemporary American politics, for example, and show the anachronistic nature of the author. The attribution of Wollstonecraft's fragmented identity mimics the instability of a historical moment and the variability of the reader who is constructing the authorial identity from the historical representations and meanings to the present. While the room serves as a visual critique of the fragility of the author, the room and the narrative converge to address how meaning making is ascribed to the present from the detached representation of history. The room serves a primary purpose of representing a historical moment and the authorial representation of Wollstonecraft is destabilized by the ghostly figure who stands on the ceiling; the acknowledgement of the author's death by the 'ghost' and meaning making by the reader further becomes unlimited by her presence. The spectator becomes the reader who is standing below or above her on the floor and actively listening. The anachronistic 'ghost' addresses questions of identity as several sources of the writing are floating, disappearing, reappearing and shifting after the fragments are collaged and reassembled. Like the authorial identity of Plath, the identity of Wollstonecraft anachronistically lives in a specific time period and is given a set of normative roles circumscribed to women during the time period she lived in. The

performer represents Wollstonecraft no differently than other historical representations of noble women. The authorial role hinders Wollstonecraft as a subject whose life is dependent on her early feminist work. Her early feminist work may vividly materialize when her identity received more attention than her writing that was given a reading to accompany it. The subject of Wollstonecraft was canonized by representations of her life through her early publications and memoirs that were posthumously published in a candid biography by her late husband William Godwin in an attempt to justify her radical views and reflect on her tumultuous love affairs, her illegitimate child and her suicide attempts. The authorial identities of both Plath and Wollstonecraft are marginalized to a constant play of pathologized yet normative roles in historical moments. Like Plath, Wollstonecraft's authorial identity is expected in many ways to play normative roles circumscribed to women. But since Wollstonecraft is an author and in a power position that is traditionally unattributed to women, she becomes circumscribed to the role of a suicidal housewife and mother whose aberration of being an author is an attempt to explain why she embodies an active feminine figure in the realm of the masculine.

The attribution of the author and the role of identity in *Play the Story* are shaped and conditioned by the male artist who is giving a representation of the feminine author as the reading of quotes by Wollstonecraft. The tension created by both the artist and subject is the normative traits primarily exhibited through the shifting and subverting the characteristics of a multi-gendered authorial body. The reader identifies Wollstonecraft in relationship to the loose aggregate of personality traits assembled through the construction and consumption of her image that is being destabilized by Buckingham. The subject that is left is a ghostly embodiment with an unstable authorial positioning. Since Wollstonecraft is known for her autobiographical identity, her identity becomes an object that presupposes commitments to what is being read. The narratives transport the reader from the past into the present and back again. The performer dressed in period attire and situated in an anachronistic set shows that the author is no longer an individual but a fluid set of effects produced by processes of signification.[260] Wollstonecraft embodies an identity around the authorial role that is subsumed by the representation of her close relationships to multiple men. This contradicted the prescribed etiquette and behaviour of women at the time when the book was posthumously published by her

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[260] Dunn, 1998, 65

widower and early anarchist philosopher William Godwin. The identity becomes a play of behavioural traits attributed to historical moments and representational characteristics that are circumscribed to her person. How the viewing of *Play the Story* ties the identity of Wollstonecraft in relationship to attribution is by the discontinuity of her person who is placed in a role that is repeatedly recast in a frozen moment of time. The technologically mediated forms of culture like the screen-based installation of *Play the Story* produces social identities towards an unstable, fragile and fluid representation of the self that is reinforced by the media and technology that they repeatedly play on.[261]

The bodies that represent both Calle's artwork and Buckingham's installation attribute themselves to the form of commodity; they are consumed through the artwork that shapes and forms identity by embodying a multiplicity of indeterminate roles.[262] The identities of all of the subjects in the art become a practice for conceptual interpretation as multiplicity of roles that intertwine and collide with the artists themselves collapse the method for both practices. While the artwork and the subject positions of both artists are distinctively different, the similarities are how the artists suggest meaning for the viewers to determine. The identities of Calle and Buckingham complicate the subjects whom they appropriate; they become part of the subjects in their art. The differences made between gender and background for Buckingham and Wollstonecraft diverge in the authorial attributions between the artist and author but Buckingham's relationship to the subject, his process of working with Wollstonecraft, becomes an embodied convergence between the two. Similarly for Calle, who is a woman and often depicts men in her artwork, the subject position of the author implies and circumscribes a certain set of traits attributed to both the artist and subject. Calle closely followed the subjects she photographed or wrote about as the differences implied by the convergence of the subjects and artist constitute an authorial identity through the 'author function' form a fluid yet unstable body that holds a paradox of meaning. In the audio collage of 'Lady Lazarus' and 'The Applicant', the action of working so closely with recordings of Plath by cutting and rearranging them destabilizes a single authorial body and creates an incoherent identity that most closely resembles that of a 'ghost'. The ghostly embodiment is a paradoxical shift between the subject and author with an inconstant and unstable convergence of the two.

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[261] Dunn, 1998, 64
[262] Dunn, 1998, 66

The collaged video poems suggest how imagery modifies the text. The texts in each of the signs in *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* individually display colours and fonts with the intonation and conditioning of their ambience. These signs, whether as a method of advertising or enforcement within a busy or isolated environment, condition the reader with the surrounding environment when text in public is encountered. The image and text that invokes a poetic expression of how text is conditioned in the public space is similar to writing methods that construct the foundation of the Imagist movement a century ago. Poets and writers like H.D. have used methods of superposition to stack writings over images to read like concrete details to express an abstraction. Imagist poetry like H.D.'s 1913 poem entitled 'Priapus: Keeper-of-Orchards' reads with brief and straightforward images. The poem is composed of images skewered together like a series of juxtaposed artefacts that reveal its language of the camera and compositional aspects of photography. The damaged appearance of the 'fallen hazel-nuts' juxtaposed with hanging grapes that are broken and 'dripping with wine', suggests that the harvested fruit is hardening from a result of its exposure. The openness and of the sweet round fruit is presented as a bodily 'offering', presented like an erection protruding from underneath Priapus' tunic and glistening with fluid. The 'offering' is presented with a caveat that it is in its prime and ready to be devoured. The fragmentary relationship between concrete descriptions, like stacked photographs, urges that the reader search between the spaces of the words, the spaces between two images. This creation of a composition through associations with images as words alludes to the superimposition of video clips of words in my project. The project is inflected by the concrete imagery surrounding the words to create relationships between the two words next to each other and their surrounding ambience:

> The fallen hazel-nuts,
> Stripped late of their green sheaths,
> The grapes, red-purple,
> Their berries
> Dripping with wine,
> Pomegranates already broken,
> And shrunken fig,
> And quinces untouched,
> I bring thee as offering.

H.D., Priapus: Keeper-of-Orchards, 1913

Figure 12. Allan Sekula, Images from Fish Story: The Rechristened Exxon Valdez, 1990

The superposition of images that reveal an abstraction relates to the photography of Allan Sekula, who referred to his compositions in 2008 as a 'prose poem in pictures.' The artwork of Sekula is visually a precursor to the way the ambiences of the scenes are filmed in the project. Sekula superimposes his photography in a gallery setting to create an abstraction through layers of concrete connections and similarities between the two objects and the space in which the objects inhabit that reveal the vulnerability of society. As *Zorns Lemma*, which is a structural film made by Frampton in 1970, visually precedes the sequence of images in the video collages, the compositional and sequential aspect of the clips of filmed words that constitute the video collages allude to the scenes of London that they were filmed in. The collaged film visually mimics the transition of Sekula's photo sequences of urban architecture that reveal the voyeuristic qualities of the spectacle in late capitalism. The photo sequence of the oil tanker that transformed to an isolated art object displayed a gallery setting in *Fish Story: The Rechristened Exxon Valdez* from 1990 showed the extraction and transformation of the oil tanker known for its devastating oil spill a year prior into an isolated geometric shape of a ship's body upside-down. This juxtaposition suggests its removal from the oil-polluted sea and into a clean and brightly lit white cube for public exhibition and consumption. The ambience of the sea and the visual precursor of shape and symbol of the oil tanker demonstrate how the commodity of the art object intertwines with historical events.

Figure 13. Above: Chris Girard, Images from Law Series, 2006
Figure 14. Below: Chris Girard, Images from Law Series, 2009 to 2011

As a teenager, I began exploring the exhibitionistic qualities of intimacy in public through the representational aspects of the self that one enacts when taking self-portraits. The photographs were separated and stacked on my blogs and expressed the constructs of identity through the blur that was superimposed next to images with my own body. Since I could never take a crisp photograph with a shutter speed that was slower than 1/60th of a second, I could have never become a photographer. With the implicit nervousness that comes with having shaky hands, photography that uses the least amount of light available became my favourite type of photography. The blur incorporates part of the creation of

an image with my moving and shaking hands that records my nerves. The movements recorded in the blur of my body express and explore the spaces between the positioning of them. The images imply that the distortion caused by the blurs and waves from a slow shutter speed complicate the positioning of my own body through its distortion. These photographs taken next to windows complicate intimacy with the elusiveness of a dark interior that the body incorporates through the blur. I identified that my expression was complicated by the displacement I felt from the physicality of my hometown. I advertised a free photomontage of a crooked beach behind a silhouette of myself next to sublime shadows of palm trees and water stained glass on Craigslist that could be retrieved along the Pacific Coast Highway stretch of Laguna Beach during Memorial Day weekend in 2008. It was reinstalled several times as bystanders moved the board, once to the garbage can. A few hours later, a homeless person sequestered it.

The proximity to intangible or intimate environments was constructed from my displacement to my physical presence, as the California town's urban structure reinforces car-dependency and involvement in digital communities. The gathering of people in public sidewalks was discouraged by a substantial presence of regulatory signs. Public gatherings were limited to privatized spaces, like privately owned parks and pools. I tried to duplicate this isolation of the body in the regulated space by photographing as many 'No' signs as I could find and create a clash between intimacy and regulation in multiple series of photographs entitled *Law Series*. The fragmentation of the body and indoor objects correspond to the parameters of regulatory mechanisms that complicate intimacy. The mechanisms are shown by the presence of outdoor regulations in stark contrast to the interiorized body that corresponds to the direction and compositions of the signs.

The series of six photographic collages that constitute *Law Series* show images of regulated landscapes estranged by texts authored by California housing associations, gated communities and police with self-portraits taken on different beds, interior objects and surrealistic blurs. The contortion of the body on the bed becomes part of the fragmented composition that restricts it to the regulated space. I lived in Orange County, California for almost a decade and never noticed that there was at least one 'No' sign every 15 feet until I walked along a road adjacent to the housing association my parents lived in, and photographed every sign that I could find. Since this road is relatively short, I created the constraint of photographing 'No' signs within a one-mile perimeter from my

parents' home, which included privately owned parks and other gated housing association and condominium clusters. The absurdity of the pattern of 'No Parking' signs followed by 'No Trespassing' signs systematically equidistant to each other reflects the town's genesis as a collection of privately owned housing associations. The California town that advertises rows of large identical and attractive homes or 'McMansions' in a state of simulacra reflects how identity is alienated from the notion of community in the historical sense. The intimacy implied from the authorial inscription is subject to the restrictions and regulations that are fragmented by the texts of the privatized space that they inhabit. The placement of my body with the ambience of these photographic scenes implicates the individual photos to the overall sequence, which becomes authorial constructs even if the author remains elusive. Similar to Sekula, the photo sequences construct the systematic placement and positioning of the sprawled authorial subject to regulated text. Sekula constructs 'prose poems' without his body through the placement of photojournalistic photographs, like the placement of words that constructs identities through the narratives that articulate their presence. Even if the author is elusive, the placement of images with text inevitably directs the presence and intention one has placed. By photographing, filming and editing the artwork, the author's story becomes one of process and proximity.

On Digital Writing

Since the project is almost entirely screen-based, the context of the project being digital and incorporating social media examines the dispersal of readers between the decentralization of sites that incorporate installed artwork and websites. While the notions of materiality, scale and context are presented in a distinct manner in separate spaces, the project readily changes as it engages with the space that it occupies in the digital realm. The digital realm is the place in which the database of writing is made available and accessible. Digital writing, which includes the simultaneous movements and changes in the text of the audio and video collages of *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* and *Shadows/Shadows/Tomb*, marks their instability and fluctuation. The reader connects several overlapping slices of words through the determination of a hierarchic source since the project fluctuates through several sources of writing and can never be marked by a solitary author. The display of writing on a screen, in the digital space that composes it, changes the way a reader associates the writing process to the ghostly embodiments of

the text. The shifting and wavering embodiments materialize the apparent semantics of the collage process that emphasize an unseen collagist, filmmaker and editor of the audio and video. The embodiments, whether the attributions of roles are similar or different, reflect how the fluidity of authorship in digital media is constantly variable.

The modulation of digital writing and texts embodied in specific media direct the way in which the reader attributes the author to the writing. 'Digitized artwork manifests its own form as the texture of the page and its actual lettering cannot be replicated.'[263] In *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus*, the sequence of collages incorporates a hybrid of practices onto a projected and digital screen that alter the look and reading of the writing. While the visuals in digital text are variable in attributing the 'author function' to digital writing, the encoding of interactive texts and the process of using a digital text pad to collage the project show a similar body but with a different constitution. The formation of an author reveals how it is presented and interacted with through its implementation and execution of digital writing, Digital text is always in movement and characterized by its instability, fluctuation and being in a constant state of process. It is objectless and functions like an event in contrast to the stiffness of print text on its page even if the words are fluid. All texts endlessly shift and waver, whether embodied in digital or print media. The reception of the video collage always changes in an installation form since the video collage is on a constant loop and introduced differently. N. Katherine Hayles, who is a prominent writer on digital texts, believes that while print texts change by the conditions of their production, 'with digital texts, changes of some kind happen virtually every time the text is performed, from small differences in timing to major glitches.'[264] How the fluctuation of digital writing is similar to the fluctuation of the author is in its state of being in a decentralized realm, open to the reader's method of interpretation and interaction.

While a generalized concept of the framework of digital writing exists, digital writing offers no universal idea of what it is supposed to look and sound like. Digital writing appears as a myriad of text-based objects embedded in a digital space that act like 'visual objects with which the reader interacts.'[265] There is an infinite amount of space for 'performativity' that enables digital writing to afford more movement and interaction than non-digital writing. Digital writing, in context to the project, embodies the authorial

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[263] Cayley, 2006, 309
[264] Hayles, 2006, 186
[265] Bolter, 2001, 156

signifiers in the audio and video collages. The disjointed audio, for example, that results from the collage of Plath's audio recordings and the heightened atmospheric sound that surrounds the visual signs connect both Plath and myself as authors to the writing. In a similar vein as *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus*, the interactivity of hypertext provides the reader with an embodied virtual space. Digital poetry, like hypertext, contrasts with print poetry because of its inherent difference in how the author is approached through its accessibility, structure and materiality of screen and print mediums. The encoding and structuring involved with digital writing is apparent through the options that the reader has to interact with the nonlinearity of the space. Digital texts change a reader's experience through the use of file names, the movement and adjusting of the computer screen. File names suggest an authorial attribution to texts and imply an assumption and the crux of the written text by the author, who is justifiably or unjustifiably implied to be the source of the named file. The reader forms a connection to the video and certain expectations about the context of the text in relationship to the file name, which is more apparent online than when the file names of video files in the installation form are hidden. The viewer can witness the computer that plays the video files hidden at the corner of an installation and can determine what the video implies by the name of a digital file it is given. A second example of how digital text is constantly read differently is through the adjusting of the computer screen by the scroll bar or the movement of file boxes. The movement of the screen affects the way the reader makes a connection to the text as it implants and reinforces cognitive preconceptions of the reader through physical actions and habitual motions.[266] As the book presents a more directed and structured experience of text, the reader is inevitably aware that the author is an unstable and multifaceted body that transcends its layered and fragmented digital interface.[267]

The spectator is imparted with quality, medium and setting of the digital platform that constitutes the audio and video collages of the installation as it is contextualized through a constantly changing lens. The installation depends on the speakers, projectors and quantity of the physical space that modifies the text similar to the size of the interface since the project is screen-based and can potentially appear on various platforms. The physical installation would constitute a projector that was secured and mounted and the

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[266] Hayles, 1999, 89
[267] Hayles, 1999, 88

projected light of the video that hits a white wall. The installation also depends on the sound, which impacts the reader whether individually through a set of headphones or collectively listening to sound through speakers. The spatial dimensions created from the blank edges of the projected videos on the screen reinforce the reader's perception of the video as a digital file that spectators can listen to and view in any space and time through its ability to be accessed online. The impact of the digital medium reflects the variability of how and where the work can be viewed, the positions and volumes across a myriad of physical and virtual sites. The materiality of the installation is presented as having both been online and physical form converges with the reading space that takes place within it. While a brighter computer screen strengthens readability similar to quality and condition of paper and text, it may still be obstructed.[268] Multiple visitors and the refractive light from the sun along the corners of window shades can affect its visibility in the room. This obstruction enables viewers to modify their focus and form other connections, as the readability may be enriched with a collective engagement to the project. The importance of others in an installation space with the reception of ideas about the display of text and its author becomes a collaborative space in which multiple meanings and subjectivities intertwine in that very moment.

Figure 15. Chris Girard, Images from Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus Installation, 2010

[268] Hayles, 1999, 90

The awareness from a shared body of readers may contextualize the project differently when the author is identified by a collective group of readers who watch his or her life unfold and whose meaning is altered through their discourse. While external reception becomes an important process of gathering information about text, the process leads to the formation of an authorial identity that leads the reader to make judgments outside of the reading. Foucault, for example, describes the reading of his own writing as him being separated from it. The author, regardless of the medium he or she embodies, remains an ideological product since he or she represents the opposite of the historical function of writing.[269] The author changes from the dichotomy of an individual that tears him or herself 'out of the anonymity of everything' to embody a 'voice' among a 'great anonymous murmur of discourses held today.'[270] Authors, especially renowned ones like Plath, become mythical outside of the context of their writing. The reader who constantly seeks and gathers new information through memory and hearsay readily manipulates the role of the author as the reader assesses text and creates new discoveries through a dialogic or relational outlook from the multiple sources embodied in and around the writing. The reader's interaction with the audio and video collages connects several variables to embody a mythical author that is created by the reader and arises a conflicting feeling associated with a ghostly omnipresence.[271] As the author embodies multiple sources of representation in an installation, the reader actively follows the text and interacting with the space that it inhabits. The active gathering of meaning ascribed from multiple authorial sources implies that the collages are always in process and never finished as the reader directs the manipulation and composition of the writing.[272] The reading and production of an author recombines elements created and influenced by the reader that are constantly rearranged in an already existing system of digital structures.

The disparity between print and digital media primarily exists with the interaction and limitations of a multifaceted screen. Like with the advent of paperback books in the 19th century that changed the landscape of readership, the manifestation of digital texts to faster broadband connections affected how the reader interacted with new technology. While the setting, intonation and inflection of digital texts will constantly change, the

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[269] Foucault, 1984, 119
[270] Foucault, 1996, 28
[271] Mercer, 2005, 364
[272] Foucault, 1984, 120

evolution of the digital medium may face limitations for some readers.[273] A present-day example of this is how the closures of bookstores, book distributers and print publishers reflects the change of readership from print to digital text and challenges print readers to compensate for the hole that the digital medium expands on. Regardless of a print reader's neglect of using a digital medium, the variance in preference for reading digital or print text will modify the relationship a reader has with a body of text, depending on how it is being read. The interaction with text by physically turning a page or scrolling and clicking hyperlinks with the hand on a mouse or touchpad modifies the reading of the text. The screen alters the text through its setting it is presented in. The materiality of a lit computer screen with the periphery of a colourful background affects readability similar to limitations of the size and condition of print paper. For both mediums, readability depends on how long a reader chooses to spend with obstructed text. As reading continually evolves, writing does too. The computer screen enables linear and nonlinear interfaces, sounds, colours and images to inhabit the space for texts. The digital mediums that host writing normally supplement text with hyperlinks and tags; and use navigating tools that scroll along a page. These methods of navigation are examples of how writing evolves with the digital media it serves. While digital text and the evolution of the interfaces it serves are limited to those who have access to electronic equipment, the decrease of print materials and distribution warrant accessible digital interfaces. As the author hybridizes and changes its form from the moment that a page on a book transitions to a digital platform, digital media obstructs the signification of the implied immobility of a print author with the constant bombardment of new text and imagery. While captions and titles hold significations to authorship, for example, digital writing become part of layered writing that undeterminably function as fragmentation in a poststructural sense. Digital writing can never be held to the restrictions of a single author as the 'ability to recombine texts component of language writing forms a significant bridge.'[274] The author points to the designers, publishers and marketers of information since the hyperlinks and order of information affects what the reader reads next.

Since the emergence of word processing on the computer, analyses of digital text have examined and critiqued issues related to digital media such as style and authorship.

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[273] Hayles, 1999, 93
[274] Golding, 2006, 251

Part of it is the function and interactivity of digital text that implies a reader presumes that authorship on the computer is multifaceted and therefore literary analysis is now entirely sceptical 'of authorial intention as a normative principle and linguistic meaning as a stable entity, [and] has largely abandoned the idea that we could ever keep from reading ourselves into the reading of an author and is […] no longer considered with attempting to avoid this conundrum.'[275] Anyone can engage with several texts at once because there is an inherent ability to switch texts to other pages and scrolling in several directions. Since modern poststructural analysis has moved away from the intention of the singular author to an application of an easily applied fragmentation of digital text on the computer, the author becomes one source out of many for determining meaning and creates tension, producing a linear yet contemporary analysis from many authorial sources including that of the reader.[276] A solution to this is the translation of text to statistical analysis. Computers can help the study of literature by the creation of text-based statistical tools that measure, record and mathematically calculate the presence of text.[277] Furthermore, mathematical analysis and equations can be applied to visual poetry in which the connection of words is based on individual nouns that connect to verbs through a mathematical process connecting randomized images of verbs, nouns and images on four sections that correspond with one another on Max/MSP/Jitter. While the consideration of code as an author expands on this field of research, the focus on the text generator that acts as an authorial source could potentially shift the constitutional makeup of an author to also incorporate a program.[278]

New Media Poetics

The technology I use for my practice incorporates the screen as the primary medium that both the text and the interaction of the reader and author embody. The reader's interaction constitutes being bombarded with writing sourced from multiple authors during the reading of webpages, images and text on a computer screen. The reader creates a myriad of visuals in his or her minds, similar to reading a single body of work, but the myriad of visuals creates stimuli with the inflection of multiple sources of

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[275] Ramsay, 2008, 478
[276] Ramsay, 2008, 477-478
[277] Ramsay, 2008, 479
[278] Simanowski, 2011

writing, which enhances or changes our perception of that singular body of it work, had it been read alone. The consumption of information through flashes of filmic sequences of text in *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* makes the reader discover a very loose, distorted narrative that could be regarded as Hayles' concept of 'hyper attention'.[279] The concept of 'hyper attention' contrasts with her concept of 'deep attention' associated with long periods of concentration on a single body of text and ignoring external stimuli during this process. 'Hyper attention' is characterized by switching focuses on several tasks, absorbing multiple information streams and seeking a high level of stimulation. The 140 character poems that have been posted on Twitter reflect the experience of being in a society that is overexposed and oversaturated with media. The experience of writing on Twitter becomes a collage process. This process constitutes an editing phase as I write, rewrite, cut and paste to fit the parameters of 140 characters or roughly the length of two sentences. The reception of my subject position that is complicated by the collage process resembles being on a shared stream on Twitter.

Figure 16. Chris Girard, Reblog and Location Details from Twitter Post, 2011

The initial issue that is raised during the presentations of my project is often how the audio and video components of *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* could be duplicated by

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[279] Hayles, 2012, 69

analogue processes and is therefore separate from new media. My argument is that while video and audio processes of the project could be duplicated by cutting and rearranging video and audio tape, it would be nearly impossible to do and would take a lot of careful scrutiny to seamlessly collage tiny fragments of audio tape. The debate over of what constitutes new media continues to be on going, and the consideration of new media as embodying non-interactive processes can be justifiable. Non-interactive new media can functions on programs like Max/MSP/Jitter that create visuals or sound from patches that run on their own and their reproduction on analogue mediums has yet to be proven.

One criticism of the audio and video components of *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* is from its lack of interactivity as a new media project. Since the text in this executed poem lacks an embedded code, the collages challenge the defining realm of hypertext that occupies realm of new media poetics. Noah Wardrip-Fruin, who is a noted writer and executor of new media, held this belief after writing in an email to me that the project did not 'connect well' to his interests before stepping down from my MFA thesis committee at University of California, Santa Cruz. New media poetry, which is defined within the realm of new media, cannot be transcribed through analogue or paper processes. Defining new media in terms of exclusion, artwork that analogue is unable to create, could provide a way to differentiate genres. *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* can therefore be considered a new media poem because the minutia involved with arranging, cutting and sequencing audio and video clips can only be done with the aid of digital technology. However, this definition is slippery. The creation and editing process becomes microscopic, but may be possible to do with small scissors. If the project could be duplicated through analogue or with a microscope, then the collage poems have yet to be duplicated with scissors.

A more conventional use of the new media poetry label is through the subsequent creation of a project entitled *Shadow/Shadows/Tomb*, which is a series of four screens of streaming film clips that are run on Max/MSP/Jitter and each individual film clip plays a streaming sequence of text that changes every time it is played. While new media poetics are marked by their use of interactivity through hyperlinks, the new media poem is non-interactive but runs on code written on Max/MSP/Jitter. New media could be considered synonymous with interactivity because a project that runs on patches becomes art that moves itself through the interaction with the codes that direct it. Interactivity between files and codes could expand possibilities between film, image and sound on analogue

technology. While the process of running the file on a program provides insight into how an experience of playing with artwork could shape the experience with new media, the conceptual impact of new media is currently being upstaged by the fetish of innovation for new media or code for code's sake. The possibilities of code could enhance the conceptual components of art by giving dynamic to how art could visually or audibly respond to someone's interaction. The emphasis of what the code, particularly the interactive components of a new media poem code can do, mimic the emphasis on the possibilities of text in countless movements of poetry. It is important to emphasise that I am neither interested in pure code nor wish to celebrate its potential but rather pursue conceptual thinking in respect of its symbolic issues and meaning.

Defining the split between new media and contemporary poetry or artwork should escape the limiting definition of how a project is built or could be built. Certain processes that are emphasized in the artwork suggest an overriding preference of what the artist wants to convey. Rather than seeing the process of how codes interact with external outputs, the code is often disguised or hidden within the mechanics behind the machine. The alterations and edits of poetry are similar in their hidden processes. Commercial prints, for example, no matter how much they are digitally altered and reproduced, will be based on the strokes of the brush that are discretely enhanced by the digital process and alteration after the painting is scanned. A commercial fine art gallery I worked at in Laguna Beach, California displays digital reproductions of artwork from publishers that digitally change the colours and brush strokes of the original paintings in order to make them appear warmer, cooler or more textured. The physical process of visual production, like painting and frame colour, overshadow the process of digital manipulation. The surface of the prints are glazed in order to make it appear painted and handmade; and the emphasis of labelling the digital print as a 'giclée', which is French for the word 'squirt', is to distance the technical term from the computer and onto the chemical makeup of the ink jet process. The ink jet process is more resistant to fading than lithographic processes, but the process is translated to an elusive term to hide the banality of something that shares a name with something found inside a printer next to a home computer.
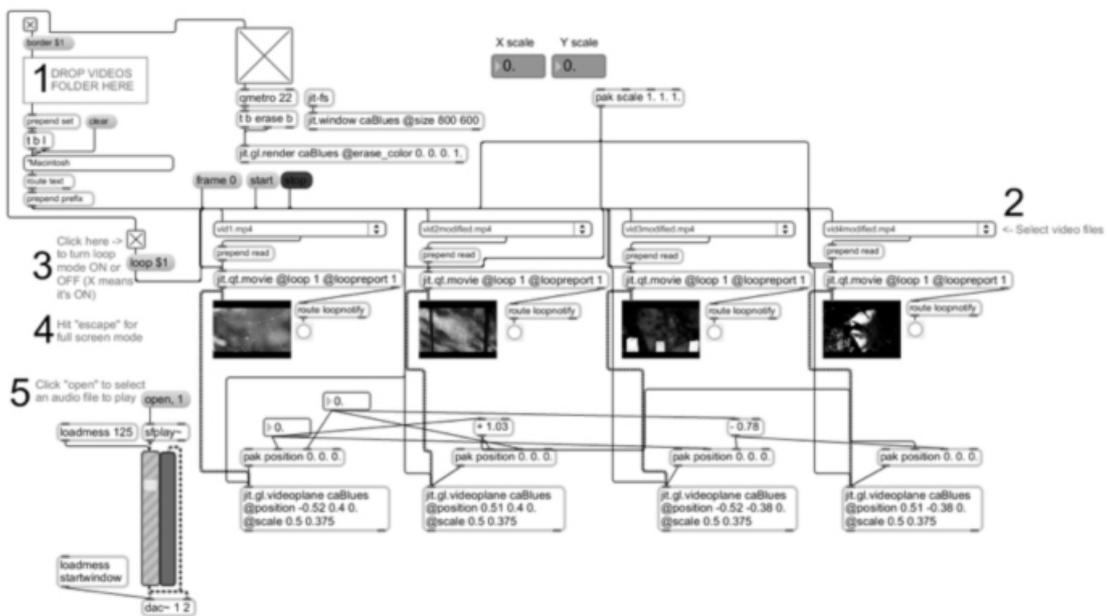
Figure 17. Above: Chris Girard, Film Stills of Shadows/Shadows/Tomb, 2011
Figure 18. Below: Chris Girard, Max/MSP/Jitter Patch of Shadows/Shadows/Tomb, 2011

The dichotomy of questioning whether my project falls under the category of new media or contemporary poetics becomes less complicated when Max/MSP/Jitter was implemented to *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* in the installation. It safely could become both. The randomization of words in an infinite number of ordered sequences, a process

that cannot be duplicated through analogue, inevitably categorizes the audio and video installation as a new media project. The new media project shifts the emphasis from the sequential order of words from myself to the encoding of the Max/MSP/Jitter patch. The framework of the patch, the skeletal aspects of the code, begins with the video drop box that new media artist Lyes Belhocine helped me connect to the output and loop. This patch systematically pulls film clips of words found on tombstones and objects close to them that are grouped into separate categories and semantically connected through four screens. The authorial inscription develops from the recognition of the patch that it runs from. The patch allows the video clips to be played by each of the videos that contain six-second clips that were pre-cut. The video clips play on four different screens placed next to each other that form a compositional quality on a larger box. The four screens are grammatically structured as the first two screens play verbs and the last two screens play nouns or exclamations that appear on each of the four screens. The words that appear with the composition correspond with each of the four screens and create the poem.

William Carlos Williams, an influential modernist poet, aspired to write poetry that could reference the development of new media poetics. Williams associates poetry practice with a call for a reinvention that must always happen, and that must always continue to be happening. He ended a lecture he made in 1948 called 'The Poem as a Field of Action' at the University of Washington in Seattle arguing that the emphasis of reading poetry should be in the way that the poem functions. In terms of new media, the poem functions from the machine rather than in it. He suggests that poetry should be read for the poem rather than in a representational structure accepted as a standard convention of poetry. The act of implementing poetry through code, which is a structure, is similar to the way that poetry could adhere to other structures like sonnets or haikus. Writing poetry and encoding poetry essentially help perform different functions for the reader. The code resembles a representational structure and helps the poem regenerate from it. The words generated from a program also have the potential to contextualize the poem through the authors involved in subsequently encoding the poem. The visual artefacts of white boxes and cables eclipse the coding as the semantic connections are made from an algorithmic process that constitutes the patch. My impression that Max/MSP/Jitter offers more impact as a visual object from its coding system is similar to my introduction to it in early 2008. I vividly recalled the white boxes but remain unable to remember what they did.
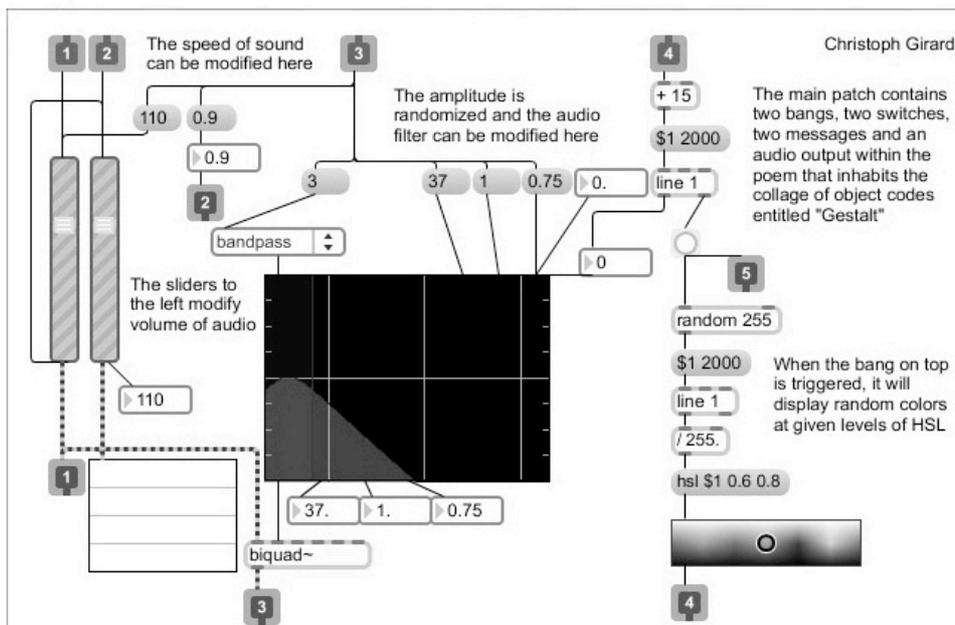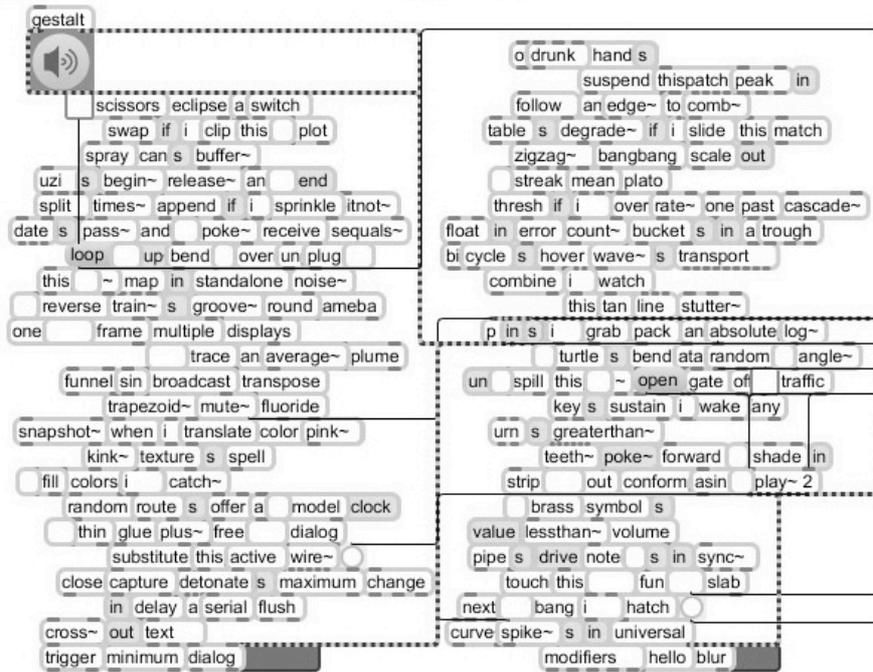
Figure 19. Above: Chris Girard, Max/MSP/Jitter Patch of Gestalt, 2009
Figure 20. Below: Chris Girard, Max/MSP/Jitter Sub Patch of Gestalt, 2009

Before the encoding of Max/MSP/Jitter into *Shadows/Shadows/Tomb*, I created and programmed a poem entitled *Gestalt* that was formed from predefined code words on Max/MSP/Jitter that are visually set in a myriad of uniform and white rectangles. The words are interwoven to form a larger hierarchical box connected to an architectural structure of boxes with cables or black lines that connect the programming language together. There are two patches within this program. The primary patch is the visual and

aesthetic interface of Max/MSP/Jitter that come with 200 predefined object codes. The sub-patch streams an array of colours and pitches of audio from the main trigger that displays randomized variations of both the amplitude for the audio file and the HSL, which is a three-dimensional coordinate system of colour. The boxes that are stacked and arranged in a jigsaw are constructed to look like a collage poem. These physical boxes of codes that resemble collaged words have the capability to output and modify the program if cables or commands are connected or broken. The program was made from some of the collaged boxes of object codes that are connected to external outputs with cables. Many of the cables are hidden under the borders of objects that also hide unwanted code and encourage readability of the poem. The codes enable the program to run sound files of spoken word in slow motion with a filter to further obstruct the recording. The filtered audio is an inaudible mumbling that suggests to an authorial presence in the way that there is embodiment inherent through the woven predefined object codes. The evolving colours produced in the background visually mimic the streaming sound of an embodied reading. Object codes that create and encode the poem allude to the primacy of text on a page. The playback of sound and visuals unfolds allusions to writing from the slow and disjointed nature of reading the poem to interpreting the direction of the cables to other object codes. *Gestalt* demonstrates the challenge of reading poetry similar to activating object codes in Max/MSP/Jitter. The opacity of the object code functions as a poem as both need to have a careful deconstruction with regards to their readability.

The visual artefacts of object codes and cables of Max/MSP/Jitter intend to be seen or read behind its display as the aesthetics of the interface are compelling enough to use in a project. The architectural structure of the boxes and cables that are stretched, enlarged and manipulated in *Gestalt* create an aesthetic and visual canvas of objects that directs how the poem is read. The boxes, cables and outputs of Max/MSP/Jitter embrace multidirectional writing in a structural yet intuitive form similar to the emergence of Futurist poetry over a century ago. To best describe the Futurist movement is to consider how the flow of writing moved in several directions in the visual poems created. This way of reading a poem similarly mimicked the advent of electricity flowing in power lines during the early 1900s and how these currents could flow in several directions at once. The creation of Futurist poetry is similar to the implementation of code through Max/MSP/Jitter; the cables intermingle and connect to several boxes that are activated,

modified and lit. Although the poem that comprises *Gestalt* reads from left to right and downward with each line break at the end of an object code, the cables that connect this poem simultaneously traverse from the poem to the output in several directions. The title of *Gestalt* comes from a Max/MSP/Jitter object code that returns hardware and software information it runs on as *Gestalt* is formally defined as a collection of entities that create a unified concept that circumvents an overall sum of all of its parts. The movements and sounds of *Gestalt* connect the semantic structure of the poem with words as symbols for commands that create poetry as programming.

While Max/MSP/Jitter excels with music and visuals with the aid of external electronics, using the program alone without external outputs, accomplishes little more visual complexity than that of a computer screensaver. Peter Elsea, who was a faculty member for a course I took on Max/MSP/Jitter at UC Santa Cruz in 2009, advised me to implement my writing into the program. The program would output it in a colourful display of traveling three-dimensional text in standing gravity with point perspective. I thought about the dancing sentence and cringe at the apparently limited solutions to the visual exploration of text is to add icing on it, so to speak. The suggestion of a dancing sentence diverts from a digital kitsch art aesthetic, which in terms of digital poetry, 'flarf' writing may closely resemble a dancing sentence. 'Flarf' often constitutes writings or images inspired by the writing from mainstream online publications, with streaming advertisements that have the appearance of a dancing sentence. The visual and text-based graphics embrace the commodification of catchy internet language, the use of abbreviations, net speak and internet memes, in essence, that digitally could be inflected with the use of bright neon colours and internet pop aesthetics which also reflect the medium and the type of graphics the writing is historically associated with appearing on. The 'flarf' movement began to manifest a the early 2000s when news articles, mass publications on the internet became readily available to duplicate an infinite amount of times onto email, message boards and early social networking websites like Friendster.

'Flarf' conceptually reflects on how culture places an importance on mainstream language and visuals as commodities. The inflection of these digital commodities often creates an instantly recognizable product. People's credence in the writings produced by mass media, and advertising is reflection of that through 'flarf', for example. However, 'flarf' is more conceptual art to me than a poetry movement. The absurdity of language,

which I embraced when I wrote an interactive book of poems that explored the poetics of spam email in 2006 to 2008 entitled *TRY ME.* effectively offers more gravity when the spam email was embedded with literature excerpts. Excerpts of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Lord of The Rings* that were embedded into some the spam emails in order to pass email filters became the most complex part of the poems. The duplication of absurdist, overly direct and banal advertising statements escapes the trite and ephemeral language that carries it and becomes an act of mimicry, a type of pop art. The language, which is considered 'flarf', is a more conceptual element of experimental writing. While my poetry practice and interests gravitate toward a different direction, I discovered that the best feature of Max/MSP/Jitter comes with limitation. What I tried to accomplish with the program was to show the aesthetics of code by showing the robot with its panels off.
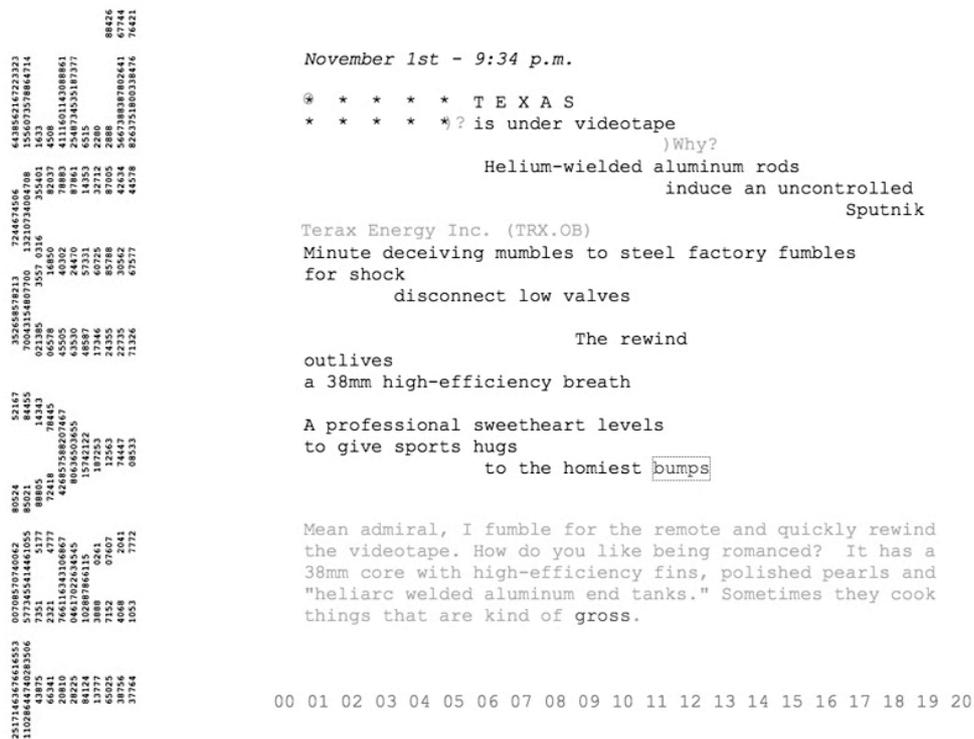

Figure 21. Chris Girard, Excerpt and Activation of Hyperlink from TRY ME., 2008

The possibilities of the technological components of Max/MSP/Jitter and less savvy HTML interfaces offer the familiar codes that they run on. These fragmentary bits of simple HTML code that became the source of the collaged writing on *TRY ME.* and the colour generator and a music filter input from an external sound file that essentially

runs *Gestalt*. The filter on *Gestalt* constantly adjusts the amplitude that then triggers random colours to display. Similarly, the function of *Shadow/Shadows/Tomb* depends on external video files to run the four screens on Max/MSP/Jitter. The program reveals how a poem is composed from its patch and could be recreated from the external sources of sound and text. The evolving sequences of sound and text can show their deconstruction from the continuous transformation of their composition and filter. Each box represents a single image that corresponds to part of a series of sequences and implies a relationship between the external file and the patch that structures and runs it. The composition evolves a story through the correlations and patterns behind the ephemeral environments generated by the patch or the digital display that reveals the program.

A New Media Poem

The exploration of my own authorial positioning on *Shadow/Shadows/Tomb* reveals my choices in filmmaking through the motion of a hand-held camera that film the texts inscribed on tombstones. When I lived in London until 2011, I lived less than a mile away from Nunhead Cemetery in Brockley and the proximity of my body next to this symbol of death alludes to the ghostly and wavering signification of the author. My practice became a film that primarily marks my authorial presence. The idea of recording tombstones at a cemetery was to follow my own authorial positioning and plays with the arbitrary following of the author through Plath, an American poet living in London, which also shadows the death of Plath in 1963, and her burial in Heptonstall, West Yorkshire. These historical signifiers denote life once being lived and the scenery, the trees and the sounds of living lives surrounding them, reflect this. The movements during the filming create a stutter towards the presence of the words being filmed as if the movements being filmed are idiosyncratic gestures to the poem. I used my hands rather than a tripod, which created a constantly shaky document of my own movements, and edited three seconds of the least shaky recordings from the film clips.

In a more general sense of the project, *Shadow/Shadows/Tomb* is a new media video collage poem that runs on Max/MSP/Jitter. The poem consists of four streaming films that are systematically arranged into a box, which create a larger poem when words are juxtaposed next to each other in the larger box. Each of the four scenes plays three seconds of a clip from a cemetery with ambient sounds in the background. The video

streams for over two days without looping. The video poem reflects how life continues after death with tombstones broken and underneath overgrown plant life. I used the video function of a Canon 7D to film spider webs, dead leaves and flies, anything that was within the cemetery, including tombstones. The constraint of filming objects within the proximity of the cemetery gates reveals an authorial signifier. The engravings and artefacts are constructed by their half-mile proximity to the residence of the filmmaker and poet. The closeness of the words near the collagist's residence intertwines between the recording of the film and the inscriptions and carvings of the tombstones on top of the buried. The overlapping of filmed words about death in the constraint of one proximate place becomes a poem that reconstitutes death to incorporate a newer lived presence.

The poems use words that would compositionally and grammatically fit into the area of the box that they stream in. Visually, each box is capable of conveying the documentary of the place. It resides in as the inscribed words that reveal their history. Rather than the new media collage poem entitled *Shadow/Shadows/Tomb* focusing on the proximity of Plath's burial located in Heptonstall, West Yorkshire, the film focuses on the cemetery close to where I lived in 2010 to 2011. The positioning of my footsteps near the film engravings and inscriptions of texts on tombstones within the perimeter of Nunhead Cemetery in London serves to more forwardly reference my own authorial positioning within the project. The cemetery was visually complex, and I had an opportunity to observe and become more intimately familiar with the tombstones that look eroded from their age and the way that the environment interacts with them. I interacted with the abundant wildlife, fauna and the aged materials at Nunhead cemetery by crawling over them and traversing around them by exploring old tombstones obscured by erosion and plant growth that modify the inscriptions. While the inscriptions denote the cultural and religious background of the people buried in them, the tombstones reflect the historical time period perhaps more than they do to the buried. These relics of the cemetery are documented through the particles of words and surfaces filmed:

Gracious / acre / sleep / hear / die

Life / amen / o / remain

Chris Girard, excerpts from Shadows/Shadows/Tomb, 2011

While tombstones symbolize death, the plants and trees that have grown over the tombstones and the sounds of people walking and children talking reveal the presence of life. The use of cemeteries as parks in London and the surrounding plant life, animals and insects reveal a second historical moment as the film clips that were reconstituted for the collage. The physical cuts and breaks in the collage of lives reflected in the film visually entwine with recordings of objects that signify death show the cyclical nature of death. The cuts show how death becomes part of a constantly changing presence. The challenge of death is to stay dead; death is otherwise an omnipresent recasting of historical moments mixed within the present moment like the plants and creatures that move atop of the surface of the tombs and signify life. Since there is nothing suggesting the presence of Plath in the poem, except in relationship to the installation, its likeness and proximity to the video poem of *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus*, Plath becomes a source of reference from outside of it. The physical cuts and breaks of the poem suggest my bodily presence in terms of the 'author function'. The poem alludes to epitaphs taken from engravings and inscriptions that document the movements of the filmmaker and reference that historical moment. Excerpts like 'the taken / years' in the recorded sequences of words from *Shadows/Shadows/Tomb* reconstitutes the eulogy embedded in the past into the present filming. The filmmaker becomes a relic of the eulogy with the movements of the camera that make the words suspend in the air also. Other recorded words like 'life', 'die', and 'sleep' suggest the encounter with being confronted with death. The inscription of 'life' entails having a body, while 'death' and 'sleep' compensate for a living body. The recorded words written into century-old tombstones, for example, modify the relic of that historical moment to embody a more present one. The film, which was made in 2011, reveals the presence of the filmmaker with the shaking of the camera as these movements reveal the presence of a living hand recording it.

Shadows/Shadows/Tomb places the collagist into the primary role of writing a story that illustrates the importance of authorial identities. The author is constructed after death through the use of new media technology. The video clips run in endlessly different combinations from a single location. The project incorporates new media technology into the poem with the use of the video codes that run on a Max/MSP/Jitter patch. The constantly changing screens with a poem that figuratively never ends suggest that meaning could be determined on the process itself, how the video clips are executed and

encoded on Max/MSP/Jitter to run on a loop with four video clips that constantly change. The awareness that there is no beginning of the poem becomes apparent after one spends time with it. Each of the four displays play a handpicked selection of 12 to 15 video clips that separately run 12, 13, 14 and 15 six second video clips. Each of the displays runs a different number of video clips because otherwise two or more of the displays will constantly play the same words and objects on the screen in repetition. The idea of the poem is for it to constantly show a different sequence of images to possibly have unexpected and very surprising results. The poem will show a different combination of words, objects and creatures for hours before repeating itself.

An iteration of *Shadow/Shadows/Tomb* was conducted as a collaborative project between composer Mark So and myself. My component of the collaboration plays with and poeticizes relics of the dead, namely tombstones, while So contributes a scrim of hovering tones, comprised of recordings he made at the piano while playing through several pages from his keyboard notebook entitled *a book of palms*. Simultaneously sketch journal and score, So's notebook documents various palm-scapes in Los Angeles (both observed and imagined), transcribing them as a kind of simple, direct notation on graph. So's gently wavering music shades the ambient sounds of the video recordings with figments of other spaces, other times. Both the top and bottom boxes have images of words streaming with individual and multiple poems, and ambience, the word-less images of reflected light and environmental sound, that in turn may act as a kind of slate, gathering light, sound, and words to be poetically inscribed into So's composition. Within the familiar ebb and flow of the piano music's loosely gridded embrace, the filmed images become familiar as they continually appear and reappear. There are a total of 54 film stills; the four displays combined with words, or scenes will show different sequences. The film images are compositionally structured for the poem to visually flow to help it be read. Verbs, primarily, and objects that visually correspond to the top images are placed on the top two boxes. Nouns, exclamations and other objects that visually correspond to the bottom images are placed in the bottom two boxes to end the poem. Each of the screens individually runs a poem of changing word combinations, as well, which allude to its proximity. The poem constantly moves and changes in this unfamiliar cemetery that was filmed yet the ambient sounds, which are combined from each of the four scenes, carry the entirety of the poem with it. The ambient sounds of birds chirping,

children playing and leaves rustling contains within them the proximity of the cemetery. The sounds reverberate life and tone across the streaming poem, lending it a fluid composition within the strict rhythm that carries it. The sounds contextualize the location of the cemetery as they are distinctly heard within the perimeter of its grounds. The ambience and piano imply that death is a living presence, as the inscriptions become lifelike through the sounds with which they reverberate.

Section Four – Audience

An American Poet in London

The positioning of the author and reader who are everywhere and nowhere at the same time could apply to the interaction of the project that argues for the fluidity and transience of the identities of both the author and reader. The method of writing is framed in terms of both a reading and writing as a 'rhizome' that covers a vast terrain that the digital poetry is situated in. The terrain is alluded to through the vast expanse of readership that reifies the 'rhizomatic' writing from the poetry on Twitter as relevant contemporary praxis. The Twitter feed overlaps into several divided lines that are 'stratified, territorialized, organized, signified, attributed, etc., as well as lines of deterritorialization […] [that] rupture in the rhizome whenever segmentary lines explode into a line of flight.'[280] The lines that tie back to one another reference the constant feed of a microblogging platform that are part of the 'rhizome'.[281] Readers that interact with this material occupy any place and time in which they read. The dispersal underlines that the subject positions of the American and British author and reader cannot be defined but may be clarified under certain presumptions about the American and Briton's relationship to language. The difference with how Americans and Britons approach language is in how they define themselves within a historical framework as readers. The way in which a historical trajectory could approach a body of work is through a reader's relationship to language. Since the English language is borrowed for the American, the difference is how its past affects the present. Americans and Britons appear to be in dispersal quite differently but reflect this through their use of language.

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[280] Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, 10
[281] Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, 10

My experiences with being an American collage poet living in London have manifested to growing belief that Americans who speaks the English language embrace the use of language from a detached point of British history. The English language, for the American, culturally represents an appropriation from the historical roots of separation. The accent may represent a turn away from British sovereignty but the etymological roots suggest a history of interaction removed from the present. Britain's past is embedded within the English language. Farther past the accent is the etymological use of word. Collage poetry also represents a fractured culture as a fractured narrative, like the former colony that America is. Collage also foregrounds that the English language is a language in process. Rather than the language having a sense of primacy or being something that is acknowledged to have a past, collage reflects the state in which language is constantly being reused and borrowed.

The reader's approach to collage, like any other types of writing, is rooted in his or her past. While it is impossible to definitively type the reader based on nationality alone, collage suggests the process of dispersion is part of a pre-determined state by the reader. The dispersion could be interpreted through the reader's association to the English language in his or her relationship to the text and his or her own subject position that is always in process. The fragmentation resembles a dispersal of seeds or leaves that leave from a centre tree or collect around it. Britain has a tree, and Americans have leaves. Collage is a by-product of the American having leaves in the present and trees in the past; and having a history of being in dispersal as being part of the present. My subject position as an American collagist could resemble the collage with the use of its language as being part of its territorial movement and reclamation that becomes part of lived heritage. Being centred, grounded is living in multiple pasts for an American, whose heritage is split or rooted in the process of arriving. Collage is a reflection of leaving Britain with a suitcase. Linguistically, the English language offers historical roots that are embedded in the past, that allude to the history of Britain. The historical roots, preservation of a culture embedded in the language becomes dispersed, distributed and reassembled. America is more separate from the English language, a body of language that is unabsorbed in its history. Collage uses language that forms an erasure from Britain's heritage and national identity like leaves in the wind from the missing tree. If the language becomes too reverent, where one's identity and history are embedded in his

or her language, the collage inflicts a type of violence, a disembowelment of the mother tongue. This closeness suggests that the act of collaging the English language is a violent assemblage that reframes its historical connections and attributions. The act of subjecting the language to collage suggests that the act of collaging from the English language would contextualize it with an acknowledgement of it being borrowed.

American and British dispersal suggests that culture is paradoxically grounded on movement. The history of being itinerant, encroaching on settlements with a historical relationship of traveling to several lands appears to be a point of confluence for both British and Americans. The difference is perhaps how everything is borrowed for the American. Although America is politically introverted, the inherent disinterest and ignorance of the outside suggests that the erasure of knowledge may be appropriate for making collage poetry. The nomadic movement of its pioneers and settlers that thrive on uncharted or uncolonized land could suggest why an American who travels outside his or her own country changes very little. Being an American collagist in Britain, my initial desire was to continue working on an art form that I believed was universally recognized. These references to the past offer tangible links to the present. The fluidity of the past and its all-encompassing nature may overlap with the present. These simultaneous events could be a fragmentation of ahistorical time elapsed in several streams. Many Americans and British come from a multitude of backgrounds. The importance of identity attributed to residence shares the inheritance of the past in relation to the present. The past, while overlapping with the present, is a host for embedded and ahistorical narratives like the plaque that presents an omnipresent historical moment of Plath's residence in Camden, London. The relationship of collage to aesthetics continues history that also meets the present. The very act of collage and the process of collage continue the construction of a narrative. The fragmented narrative, embedded within the history of the United States and the United Kingdom, carries onward as an aesthetic instead of rooting itself in the past. At the surface level, the present constitutes more of a continued past but both countries have incoherent pasts represented in the form of materiality lost. London's materiality finds the ghosts of the past intertwining with the present in its roads, skyline and architectural structures. The dispersal of British and Americans, like myself, who leave and come back, follows an overlapping past, a history of colonization and imperialism inherent in a stream of multiple pasts. The correlation between poetics and ideology is

how dispersion appears to be a part of a historical trajectory that foregrounds the past. History is often narrated into a linear story, the past is multidirectional and time can form omnipresence of people that could coexist in one physically present place.

How an identity works itself into the trajectory for collage poetry is through its fragmentation. Williams, for example, exemplifies dispersal as part of the literary trajectory for an American author. The rapid dispersal of poets as pioneers becomes the point of identification that historically construct the shaping and expansion of America. Ed Dorn, another renowned American poet, particularly for his political poetry, believes that people need to change as rapidly with the dispersal of American culture in an epic poem he wrote that was published in 1975 entitled *Slinger* whose reflections of the Wild West, while being on horseback as a cowboy, suggests a creed that people often change their mind about where they are going. The culture that he or she is in, its form, is variable, like the American West. The allusion to movement becomes as obsolete as time. A repetition of 'one' and 'one' again interfere with an exclusive association with the present one as if traveling through the canyons of Arizona could evoke time traveling through the panhandle of Texas and westward along the plateaus of New Mexico:

> Time is more fundamental than space.
> It is, indeed, the most pervasive
> of all the categories
> in other words
> theres plenty of it.
> And it stretches things themselves
> until they blend into one,
> so if youve seen one thing
> youve seen them all.

Ed Dorn, Slinger, 1975

Since the reader of my collage poetry is often distant to my physical proximity, it compels me to believe that the way in which I have networked with people is a discernible trajectory which foregrounds the way my collage poetry is identified as being American. The practice that is seen on my Twitter depends on the readership of the poetry as being diverted from the fragment like the way in which the poetry is dispersed through microblogging. The dispersal embodies being part of a history of movement,

immigration, pioneers and mixed ancestry. The American heritage mimics Twitter's activity of coming in from a multitude of locations. My own ancestry is mixed. My mother's family is from Puerto Rico and my father's family is from Ireland and France. My great-grandfather, who I share a common surname with, emigrated to the United States from Alsace Lorraine during the Franco Prussian War when this eastern region of France was occupied by Germany and thus considered himself to be German despite 'Girard' being a French last name. Twitter is similar to an American cultural heritage and common history that is loosely embedded within a framework of when the country was formed, with people who come together from several countries. The signals on wireless networks and transportation on roads in America become part of a shared cultural identity of movement. The microbloggers who cross boundaries and traverse the digital rails, roads, paths and routes are culture makers. Expansion is a major part of Twitter's cultural impact, like with the territorial expansions of America and Britain. Within the territorial expansion of microblogging is its dispersal and movement of people.

Microblogging follows the same set of circumstances of how movement plays a role in cultural and national identity. With microblogging, the historical trajectory of being a Twitterer is an act of moving towards a growing yet self-containing sphere. There is a historical process of movement and growth that is somehow a separate and distant trajectory from the current situation, as if the act of living in one place is conditioned by media and culture to be connected to microbloggers from elsewhere. The active transit, multiplicity of constantly moving frames paradoxically defines the boundaries of the digital transit of Twitter, when they travelled from other places to be an American. When microbloggers arrive to tweet, their transit from America, Britain or elsewhere into the Twitter platform becomes historicized as a precedent to their heritage. They become a Twitterer when they enter it. The interconnection, the fragmentation of being in transit, happens with moments of travel in a variability of a structure's travel, like the 'rhizome'. French philosopher Gilles Deleuze described the 'rhizome' as actively accepting interpretive 'image[s] of thought' in multiple, non-sequential, non-linear and non-hierarchical points of entry and exit.[282] The 'rhizome' as images of ideas saturated in Twitter traverse the platform they are enwrapped in, as microblogging and sharing imply a historical story of traveling. A Twitterer possesses a sense of belonging to a specific

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[282] Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, 18

place, having a profile and sense of identity within their name even if they are living in transit. An American or Briton may be defined within Twitter, as their lineage, dialect and ancestry provides a more chronological and cohesive narrative about their particular history within the decentred area. There is a clear and current consistency embedded in the dispersal of culture. The dispersal of microbloggers, similar to British or Americans' movement from a motherland, provides images of ideas or a 'rhizome' to a shared and lived culture of Twitter. The culture of fragmentation and movement is closer to the microblogger, whose history is chronologically written on an ahistorical and fragmented stream. Twitter, the platform itself, is more current, cohesive and historical in the sense of a governed platform that provides a defining characteristic of its people. The restrictions of the code that makes it run define the streams of dispersal, a gravitational and controlling mechanism for the microblogging environment. The gravity is embedded in the inscriptions of code that holds the centre that, as Yeats famously wrote in his 1919 poem entitled 'The Second Coming', 'cannot hold.'

If the Pacific Rim of California represents the end of America, Twitter could represent the expansion of the stream. The coastline of California was the end of territorial expansion and historically the end began to exist in the 1700s; its territorial existence, the land that California inhabits was occupied by a multitude of Indian tribes, has a fractured history before that. There is a rapid dispersal of pioneers in America, who have moved and spread westward to California over the course of 300 years, but prior to the expeditions and the gold rush, there is an erasure of the history of California. The thousands of years of Indian and then Mexican settlements in California are historically minimized prior to the 1800s. Californians came on and after the gold rush and imperialist expansion of the United States, during and after the annexation from Mexico from the early to mid 1800s. California represents the final trajectory for the movement through the Wild West. The settlers who have reached the end have a reason to move in a myriad of directions since one can only float onward from it. People may identify with the methods of dispersal since there is no new territory to explore or conquer. California offers a historical beginning as an end, and the direction of my travels, its ability to be recorded, offers a point of confluence for an authorial subject in the framework of dispersal. After the territorial end, the multidirectional movements and an ahistorical fragmentation represent the recordings of Twitter, which simultaneously attempts to

record and structuralize the distinctively decentred bodies that inhabit it.

The poems I have written for Twitter embrace the peculiar activity of being American through the practice of collage in London and Los Angeles. I discovered that collage textually reflects territorial dispersal in the context of authorship. The way that language moves and conditions authorial identity is through the way collage language is comparable to American migration. Once I considered my argument to be held more acutely in the form of Twitter, I discovered that my being in London was only relevant through being able to reflect upon my subject position more acutely as a foreigner in a city that is composed of mostly other foreigners from varying regions. The proximity of where my body is located to my poetry disappears on Twitter. As the location of where Twitter places me can modify the poem, the accuracy of the poem's location appears to be relevant to who is reading me. Through the constitution of my Twitter followers who are in dispersal, I discovered that, despite my body being in London, the microbloggers who are a lot more likely to follow me are irrelevant to where I am physically located. Twitter is a particular reference point to a wider argument that the dispersion of my audience is reflected in my own subject position as being in dispersion. Even though the reader could be located anywhere and at any time, how others identify with me come from within the dispersal of the microblogging platform. Twitter is more dependent on where it records the location I write in rather than where I write, but the reader is the primary source of relevance. Whether my location of being in London or Los Angeles modifies it in the context to being a lived experience in either location, the readership of my collage poems is placed in context of a universal reader and microblogger with certain predispositions inclined to read my poetry by following me. I believe trying to be 'on the road' as taken from a prominent novel by American writer Jack Kerouac particularly reveals my own authorial inscription. Rather than being on the road, my travels constitute being in the air at two edges of a range that spans one-fifth of the perimeter of earth between Los Angeles and London. When I am on the road, I am on a bike within a six-mile vicinity of where I stay. The instability of being an American in Britain, with transits that are recorded by Twitter, suggests the alternating positions of the body in a physical space, like a historical trajectory of American beat poetry. Being in transit potentially becomes part of my authorial inscription of the collage poem with the framework of a subject position that is recorded in London and Los Angeles.

The emphasis on both of the dispersal of the British and American author and reader suggests that the method of approach to authorship and readership could through a historical trajectory that is separate from the present. While it may appear that territorial dispersal alludes to pioneering outside of Britain, British fragmentation potentially contributes to the role Britain plays in colonialism and the creation of an English language that is embedded in multiple streams from the past. Since British collage poetry is more closely associated with the historical roots of the English language, the appropriation of words, deep in the etymology and at the surface level of their cadence, suggests a purpose for playing with that embedded history that the author could historically identify with. The language in its current state of being separated from the mother tongue offers the collage poet a relationship with language like the collagist to a word bank. The handful of British collage poets could underline how the relationship to their language reflects the overlapping presence of a multitude of streams, perhaps no different to that of the historical source, if one exists. While contemporary British poetics engage with collage poetics less readily than Americans do, the British poetics that are considered innovative or experimental offer differences in methods and approach that cannot be defined in a grand trajectory.

While Americans have been influential in contemporary poetry, it may be in their dispersal that foregrounds the innovation and suggests a historical trajectory that foregrounds American poetry. A lot of American poets in Britain appear to intermingle with British poetics that are considered more contemporary and experimental. British publications like *Shearsman* and venues like the Contemporary Poetics Research Centre at Birkbeck, University of London feature a variety of American poets. Even *The Journal of British and Irish Innovative Poetry*, which focuses on contemporary regional poetry from Britain and Ireland, has the American poet Marjorie Perloff on its editorial board. The 'British Poetry Revival' movement, a movement known to embrace experimental and modernist approach to British poetics, focuses on modernist American poets like Williams and thrusts itself against a counter movement called 'The Movement'. 'The Movement' describes a more conservative British poetry scene in the middle of the 20th century and is defined by a limitation and avoidance of excess to poetics. Ted Hughes, who was Plath's husband, was associated with 'The Movement'. The short, deliberate, and vivid poetry that Hughes wrote suggests a stark contrast to indulgence that his wife

Plath, an American in Britain, allowed herself in the long, meandering yet powerful poems that she later became famous for.

Bodies need to keep moving in order to continue their persistence, as they move along areas of territorial and digital dispersion. Microbloggers continue to move in order to write. The mechanism of my persistence and dispersal reflects a consideration of how the possibilities of moving and transitioning between the physical spaces of Los Angeles and London potentially create cracks and break barriers in poetics that can transcend its physical space. I believe the American trajectory for poetry was created from the result of being pulled, pushed and moved between two distinctively separate places until level of distortion was reached. My poetry on Twitter manifests a machine-like presence, an emphasis on the carnal growl of microblogging within the physical presence of a computer. The viral presence of Twitter contrasts with my virtual one and diverges to an action that translates the physical body digitally and textually. I believe the strength of Twitter is in its corporeality, watching the text and the machine slowly die off. The poems that draw me to write them on Twitter are in their dispersal that fluidly become translated or reproduced. The digital dispersal will constantly replicate in the present moment and will play, replay and subject itself to a constantly changing memory.

The Collective Reader

The reader collectively holds indistinguishable attributes as he or she holds social, political and ideological views that affect the choice of their reading material. Bodies like those of the spectators of *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* or *Shadows/Shadows/Tomb* that engage with the project may share similarities with readers who engage with my poetry on Twitter. Whether the reader also comes a former British colony, is interested in the conceptual components of the author or collage poetry in general, there may be a general ilk of online or more visceral form of visitor who visits the project for several reasons. A spectator that encounters the audio, video and text collages is considered to constitute the reader. The ability to encounter the collage poems enables anyone have the potential to constitute the reader role, which makes the reader's constitution being from a specific ilk of people indefinable. The reader's awareness of the collage process becomes a conscious act to explore what it means to be a reader and what it means to engage with the project. The reader's collective identity exists in his or her own process of reading, being engaged

to a text. Those who identify, or purportedly identify, with the reader role have no predetermined attributes, belief sets and roles ascribed to them. There is a heterogeneity that speaks for a collective reader with the audio and video collages of *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* and *Shadows/Shadows/Tomb*. The role of the reader in relationship to the audio and video collages is considered to be an active interpreter by the production of variable meaning. The identity of the reader or spectator in the video collage forms on the grounds that he or she has the awareness and ability to obtain information that the signs individually lack, for example. The image of an isolated word on a sign becomes a part of a multiplicity of roles that arises from their totality that the collage is engaged with. The authorial inscription from an individual word becomes part of a collective one, from a group of words connected together. The collage in relationship to the 'author function' by Foucault is distinguished to be an active determinant of meaning, such as by the type of words it is surrounded with and the context of what the storefront or regulatory signs say and their physical proximity to a street, store or a governmental structure. The process of collage, its selection and location, becomes a predefined and embedded body of work that suggests or overtly shows a prior existence. The identity of an individual reader becomes the function and response of a collective body if engaged with other readers because no distinguishable traits can signify a separate body for the individual reader. Anybody can be a reader and nobody can be excluded from this role.

While the consumption of meaning is an individual process for the reader, the interpretive process is a collective one because it takes place externally. As the reader sifts and sorts information with his or own eyes and ears, he or she plays a collective role by deciphering and attributing meaning through the various permutations of fractured writing, with the audio and video collages, that he or she is presented with. The variance of interpretations is a constant reminder that meaning is relative but readily calls on readers to engage with it. The context of words in the English language become variable depending on the subject position of the reader, the country he or she comes from, and the way that it is used. The way my poems are interpreted could be different in other places as they may be in the United States, where collage has more of a historically illustrious engagement with poets and artists. The collage of audio and video takes precedence externally for the reader who interprets the writing through the connections that he or she has made prior to the text. The reader is always actively interpreting, no

matter what his or her subject position and background suggests. The body for the collective reader suggests always being in process, and never being static as the collective reader is otherwise indistinguishable in terms of his or her function of reading.

The fragmentation of meaning suggests also suggests an external function when the act of collage occurs. Words that initially read as oppressive when they are presented as enforcements with parking signs, for example, become interpretive when they become fragmented. The reader could instantly familiarize himself or herself with regulatory words that are publicly placed on the streets and enforced by private ownership and police enforcement. The reader who is affected by the spaces that inhabit the signs and are normally regulated by laws that heavily support privately owned businesses and consumerism watch their inscriptions become destabilized when presented in a collage form. People actively read and actively deconstruct the writing, and the space the signs inhabit. The inscriptions of the signs that constitute the poem may fall under the same category but are identified differently and have distinguished roles. These reading roles become active when regulatory forces that inhabit the signs are destabilized. The poem becomes an active body, fluid with interpretation. The process and the result of the collage becomes the centre of attention by it taking over a body of writing that points to consumption and regulation. This shift of attention becomes part of a political act; these regulated spaces become overshadowed from the possession of its intended meaning.

The mechanisms that repress connections made between words in a reading of regulatory words, subject it to become more active, actively breaking from the restrictive forms of past narratives with the presentation of collage. The collage momentarily shifts the focus of an oppressive instruction, for example, onto the action, away from the regulated space. The signs that carry the laws that govern and regulate its words are often imposed onto a collective body as a method of control and reminder and often deflect the possibility for a breach of its intention, instruction or regulation. The collage of signs enables the possibility the interpretive process to take place in the act of collage. The laws from signs enforce and maintain the imposition of threats and physical actions by police. The play of words that enforce, suppress and struggle for power become a cause for the interpretive process for the reader whose relationship to the law that these signs uphold momentarily transcend them during the interpretive process.

The acetic nature of the audio and video collages of *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus*

and *Shadows/Shadows/Tomb*, for example, is a way to allow the reader to focus on the constraints used in the practice, and its process and historical implications. If the project potentially has one indulgence that is revealed to the reader, it could be through its wideness of variety of texts presented and more conceptually, the approach of collage making. More simply, the collage presented as a text that is nuanced with imagery or film becomes a similarly evoked response through the history of playing with that language. The procedural methods that inhabit these texts, and the imitative patterns of the collage, the duration of collage as a daily practice as recorded on Twitter, corresponds to the multiplicity of how poetry is received by the reader. The way digital writing is executed and redistributed on Twitter, for example, becomes a physical recording of the reader's interaction of my text as a historical object. The presence of my writing on digital media becomes a historical object once it is posted. My poetry on Twitter, for example, becomes part of a collective variety of poetry, and art from a multitude of users whose posts, feeds and streams become an amalgamation of multiple authors and shares on my Twitter, for example. My niche, and the intended audience is part of a digital dispersal that is fast, and defined by a continual presence. A post reflects its historical moment of being posted, as nothing is held present in digital media. If I were my intended audience, I would be part of this online dispersal. The demographic that engages most with my work appears to be American. My writing, with or without the purview of visitors from anywhere in the world, exists in a decentred and fragmented realm.

Analysing a poststructural approach to readership, 'reader-response criticism' contextualizes the multiplicity of writing with regards to the level of focus and uniformity on the individual reader's response. The writings that contribute to 'reader-response criticism' put forth by Fish argue that the reader actively creates his or her own interpretive and text-related function in terms of the audio, video and text collages. 'Reader-response criticism' generally presents the reader in three separate ways: he or she could either be presented individually, as part of a controlled experimental group or in a large uniform group. The differences among individual readers and readers in a controlled experimental group are in how the subject position of the reader are examined in relationship to the writing. The readership of all of my projects is assumed to have a level of uniformity, and that the text exists before and independently of the reader's interpretation, and is recognizable at all times. The reader, in the process of reading,

writes literary works within a collage text that other texts are embedded in as well.[283]

Both the reader and text essentially drive the experience of reading. The reader is always consuming, and the scope of his or her consumption is in relationship with how the collage poetry is contextualized with poststructural feminist criticism and discourse. Fish analyses the reader in relationship to the text and believes that meaning is embedded in the text as an artefact.[284] The collage conditions the reader to be aware of how the text is treated and processed in it. The text is a rejection of the author, no differently from a poststructural approach to interpreting text as the principle of obtaining meaning. The reader invests in a meaning that is inherent in the text. The procedural process of reading inherently has meaning on its own that is separate from the text.[285] The relativity of the reader's understanding depends on where and how the text is read as the interpretation fluctuates over time. The audience of the project is intended for any ilk of reader that shares a commonality to being familiar with the collage process, how it appears and the way in which the writing is derived from multiple sources. Since the collages are exhibited online, the way that they resonate with the reader suggests his or her methods of deconstruction reveal the commonalities of the reader in how the collage is responded to. Individual differences of readership may support or negate assumptions that Britons, through the language of which their history is carried in, would find less of a resonance to collage but be part of a wider definition of it through the familiarity of its process.

The cut-up text as an artefact in itself contains meaning despite it being unwritten. It is served on blank slate for which the reader, in reading, can actually write further text for it. The proliferation of meaning from the blank slate that the cut-up text is surrounded in is no different than assertions of poststructural theorists like Barthes. Barthes believed that the author was an arbitrary mechanism for interpreting meaning. The text becomes an experience that comes from the reader. It is experienced, and becomes activated which makes the reader create an experiential dimension of meaning that is inherent in the 'active and activating consciousness of the reader.'[286] The reader is always reading his or her own understanding into the text without any possibility of achieving an interpretation centred on the author. The interpreter always searches in the direction that he or she is

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[283] Fish, 1980, 150
[284] Fish, 1980, 150
[285] Fish, 1980, 158
[286] Fish, 1980, 44

looking at. It becomes an act, a circular process of interpretation.[287] The text produces predictions that are convincing to the readers whose assumptions about the theory and principles for are obvious. Success is inevitable because the assumptions one starts with determine the outcome of the reading.[288] The methods with how one approaches the text have already determined the result, one of the assumptions driving the product including Fish's own work, which has demonstrated this body of writing, to himself.

      A text is one that comes from many sources, which the reader can project culturally influenced reflections from. A contemporary example of the act of reading, writing, and rewriting are texts that are implemented online and are 'reblogged' or regenerated from one authoring body to another within blogging and microblogging platforms. While the text contains the content that is supplemented and interpreted by the reader, it is the blogging website that is a guiding principle in how it is shared. The website which the text is published in determines the form of the how the text is presented, disseminated and its content. When it is shared, and the method of sharing on the platform that it is published on, becomes part of the system that overlaps multiple authors. The sense of interconnectivity within digital media shows how the sharing process is recorded. The sharing process is tracked, and becomes a way of how authorship is simultaneously tracked and overlapped. Twitter, for example, is an unsettled place with people who read from different sources and sources grouped together like cliques, but all of which are different, preserve the way people are reading and reposting other blogs. The platform is classically similar to the book in that the book could be combined with other books, and how text within the book transcends into other writings. However, the sharing process and appropriation of text becomes less opaque when copying from a book. The writing functions like a mirror that reflects instances of inspiration or interest from a reblog for the reader. The repetitions of previously existing writing, suggests that the reader takes on an authorial role and appropriates the writing that somehow lives past the creation of a previous author that he or she is working from. To respond to a body of writing by using the sharing process leaves a record of an interpretative response that also splits and shares the authorial role, the previous author that he or she was sharing from with the inscription of sharing. The authorial split creates

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[287] Fish, 1980, 13
[288] Fish, 1980, 68

an indeterminate amount of separation of bodies, that the reader determines and ascribes the current body an active interpretive function, and the prior body he or she shares the function of his or her response. The author, who is specifically being shared, rewritten for, or forwarded on Twitter is encased within a current author's interpretation or action of demonstrating or reblogging his or her writing. This act of sharing suggests that the author is a textual creation of the reader.[289] The embrace of the author by the reader is the only body that is active. The interpretive function of an author is outside of the writing until he or she becomes active. The author exists with an interpreted realm, one that is mediated with the conscience of the author's existence. The act of reading is central in the development of meaning. 'To consult dictionaries [...] and the story is to assume that meanings can be specified independently of the activity of reading.'[290] The reader who reads digitally exists in the same world of the author and has direct access to the original context of the author's body of text. His or her interpretation can meaningfully gather writing that is obscured from the prior author's writing.

The reader's historical knowledge of past worlds and cultures through their points in common with the cultures of the past is somewhat limited within the gaps of erasure, the unwritten past, but can be connected to through what is written. Within social media, distance is replaced with time, subject positions and time zones become similar to time, a type of separation that creates a distinction to how the present is interpreted. Those who come from similar locations and time periods could have differences depending on their age, ideology, and personality. These differences in interpretation could be a quantifiable measurement on a myriad of traits ascribed to the subject position of the reader. The consciousness of the reader is a subjective phenomenon that is conditioned by his or her own social factors. Readers interpret what is possible in the social context and culture in which he or she lives and interacts in. The reader's relationship to another's writing through the sharing process on social media is conditioned by his or her own experiences with the writing; the extension of the author as a reblog or a share becomes framed within the implied consciousness of the author. The reader, Fish believes, is socially conditioned and therefore must have difficulties with thinking past the limits possible by the culture that he or she lives in. To think outside the box is thinking within the box for reading, like

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[289] Fish, 1980, 16
[290] Fish, 1980, 152

a reblog or a share, a previously constructed idea within a share. Reading both enables and limits the operations of his or her own conscience and a reblog or a share is an interpretive way of looking at how the human mind works, and delivers information in a representational form. Reading is made up of interpretations beyond the scope of reading, for the constitution of communication.[291]

The reader, specifically on Twitter, is informed by a particular place or culture that is historically conditioned by how the reading is structured. The way that the reader reuses text in a structural system like the interface of Twitter suggests that he or she chooses beliefs and values based on his or her active interactions.[292] The views of the reader are the expression of the reader's subject position within a systematic sharing process of reading and sharing. The text becomes a reflection of the reader, which is subject to change as his or her time, place and culture do. While it is argued that the platform of where he or she is sharing information homogenizes culture, the platform of which writing is shared is politicized by its structure. The culture or ideology that the reader is ascribed to suggest that it is outside of being a conscious choice. This implies that to stand apart from his or her subject position is a separation. The separation reveals the reader's subjectivity as being separate from an identity that he or she stands by as a reader, whose representation is seen with language, in that moment and place.

The reblogs or shares sway from the permanence of writing as timeless moments of existence of it being captured and redistributed. While the shares are unlimited with how their words, their texts are framed, they are also embedded within a cultural framework decided by what counts as being readable, which also define what the role of reader is in relationship to the collages of Plath. A similarity between collage and the reblogs are their historical attributes embedded within the very words; the collage and reblog both hold a suggestion of it coming from a historical precedent. The author as a precedent is a decision that will be enforced only as long as readers continue to believe in it.[293] If what follows the author who is identified as encased within the reblogs or collage poems are a form of interpretation for the reader, it is because a language, the sense of being able to determine the meaning of words and the rules for combining them, is a way

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[291] Fish, 1980, 14
[292] Fish, 1980, 97
[293] Fish, 1980, 11

of thinking within a cultural framework, a way of life.[294] The characteristics of read and spoken language are heard and constantly repeated as the actions of the reader involve him or her in a world of objects and signifiers that are already in place. The purposes, objectives, procedures, and values are predetermined.[295] It is in the way that the reader has been introduced to reading that he or she will have a varying relationship to the text, depending also on his subject position and culture, one which is as variable as identity.

Reader-Response Criticism

Identifying the context of the reader with 'reader-response criticism' allows the clarification for identifying the reader as a separate body with distinguishable attributes and traits that is apart from a totality of bodies or a universal body. The concept of the reader as multiple, provisional, and transient helps to make similar comparisons to the reader in relationship to the dispersal of digital poetry. The reader who reads digitally, and engages with the work at separate times, places and ways, engages with it for a variety of reasons. The compulsion to engage with my work depends on the reader's relationship to collage, and furthermore, to myself as the author. The reader may be more compelled to engage with a writer whose writing he or she is accustomed to, someone whose familiarity with ideologies or cultural influences that that he or she is interested in or accustomed to but the reason why the reader chooses who he or she is more inclined to follow becomes an immeasurable abstraction.

The reader is in dispersal, and can read and reference my work from several points of time and place once the work is published online. As Americans who are more familiar with my subject position as an experimental collage poet from California hold a familiarity with my type of writing, the possibilities for a specific demographic of the reader is impossible to measure. Proposing a homogenized or specified audience suggests exclusion and would contradict a contextual approach to defining a reader in relation to 'reader-response criticism'. Wolfgang Iser categorizes a reader who resides in a multiplicity of fabricated identities as one component of 'reader-response criticism' as proposed in a book published in 1978 entitled *The Act of Reading*. My work on collage reveals a shared authorship that, once it is revealed and identified to the reader through

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[294] Fish, 1980, 303
[295] Fish, 1980, 304

Foucault's notion of the 'author function', includes my own subject position in terms of the identification of myself having a cultural resemblance as an American who claims to act more European than most Europeans do, in terms of his resistance to assimilation, and then most specifically as a Californian. The attribution of multiple traits ascribed to my identity enables my practice of collage to be better understood within a global context, being amongst a multitude of reference points coming from the collective reader.

There could be a variety of arguments made on what constitutes contemporary avant-garde and experimental poetry for the reader. My approach is to contextualize experimental poetry, with characteristics of collage that are considered to be experimental or avant-garde in the historically American trajectory. Poets are historically structured within proximity of where a school is taking place. The proximity is usually considered to be a physical one, but with the advent of online communities, the proximity is digital. Whether a poet was realized as a beat poet when he or she moved to the Bay Area in California in the 1940s, or whether the New York school of poets only had such an ilk of writers within the parameters of New York is highly unlikely, but the way location plays a role in the formation of groups is becoming less conditional and circumstantial as more of an emphasis is placed in the digital communities that a writer associates himself or herself with. I believe that with online resources, like Twitter, schools are becoming diversified online. A school, which was once defined by the parameters of a physical area, becomes a shared dispersal. The writers who publicly post poetry onto blogs, and are a part of a network of friends, are defined by these digital alliances, as writers that are becoming more reliant on the feedback from a community that forms and meets outside of a specific time or place but within a blogging forum. The forum presents itself by the interactions from separate blogs that are directed towards one blog, collectively as an interconnected chain of writers communicating with each other. My being in London is best described as my writing from it, as being in transit. I find as many influences from being in Britain as I do from being in a state of movement.

I find myself being influenced by writing that lives in movement. The closest aesthetic I follow is through a contemporary American trajectory, being a writer on the road, as popularized by the title of the autobiographical book *On the Road* published in 1957 by writer Jack Kerouac. The best way to describe my being in London is to somehow structure myself within it. My ephemeral presence of being in London, in the

larger sense of my being in a state of movement, places myself in a proximal relation to the people I present my poetry to, who come from London and we coexist together in that moment, presenting and listening to each others' poetry from the same room and at the same time, which has a beginning and ending. I believe that the importance placed on presence, the pedagogical urge to have one's poetry critiqued by another physical body is partly a communal activity to satisfy the need to be heard, and escape from being forgotten. I am writing in a public place in London to escape from being forgotten, to write myself in a place, a point of dispersion, at that very moment with the reader being part of my movement. My life in England and my life in California connect like two bodies interweaving; my flying forward in time to London from Los Angeles is like trying to run away from being grounded in the past. My flying back to California is like getting my head out of the clouds. I feel like I could be immortal when I write because I am constantly moving back and forth in time. I completed the filming and most of the writing in London and most of the editing in California. I believe being eight hours and 5,000 miles away emphasizes my acute experience of what traveling back and forth in time is like for me, forward in time to England and back in time to California.

An argument could be made that everything is momentary. My belief that the body, which is more ephemeral than writing, can be found through my own writing, from the changing eyes of a collective reader who reads digitally. Since I will live to one day acknowledge my point of my body dying, or at least to experience my own end as a body, what could be left of my body is the writing left in digital media. The readers who read digitally and come together can find influences that other writers start from, in different places and moments in time. The benefit of a readership that reads screen-based text is its ability to collect from a past movement of what one has left behind. I feel as if the poems I read are past representations of oneself, where one came from, historicized on a digital post, and can be reworked, reordered, and collaged into something new, whether a translation or an entirely new poem based on the inspiration of its approach. For my own body is my writing, the ephemerality being the audience. I discovered that since I move around so much, I only constantly exist online as my writing. My online presence is ephemeral that is no less different than bodily existence. There is an end that is implied for both. If and once technology either stops or destroys it, the writing will cease to exist. I feel like embodying a poem by speaking for it, the process of attempting to complete it,

by reading it out loud, ascribing the poem its author, to embody it, becomes secondary to the digital technology that is presented. The reason it is secondary is that human presence carry the poem with morale and enthusiasm rather than in its technological components, yet. There is a fixation or desire to have my 'voice', like other poets, be heard, however, I believe my 'voice' is heard more competently through the internet, a blog of my posting, than on a podium, which my audience in that time and place appears more inclined to listen to when he or she searches for it. This may be no different than the daily travellers who encounter my poems on Twitter as this omnipresence and constant positioning enables those who are willing to stop more time to. Digital platforms provide the ability to constantly speak from a podium, to encounter serendipitous turns of events of finding people genuinely interested in my work as I read. If I am stuck in the past and missing, I am readily found in a virtual world. Different people, in different places and times, could find me there too, in a constantly on-going search.

If the hyperlink and screen are considered two primary ways of defining digital text, the way in which it corresponds and integrates multiple texts into one, and its ability to be tracked can correspond to a reader through his or her physical interactions with it. The ability to click through an enclave of transition points tracks the reader's footsteps, and creates a dynamic of time and space within the linearity of digital media behind a screen. Since the use of hypertext often includes text embedded within it and surrounding it, the reading of multiple streams of texts would likely become a confluence of points of entry and exit from separately authored texts for the single reader. If the hypertext is based entirely on some type of formalist, linguistic and structural coding pattern, there would be another level of attribution recognized through the coding process, encountered with author would emerge. The idiosyncrasies of code and hand share similarities in its ability to develop a moving flow with leading the reader to transition to other points in the writing. The reader that reads digitally contextualizes his or her relationship to texts, specifically by the reader being a moving presence in digital media, as the function of hypertext has evolved the way in which a reader gathers text. A notable difference between digital text and print is time; time becomes synonymous with the movement of the reader and his or her clicks and scrolling with the screen. The coding, the linking of hypertext, greatly interacts with the way that texts transition. The technological advances, mostly in the speed of the internet and how the texts are integrated on a webpage, allows

readers to interact with multiple texts in a continuous stream, to click and scroll between several texts back and forth. The links between texts can enrich the structure of each text with layers of other information. A digital treatment of print text alters the perception and conceptual interpretation of text by the reader's interaction and shaping of a text with other texts or within the same text through hyperlinks. The aid of technology changes the reader's relationship to text from its digital platform. The changes alter how he or she interacts with it and enable the reader to formulate him or herself 'and thus discover an inner world of which [they] had [...] not been conscious.'[296] The interpretive possibility of a page as hypertext shapes reader to more aware of his or her relationship to a body of text through the choices and direction of his or her clicks.

The act of reading is a practice of consciousness. The reader's interaction and decision making in the hypertext, for example, could be recorded through the history that a browser tracks when someone is browsing websites. The tracking of the consciousness of a reader through his or her movements in the hypertext demonstrates an interactive reader and an interactive body of text. Hypertext could also reflect the disposition of the reader. The patterns of reading are altered and transform a body of text through hypertext, for example, into a stream of the reader's interpretation, through the interaction, the order of clicks in the case of hypertext. Any change that happens in the platform of hypertext, for example, through an error in its transmission, or coding, transforms the relationship between text and reader that negotiates the reading of a particular text in an interpretive sense. Although the response occurs from inside the text, it brings into play the imaginative and perceptive faculties of the reader to make him or her adjust and even differentiate his or her own focus.[297] The interpretation intertwines with the ideological stance of the reader by treating the text to a historical or ideological thinking pattern prior or even simultaneously to a rewriting or structuring of it.

The act of reading means that the letters translate into a stream of imagery. The interpretative process, with an active and transformative reading, implied in the hypertext, identifies and reconfigures the text to various perspectives of the reading. The reader often interacts with fragments of the text, as it 'cannot at any moment be grasped as a whole.'[298] Both reading and writing become a part of a critical dialectic that is

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[296] Iser, 1978, 58
[297] Iser, 1978, 10
[298] Iser, 1978, 112

inseparable and both interpret the hypertext as a fragmented text. The perception of the text as a fragment 'in comparison with [the reader's] normal modes of perception, may […] offer distinct advantages, in so far as it permits a process through which the aesthetic object is constantly being structured and restructured.'[299] In a reflexive reading of the text, the reader defines it by giving it significance, and also constitutes himself or herself as a reading subject. The interpretation of a text becomes complete by the interpretation of a reader who better understands his or her own subject position, or alternatively understands himself or herself in another way.[300] The dichotomy of what the reader and his or her reading constitutes suggests that reading is a way of extending the subject position of the reader. Reading passively receives the imprint of the text with a dynamic process of recreation that allows the reader to formulate thoughts and perspectives that are outside the text but also that question his or her own existing perspectives.[301]

Text that is presented in hypertext is always in the midst of other writing as the reader can focus on the manifestations of it being in process. The hypertext becomes a conscious attempt to incite the reader to make a conscious impact onto the writing through using his or her imagination and turning it into an action of the writing. There is a continual interaction between the conscious element, which is more prevalent in words swimming in the hypertext, and the potential of the imagination. The conscious thought of the reader stimulates the evolution and interpretation of the reading in the hypertext by its manifestation and its use. Hypertext functions in opposition to historical convention as it reorganizes pre-existing conventions and fields of reference; and undermines them in a whole array of conventions staged in a text. The reader, like the hypertext he or she reads, is within his or herself and simultaneously outside his or herself. The constitution of meaning implies the creation of a totality that emerges from interacting with textual perspectives through changes in the writing and formulates this totality with the reader.

Embodiment, This Embodiment

The human body is ephemeral. The exchange that a poet gives as a body with no writing could reintegrate in others' writing. The body with no writing exists in its representational form that others give it. My interest in digital writing has much to do

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[299] Iser, 1978, 112
[300] Iser, 1978, 147
[301] Iser, 1978, 147

with an interest in the effects of constraints upon self-expression through the body's methods of production. The proximity of where the body films words or the process of using a constraint of all words in the arrangement of the voice-over in the audio and video collages becomes part of my body that is embedded in its intention. While my body in a space precedes a body of writing, the poetry I read aloud demonstrates its presence, or implied presence, until it disappears. The writing that is presented in digital media brings the unfamiliarity of ways in which text could be contextualized on a screen or within a platform of dispersal, possibilities than those already explored. I am struck by how a shared body of writing could be modified by a digital system of reposting, like with the platform of Twitter, commenting and modification, even when it is casually applied, produce quite different results of poetry. Like with other Twitterers, I desire my writing to be readily and widely available. My physical presence delivers an enthusiasm almost entirely unrelated to the body of writing being read, a carnal presence to satisfy a plural audience that is limited by the accessibility of physical space. I am unable to produce enough of my physical body in a reading, the way I could a body of text. I fear the limitation of my body, the limitations of time and space, the scarcity of its expansion, its inaccessibility outside of digital media.

The concept of a reader who reads digitally could be in the past, future and located anywhere, unlike the physical body. The body is apparently the first to go before the writing and digital media. My relationship to the reader as defined in 'reader-response criticism' on Twitter, for example, is how he or she experiences my poetry through a subjective construction of my identity. The focus on recording my daily practice of writing and posting daily collage poems on Twitter, reflects the dispersal of the reader through his or her reblogs and reposts of the collage poems. There are different forms of practice production and distribution, essentially connecting my collage writing to the multifaceted reader with Twitter. The importance of readability and interaction with my collages on Twitter is how the reader emerges in the form of methods of redistribution that comes with a larger following. There appears to be less opacity in terms of following fragments of a multidirectional readership of my writing through methods of sharing. Although the reader is defined in terms of being part of a fragmented distribution, the reader responds to writing as a repository of information whose engagement with the body of text comes the platform of distribution. As a reader, the writers and artists that I

encounter are often as preoccupied as I am with promoting their own work. If there were an ideal audience I would wish to be followed by, the readers would include humanities research students and poet-critics, which are intermingled in a multitude of followers. If an analysis of the followers was conducted on my Twitter, for example, it might show that the particular demographic of readership that is heavily influenced on the subjective nature of how I networked with people in 2011. The audience comes from a variety of places but shows a particular demographic of American followers, based on the users I follow and particularly how other followers found me. The building of audiences on Twitter engages my own subjectivity, in which the personal values and conditions that reflect the composition who I have added, show an ilk of reader that I am attracted to that is often American, interested in queer theory and the practice of experimental poetry. Even though the platform on Twitter has no centrality, the constant stream of microblogs allows the relationship between subject position of the reader and the collagist to establish itself in a fragmented realm through his or her following list.

The collage poems collect and redistribute writing, links and images that emerges in a structural format. The collective writing on Twitter is similarly decentralized, but allows the writing in a decentralized realm, to move and become redistributed within this space. While fragmentation, like a collage, could resemble the distribution methods on Twitter, the poetry on Twitter, in its totality resembles a collage:

> Quills quills find the thin bronze line part gun range brown range gum light train bound Bond street Bond street the next dot dot drop.

Chris Girard, Twitter Poem from February 16th, 2012

The words that constitute a lyrical collage poem that was written on my iPhone during a ride on the London Underground on the Jubilee Line are taken from patterns of read signs, sounds of overheard conversations and announcements that Bond Street was approaching and then has approached. The fleeting hubbub on the subway echoes the cadence of the hum on the moving train and opening doors that approaches, stops and passes Bond Street almost instantaneously. The distribution method of poetry similarly resounds in a Twitter stream as fleeting bits of writing become redistributed and part of other streams from other networks. Their totality, reversal of direction and re-order endlessly shape and contextualize shared texts within these flickering streams.

Collage poetry, which could inherently fit into particular forms of constraint-based writing, adheres to a constrained form of writing poetry within the limit of 140 characters on a Twitter post. The constrained forms of haiku, 'senryu', and 'tanka' each observe no more than five and seven syllables per line and in the case of 'gogyohka', five line breaks and no syllabic constraints. The rule of constraint-based forms with context to their syllables and line breaks is more straightforward than, in the case of distinguishing a senryu poem, addressing the constraint of a particular theme. Both the haiku and senryu form observe no more than 21 syllables, however the divergence between the two forms is the observation of dark themes and human foibles for the senryu form. Several poetry feeds on Twitter, some of which are included in my following and followers list, that primarily or exclusively post constrained forms of poetry, embed within the writing a modifier, a way for the reader to distinguish a particular form through a 'hashtag'. In a similar way that a reader could identify heavily disjointed or abstract writing as having a process attached to it, a hashtag, which is a link to an aggregate of ideas within one signifier, explains a historical process to the reader by the signifying word.

A hashtag is a way that writing, within a stream, becomes mirrored into the stream, an aggregate of ideas, of the signifying word that other readers could access, and then be redistributed. A hashtag uses the symbol '#' in the front of a word, hyperlinking the word and the entire Twitter post to be streamed within it. The hyperlinked word functions as hypertext within the overall post that becomes an interactive component of a shared authorship. It relates the associations to the word within a 'hashtag' to a dispersal of similar ideas when the reader modifies the stream that he or she sees. The constraint of writing one poem a day, two if the previous day is forgotten, and three if the day before the previous day is forgotten, a constraint applied to my own writing process for example, could impact the way a reader is introduced to the writing through its historical process. The hashtag of a constraint-based poetry form that connects to other streams of writing could signify the importance placed in every character due to its limitations of form and characters. The constraints used with the limitation of characters on Twitter offers similar methods of constraints used in collage making. A constraint made with writing poetry from a limited number of characters contrasts with the limitations placed on space, time and authorial inscription. The physical proximity that a recording takes place and the use of all recorded utterances or signs in the audio and video collages discloses the process of

the poem's construction. The hashtag from Twitter reveals how the constrained poetry the poem under is modified, while the authorial signifier of 'Christop', the username of the Twitter feed, modifies the way that the collage poems are approached.

Figure 22. Chris Girard, Twitter Feed from March 16 to 19th, 2012

Twitter creates a framework for an interactive component of distribution process for constrained writing. The interface of Twitter made for and through a mobile device provides cutting-edge literary discourse in digital humanities. Posting tiny poems on a platform developed for mobile technologies imparts with the reader their framework of dispersion that a reader interacts with on a handheld device. The scrolling feed on Twitter allows the writing to be more readily available and interactive through an interconnection of hyperlinks of other scrolling feeds. As computers and mobile devices eventually merge into one platform, the stream and scrolling ability that reconstitutes the directional pattern of reading actively transitions and reshapes the dynamic of reading digitally on newer mobile platforms. The dynamic of reading digitally is the state of having a published text be one of many in a constantly changing body of readers. My physical body apart from the text body is ephemeral. The text is experienced by a constantly evolving readership despite my lack of presence. The space that my work inhabits is important right now in the context to how the translation of text represents the materiality and sustainability of

the body. I, the body that I am, will disintegrate in a hundred years but my text probably will not. The purpose or motivation of the digital resonance of text that can be mirrored, even when the stream appears to stop, is being a body that can sustain itself with time.

The reader as an audience concerns me more as an omnipresence, with a past, present and possible future, that reads a text. My subject position and the influences of my writing are clearly shown as their own body that is reconfigured and redistributed. The difference between my poetry, and purportedly avant-garde poetry, is how the space of the body as a text, becomes the interactive component for the reader. The physical body is central but the text takes its place when the body is void. The body as a performer depends on the participation of a present audience, the presence of bodies for the body, these bodies of an exchange of interaction at the same time and place, age together in a space of interaction. The individual body within a performance space will eventually die off, as will the performance, if the body lacks a replacement. The physical body can be duplicated as a collective body, to create and withstand the cracks, rather than fall apart. The body of readers as an audience could repost his or her interactions with the reading because the memory is momentarily duplicated as a text. The author, whose body is ephemeral, as his or her materiality dies, becomes the body of text. The materiality of the body becomes embedded within the materiality of text; the body of text becomes him or her. There is a quality of my body being readable like a collage with historical signifiers. It could be interpreted again with another body. If a body could inhabit an aura, presence or eternal quality without a representation of its state, the physical body would function like a text. My physical body is 30 years old and will be completely decomposed in a hundred years. If my body exists as an omnipresent text, then my textual body, if it is remembered, will become someone else's text in the future.

It is important to consider the similarities and differences between the reader in context to the audio and video collage poems in an installation and a digital setting. The reader, according to Fish and Iser, is historically grounded as the primary source of deconstruction and reconstitution of writing in a given body of text. The changing shape of writing that is dispersed, blogged and reblogged digitally, for example, presents itself in a multiplicity, like that of the reader. The installation part of the project presented the audio and video poems, as being simultaneously active for the reader. The intonation of two separate collage videos in the room and reverberation of ambient sounds and the

collaged audio recording modifies the reader's interaction with the installation, but retains a physical constitution as a reader in a given space and in that moment of time. Readers who converge are more likely to be part of a larger interaction as dialogue in an installation, as they are able to verbally or nonverbally engage with others who are simultaneously witnessing the screens in the room. The physical bodies of the readers define their presence in a single space and time with context to the physical installation. The readers similarly consider the position of the author through an active engagement with the body of text in its physical proximity. The audio and video collages offers a similar kind of active engagement online that allows the ability to comment on the video if a reader clicks on a video link and forwards these web links through Twitter and other forms of social media. Since the primary source of referencing the audio and video collages is through digital means, the reader's access to the project is modified through his or her engagement with the audio and video poems online. The presentation of an online poem as separate hyperlinks distinctively modifies the reader's experience with the poem but the lack of constraints in its time and physical proximity allow it to be experienced from the digital platform's lack of a centralized, physical and timed space. The presence of a physical body in a space and the inclusion of an installation allows for the inflection of the project's entirety through multiple and simultaneous screens.

The text that constitutes the audio and video poems goes through a process of translation by the reader who connects the collaged speech and signs with shifting and floating authorial signifiers. Whether through the online presence of a single collage poem or the experience of multiple poems in a same room on a looping projector and screen, the reader is presented with the fragmented and ephemeral nature of public signs and speech through the breaks of each word in a given collage. Since the audio and video poems construct a fluid authorial body largely associated with the familiar recordings and places, the ephemerality of the original body of text challenges the reader in the collage. The collage of regulatory signs individually addresses the spectator who destabilizes its sequential placement. The listener of the audio collages, for example, becomes fully aware of the disjointed process when he or she attempts to follow the connections of words that are previously unconnected. Each individual recording of text in the video poem presents a totality of incomplete fragments that have a prior history, and attempt at corresponding to both the visuals and semantics of each following word. The presentation

and treatment of signs imply an association with several authors that is complicated when the texts in their entirety are presented as a single poem. The sequence of signs could potentially inscribe a multiplicity of authorial bodies that including the positioning of the bodies of both the filmmaker and the collagist. The separation of bodies enables to compose their transitory movements and exploration of collage. The structure of the resulting collage echoes with my 'voice', the inscription of the collagist, through a spectral presence of bodies embedded in it. The process of collaging from deconstructed fragments of audio and video clips presents how a multiplicity of authorship is revealed to a multiplicity of readers.

Section Five – Conclusion/Addendum

Conclusion

The questions posed from the outset of the project are consistent throughout the theoretical and practice components of the project. The personal narrative, grounded in 'autoethnography', evokes the production of 'performative' research that sensitizes the readers to a multilayered subjectivity between Plath and myself. The collage process reconstitutes the author, writing and reader through digital media but the project is not a technological marvel. Many aspects of the project could be achieved through analogue technologies from over half a century ago. My practice can be partly situated within the current fascination with analogue media that is prevalent among many contemporary artists. Many proponents of old media stake an attachment to celluloid as a fidelity to history, craft and the physicality of the film editing process. The sumptuous texture of indexical media is unquestionably seductive and its desirability also arises from the impression that it is scarce, rare and precious. While digital media can be infinitely copied at an inexpensive price, a 16-mm film, for example, cannot. The act of physically cutting and arranging strips of audio and videotape that involves such a minute and intricate pattern, minding the space for breaths between the readings of words, would be a marvellous achievement in itself. The process would require a magnifying lens, razor blade and finite precision, as well as extra audio and videotape if mistakes happen. Rather than serve as a substitute for analogue, the project contextualizes collage poetry in the framework of arts and computational technology and underlines a relationship to the

theoretical components of the project. The importance placed between the practice and research components is with how the process of collage reconstitutes the author, writing and reader through digital media. Issues of authorial intention, embodiment and 'performativity' are touched upon as the audio and film collages augment the way that foregrounds how collage making could evolve the prior source that was used. The process of collage making generates a shared authorship through the individual words that are sourced from other authors and can generate poetry within the basis of a destabilized and constantly changing authorial body. The shift of authorial attribution is actually more of a process of attributing multiple bodies to a single process through the 'author function', the shared authorial body that is always in process. The conditioning and awareness of digital text is acknowledged to always be in dispersal, which can be made for appropriation and reblogging on social media platforms.

The collages of *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* and *Shadow/Shadows/Tomb* are composed with constraints that appropriate other authorial sources. The constraints used in the practice incorporate all of the spoken words in the poems and film clips taken in a specific area of London and then are attributed to the biography of the author. The attribution of an authorial source in the poems disrupts the primacy of a single author, into a multidirectional facing body. The 'performativity' of an unstable body enacts a ghostly figure to share the author's body, attributing separate components to the authorial body with a conflicting gender, timeframe, and racial makeup. An engagement with the collage poems reconstitutes roles of authorship, and authorial attribution, when a multifaceted body is presented. The power of attributing a fluid and unstable authorial body to attributions in collage poetry is to challenge the paradoxical reinforcement of the shared author to become a single body, and share conflicting attributes, through the 'author function'. The conflicting role of the author is explored with the authorial identity of Plath, in which her identity as an author is given a multiplicity of roles, as described in Butler's notion of 'performativity'. The actions that construct an authorial signifier through 'performativity' become implicit with the biographical attributions attached to formal names. However, the actions also become part of the procedural elements recorded in the completed collage poems. The play of both an authorial and interpretive role of the collagist of the audio and video collages complicate and reveal the act of collage through the fragmented sounds and imagery.

The embrace of collage through these procedural elements that is perceptible through the use of screen-based media as poetics considers the 'voice' of the body and movements of text. The bodies of Plath and myself are living and reliving through the collage processes. Plath asserts a will of living through her own body as text by writing about her death before it even occurs. While collage approximates the authorial identity of Plath with that of the collagist, the process of arranging Plath's poems 'Lady Lazarus' and 'The Applicant', revealed in the audio for example, demonstrates how a shared authorship suggests an omnipresence of bodies. My own body as a collagist, a shared authorial body, in relationship to reader and the 'author function' shifts, changes and changes very fast, to having the qualities of Plath's ghostly presence, and vice versa. The collage becomes an interpretive force for the reader as the formation of a signifier, the procession of elements that constitutes shared authorship fabricates a spectral presence that contextualizes the poetry readings and storefront signs. The name *Lady/Applicant: The Lazarus* itself hints to an authorial signifier as 'Lady/Applicant' suggests how the application of roles reconstitutes a shared authorial body, like womanhood, and 'The Lazarus' references the constant rebirth of an author.

The ghost of the author is as elusive in Plath's poetry as in the collage. The differentiation between the fragmented bodies of Plath and myself inherent in the construction of an authorial figure is in a path of discovery of the reader, a set of predetermined attributes from biographical roles, how they circumvent gender, sexuality, and mental illness, with regards to an authorial role in the collages. The reader, as contextualized in 'reading-response criticism', is constituted collectively in terms of his or her physical presence in a specific time and space to view the collage poems as a physical presentation or installation; or within dispersal in digital media. The reader who reads digitally and encounters a multiplicity of authorial sources in the collage poems is collectively in dispersal since his or her subject position cannot be accounted for in the definition of a reader. The act of reading in a digital platform shows that a singular or plural authorial body is in a similar realm that the reader is in. The constitution of the body is in a myriad of directions, like the reader, who is active in choosing the direction of reading the streaming collage poems in a multidirectional interface or installation.

The author's omnipresence sways between polarities with a text that fractures the meandering body to its dissolving point, while the body transcends time like an

anachronism. Time is relentless and indicated by details that lead the reader to move by association because, like memory, history overpowers the present. Age is as deceptive as authorial and time reinforces a catalogue of varied codes with an impenetrable play on the overlapping context of historical events. The reader invents judgments that induce authority and challenges the capacity of poetry reading by arranging the practice of thought with symbols that react to the varied permutations of familiarity. Everything invented by the reader is an anchor; the mirrored landscapes are strewn with paramours connected to the land and meet in a large box of mirrors to visit their amours and show off their endowments. Codes of language reveal a field of inverted connections and the significance of the reader's wilful instincts. A resolution is the bane of the author's intention in the collage poems, by my saying it, and if the poems have a resolution for one, they are collectively never resolved. Reading creates repetitive moments of collision as with it comes a desire for conclusion.

If the assemblage of familiar objects and representational constructs of an author through its process can be taken as the collage's sole content, then the collage process, a weaving of separate texts, reflects that to be alone is a paradox, it is the experience of being alone when the reader is present. The inscription of meaning into a collage poem embeds these associations into its process. Its sounds and visuals require the eye to echo the writing while the volatile shifting from the reference to the phrase becomes a continuous, caverning bridge constructed by the reader. The process and authorial signifiers of collage traverse the links between the author and reader. The author, who justifies the publication of the written word with his or her signifier, suggests that the experiences of language presented may be entirely modified by process of collage making. The constraints that tone and shape the collage through its proximity to an author become part of how the collage is interpreted. Authorship manifests in the conversation made between the writer who is speaking and the reader who is listening. Within every utterance, there is a new utterance. The writing is embodied and re-embodied as the eye of the reading takes to the streets and rolls along London and Los Angeles.

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Appendix A: Websites

The purpose of the appendix is to provide documentation and context to my creative practice, publications and exhibitions. The five webpages included are links to the practice components of the project. Although each of the links suggest the content that each website includes, each website provides references that constitute the entirety of the project in the form of images or films. The appendix of websites structures my often inconsistent, whimsical, and scattered projects with a definitive list that references my project work during the completion of the Ph.D. The official site includes the entirety of my projects with links to Twitter, Tumblr, Vimeo, and a Facebook artist page for updates about projects, artwork and future exhibitions. The links for the websites include:

Official Site
http://www.chrisgirard.com

Vimeo
http://www.vimeo.com/chrisgirard

Facebook
http://www.facebook.com/christophgirard

Twitter
http://www.twitter.com/christop

Tumblr
http://cgirard.tumblr.com

Appendix B: Exhibitions/Publication

The primary concern for me is exposure. The entirety of the project is clear and plans for future projects are clear enough. My motivation is to explore more deeply felt landscapes and step farther past the position of having an expertise and mastering a craft. The direction of my research appears set in stone and I want to further dig into the realm of this specific niche of digital humanities. Since the education system marginally supports the collage poetry I present with tiny stipends and grants, the direction I want to head in is to present collage poetry outside of the academy. The benefit of being outside of the academy is in having an audience of readers that translates to more outlets for reception. Editors have personally asked me to submit to publications that they edited that have followed me on Twitter or found my website. Although I submit to people who represent journals that invite me to contribute or wish to request publishing my work, I also actively submit to major publications or exhibition opportunities. Within the methods of promotion, like through Twitter, a certain demographic becomes exposed and familiarized to my body represented as text. The publications and exhibitions include:

Abes Penney, performance, 2012
A Glimpse Of, poetry, 2012
Birdsong, interview, 2012
Browns of Brockley, photography, 2011
GLITS, essay, 2012
LA Road Concerts, film, 2011
On and On Screen, film, 2011
Pocket Litter, poetry, 2011
Queer, The Space, film, 2012
Truck, poetry, 2011

The strength of reaching out to a wide range of publications through social media reinforces my belief that, while nepotism overshadows the submission process, the

strongest publications come from methods of do-it-yourself publishing through social media, something that is interconnected within a platform. The interconnection of social media, with Twitter for example, reveals the transparency of the submission process through its announcements. The mirroring of publications from a Twitter 'hashtag' makes the database of searching for writing more transparent. The transparency of publications also reflects the journey of a collective endeavour of the submission process. Quite a handful of literary journals, galleries and organizations have also, rather than rejecting my digital submissions, have not responded back. The futility of being digitally rejected comes with a caveat that while there should be an expectation for a lack of response, there should be little expectation for a formal rejection unless explicitly asked for one. The lack of response, rather it being an act of ignoring or formally rejecting a message, resembles a fishing line in a river for the online submission process. The process of sending materials like selecting them for digital publications is drawn from a continuous stream of submissions, and the rejection is an implication from announcements of what is published versus what is not. The lack of response to a digital message, or a definitive conclusion of a rejection becomes an ellipsis that leaves the possibility for a follow-up, or until the submitter, on his or her own volition, decides to revoke it. The ellipses leaves an often intangible blur in the communication process, which allows the person who wrote the overture the agency to make a decision of when he or she decides to stop writing. In some cases, this may lead to the sender to be blocked, but in other cases, there may be a relationship being built between the ellipses, the ignored and the ignorer, the recipient in question who may one day respond back.