

HOW WE ARE TOGETHER:
GENEROSITY AND DISSONANCE
IN INTERNET-SITUATED
PERFORMANCE ART

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Abstract

How we are together: generosity and dissonance in internet-situated performance art is a practice as research PhD that focuses on how artistic practices engage with the increasing ubiquity of internet communication. Specifically, it addresses how performance art practices respond to the ways internet-enabled technologies augment and extend the interactions between individuals. *How we are together* investigates what “together” means as internet communication technologies become ubiquitous, and how social relations interweave the on and offline sites of contemporary culture. Through a series of artworks devised alongside written analyses, the project demonstrates the ways in which “internet-situated” performance and performative artworks highlight the increasing digital mediation of contemporary practices of relation. These practices, and the relationships instantiated through them, are the basis of an investigation into the entangled politics of the emotional and technological. *How we are together* defines a set of contemporary “internet-situated” performance art practices, creating a subset of internet art that is specifically using and referring to the social processes of digital communications. The innovative nature of this thesis emerges from its approach to the interconnected emotional and technological politics of internet communications through its theorising of the concepts “generosity” and “dissonance”. Expanding upon Rosalyn Diprose’s *Corporeal Generosity* (2004), this project demonstrates how generosity operates as a tool in artistic practice that emphasises relation and enacts a specific openness and care through the terms of reciprocity in exchange. Dissonance, defined by building on theories of friction, failure and disruption in both technology and performance, provides a new critical intervention into the imbrication of emotion with digital technologies in contemporary culture. The conceptual and practical interventions of dissonance and generosity are demonstrated across the written analyses and artistic practice, which developed in parallel over the period of research. The project asks: In what specific ways is the practice of art shaped and forged by the new contingencies of relations that emerge within internet-situated contexts? In answering this question, I combine performance studies and feminist cultural

theories with practice as research; this produces a new and innovative engagement with both digital philosophies and performance practices. This practice as research approach draws on feminist epistemologies to emphasise situated knowledges and emotion. In this way, the thesis bridges the theoretical gap between theories that address the politics of emotion and those that focus on the impacts of digital technologies.

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Preface: a note on the appendices

A body of artworks was created alongside the written thesis of this PhD. An appendix (**Appendix A**) accompanies the written submission. The appendix includes information on each of the works discussed as well as a URL that links to each specific work within the online exhibition. Appendix A.13 provides images documenting portions of this online exhibition, for readers without access to the Internet as well as future readers. Throughout the written thesis, the artworks that accompany this written submission are referenced in relation to this appendix. The appendix also lists the file names associated with each work, which can be found on the DVD attached to the printed thesis. However, the reader is asked to remember that the work is intended to be viewed online. To this end, the attached DVD also contains images documenting the online exhibition.

As the focus of my project is “internet-situated performance”, I have presented these works in an online exhibition that can be viewed at <http://cargocollective.com/howwearetogether/>. The works appear chronologically on the gallery page. I have also curated navigations the visitor to the site can choose to follow, each of which brings together approximately five different works that are related in form and theme. I encourage readers to explore the site before, as well as referring to it throughout, their reading. At the beginning of each chapter, the works that will be discussed are indicated: readers are encouraged to refer to them prior to reading that section.

In **Appendix B**, I provide information on essays and articles I have published while writing this thesis.

Appendix C is a timeline of artists and artworks that provides an overview of the artistic practices relevant to my artistic research. Included in this timeline are key events in the development of the internet, to provide further historical context and artworks from my practice as research that were presented publicly.

Finally, **Appendix D** offers an overview of the specific software programs, websites and applications that are referred to within the thesis. Digital technologies change swiftly: the definitions provided are intended to help a future reader in the applications that were seemingly ubiquitous during the period (2014 – 2018) of writing.

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With endless gratitude to my siblings, the first and best source of generosity and of dissonance; to my parents for their unwavering support; to Mira for making art with me and for so much more; to all my brilliant friends and extended family, who thought with me, laughed with me, and kept me mostly sane; and to my love.

For Dan Dunlop.

Author's Declaration

I declare that the research contained in this thesis, unless otherwise formally indicated within the text, is the original work of the author. The thesis has not been previously submitted to this or any other university for a degree, and does not incorporate any material already submitted for a degree.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. F. Dunlop', written in a cursive style.

Jane Frances Dunlop

1 July 2018

Introduction: how we are together

In this section, *I discuss when we are together* (A.1). Readers are encouraged to listen to the excerpt (available online or in the DVD that accompanies this thesis) before beginning this chapter.

'[...] **our media matter most when they seem not to matter at all**, that is, when they have moved from the new to the habitual' (Chun, 2016 p.1, emphasis in original)

'[...] the production of knowledge is always a collective effort, a series of back-and-forth conversations that produce multiple results' (Taylor, 2003 p.xx)

Performance, as an artistic practice, is a generative process as well as an exchange based one. It necessarily requires a score or script, however loose, as well as an audience and a performer. It is through this relation – one person witnessing another in something that has been named a “performance” – that it constitutes its affects. Historically, performance art and theatre have gained much of their political and artistic value from the intimacy they create in the shared space of that generative exchange. Here, I focus on artistic interventions and engagements with the internet that reflect the intimacies of our social exchanges. Performance is a collective effort, staging a relation that has a generative power. Performance defines an art form, but it also contributes to how we understand social practice and the constitution of identity: the meaning of performance moves. In the realm of information technology, it is used to describe the functions of software as they execute their algorithmic processes, processes that make the internet visible through various browsers and apps. Here, it is predominately used to describe artworks that are generative and that operate in various ways to bring about a relation between artist and spectator. Thus it is important to note; this is a project that deals in the intersection of digital technology and artistic practice with daily life. Specifically, it uses artistic research to investigate and intervene in daily disruptions that are a central aspect of our use of technologies. It is these disruptions, emotional and technological, that are expanded upon through this project’s inquiry and that provide vital insights into *how we are together*.

This thesis is, ultimately, deeply invested in how, as Diana Taylor writes in *The Archive and the Repertoire*, '[...] the production of knowledge is always a collective effort, a series of back-and-forth conversations that produce multiple results' (Taylor, 2003 p.xx). My project focuses on how the 'back-and-forth' relations that occur via the internet – a technology with ever-growing centrality in the contemporary social landscape – become the material and focus of performances and performative art practices. As a discipline, performance studies is skilled at interpreting the movement between artistic and social practices because its central object of study does exactly that. The 'multiple results' of the 'back-and-forth' relations, through conversation as well as exchange and performance, provide the strategies for negotiating this relation.

Throughout what follows, I will focus on artworks that respond to practices of exchange in internet communication. These artworks, I argue, capture the frictions of social and technological processes that mark collective efforts: the strain of systems in moments that, as Wendy HK Chun writes in the epigraph, 'seem not to matter' (2016, p. 1). Technologies and cultures develop together, each strand both solves as well as creates problems for the other, and each is the product of a "collective effort". Here, I use performance – and its ability to move between the social and the artistic – to understand how the increasing ubiquity of internet communications contributes to how relationships are performed in the 21st century. Social media theorist Nathan Jurgenson proposes the term "augmented reality" for addressing the disintegrating difference between on/offline (Jurgenson, 2011). He argues that it is necessary to move beyond the dichotomy of on and off line space – what he calls digital dualism, the belief that on and off line are separate spaces – into critical considerations of how we live in augmented reality, when distinction is no longer relevant, useful or even readily apparent.

Within this thesis, the "internet" is a functional system of software and hardware as well as a cultural imaginary: the artworks I will analyse throughout represent possible engagements with its systems, and its imaginaries. The works I write about use the Internet, the now global network of networks that began as the military research network APRANET. However, I will not capitalise internet or associated terms such as "web" throughout this

thesis. In this way, I aim to underline at the level of language how digital technologies become mundane and part of everyday life (likewise with terms such as “web” or “email”). It is at this point that these artworks engage with the internet as a widespread social technology. My project builds an expanded field of performance that occurs in, and draws on, the materials of conversation and exchange – that is, interpersonal relation – on the internet. The expansion of performance into the sites of internet-enabled communication facilitates a critical consideration of the social and cultural construction of these sites. The performative quality of these works is the object of analysis: how do they generate the relations and affects they also name? For this reason, my artistic research makes use of widely available communication softwares. This enables me to investigate and intervene in the communications practices, expanding upon the aesthetic and performative qualities of the internet communication tools that are already at the centre of daily life. I will refer to these artworks as “internet-situated performances”, defined as performance that is made with the material of internet-enabled communication or occur on the web or, as is often the case, both.

Internet-situated performance’s use of technological friction as aesthetic and performative device draws attention both the entanglement of feelings and mediating technologies as well as to the social frictions that are recurring characteristic of our relations. To respond to the rapidly increasing entanglement of previously separate categories (performance; cultural theories of emotion; digital network philosophies), my artistic research methodology draws together feminist epistemologies to formulate a practical and theoretical approach based on weaving. I deploy “weaving” as a method that brings together different approaches and theories from multiple contexts as I investigate *how we are together*. My research, artistic and theoretical, defines this set of performance practices in order to investigate the specific ways relation evolves with technologies, as well as the broader complexities of relation that occur through experiences of being together. Site and time are key characteristics of performance, as is the audience-performer relationship that a performance instantiates. Taking performance as the central paradigm of this work, I argue that the specific insights of this project can be understood through the ways in which generosity and dissonance produce a sense of

together in the sites and temporalities of internet-situated performance. These three key qualities provide the structure of my written analysis, in chapters that focus on “sites”, “shared moments” and finally, “together”

In September 2014, I wrote a performance text based on my PhD application. It was titled *when we are together on the internet* (see Appendix A.1 for an audio excerpt of the text) and performed as part of *transmute* at the Phoenix in Brighton during Brighton Digital Festival. The following week, I started my PhD. The performance was an attempt to bring questions from my PhD proposal about the internet as a contradictory (near and far, simultaneous and syncopated) site for relationships into my artistic practice. At that moment, my practice was predominately live text-based performance and I had only just begun the experiments with sound and video that developed into the body of artworks that forms a central part of this thesis. In *when we are together on the internet*, I talk about exchange and generosity, about real and virtual and emotional geographies. I talk about how ideas move, about how we encounter each other’s ideas and borrow or steal them. I talk about charisma. It begins:

& so this is about exchange.

Exchange as the act of giving something and receiving something else in return.

& it is about why I am using the word exchange. Why we use the words we use.

*It is about thinking about the metaphors that we pick up
without knowing we are reaching for them.*

I am interested in the communication of ideas.

The passing of information in these new & multiple & contentious geographies.

How this passing is performing place.

How it is performing place on the internet.

In it.

The place it is making in the internet. (see A.1)

Although “when” suggests a temporal preoccupation, *when we are together on the internet* is a performance that was preoccupied with space and place.

Metaphors of space have been used to describe the internet since its inception; my interest was, and continues to be, more concerned with the internet as an imaginary place where people feel they are together. Over time, the project's focus has shifted from "place" as a spatial location to how performing interpersonal relationships embeds meaningfulness in communication systems: that is, the social relations that exist through mediating technology and therefore seem to be sited in it. It is for this reason that the title of this project is *How we are together*.

The small excerpt from *when we are together on the internet* above signals the importance of exchange, casting it as a generative process that is tied in with the back and forth of performance. The emotional politics and effects of these processes ultimately became a key way in which my project distinguishes itself from prior considerations of internet performance. The felt qualities of performance, and the centrality of audience-performer relations to this, offer a framework for understanding how an artwork situated in internet communications gains a performative power from the real life affective conditions it both references and is embedded in. It is through feminist theories of emotion and affect – and their important intersection with race, sexuality and other markers of difference that are subject to systems of oppression – that I will consider the performance of relations in artistic works, and their resonances with everyday practices of communication.

Research questions

This project began with a question about where we are when we are together on the internet. What has evolved since is a series of questions that address the interactions between social relations, internet communications and artistic practices. Over the course of this thesis – both the written chapters that follow here as well as the body of work discussed within them, and produced alongside the writing – I investigate three key questions:

In what ways are performative art practices shaped and forged within internet-situated contexts?

How are social relationships formed and enacted through the technological and emotional infrastructures that support them?

How do artistic practices respond to, and make use of, the new digital forms of relation?

As these questions make clear, this thesis is an examination of the relationship between art practices and the social performances that inform and instantiate them. The slippage between these two modes, and the many other ways in which the abstract and material, the real and the representational, weave into and out of one another in artistic as well as digital contexts, will be central to how I approach answering these questions. Indeed, the focus of this thesis is on relationships: primarily the mediated relationships of people on the internet, but also the myriad of other relations between ideas, art forms, personal and political positions that become entangled with those relations. Through analysis of a variety of contemporary artworks, alongside the creation and critique of my own body of work, this project investigates performance and art practices that make use of the internet as both the context and material of their work. In doing so, it addresses how these art practices contribute to the social futures constructed through new technologies.

A reciprocity of influence between my artistic practice and theoretical research has been essential to exploring *how we are together*; these are two aspects of my approach, two of the threads that my practice as research methodology weaves together. The “we” in question is, broadly, anyone for whom the internet is daily technology. This is a project about how artistic practices provide tools for investigating social practice, and the key contributions of my research can be understood in relation to this: it is a project focused on how communication informs our relationships, the experience of being together that we perform in our interactions with one another. The “we” operating here is also meant to emphasise the ‘collective effort’ of knowledge and meaning making (Taylor, 2003 p.xx) and anticipates the feminist epistemological practices that frame my work. The title, and the short excerpt above, address the reader and the listener as part of project; this is a tactic that might produce friction, even as it gestures towards

generosity. Part of this project is understanding how, when and if we are together. The written thesis that follows, and the body of artistic practices that accompanies it, were developed in similar fashion. The thesis performs its own back-and-forth conversation and, in doing so, provides a theory of “generosity” and “dissonance” based on the daily performance of relation that develop via emails, messages and videofeeds, as well as the artistic practices that explore why these performances matter.

Structure

Alongside the written thesis, the online exhibition *how we are together* documents the artworks produced through my artistic research. The beginning of each chapter of the written thesis indicates which works it will discuss, to enable the reader to engage with those works beforehand. But it is only a guide: the exhibition can also be explored on its own, and in whatever order the reader prefers. The first section, *Part 1: Contexts and Processes*, of the written thesis provide the contexts and frameworks through which this PhD was created and makes explicit the role of practice in my findings. In these chapters, I define key terms and lay out the methods that framed my line of inquiry. The first chapter defines the central terms of this thesis and situates those definitions within their disciplinary and interdisciplinary contexts, as well as the art historical context that frames internet-situated performance. It locates this project in the broader fields of performance studies as well as digital theory and new media studies through the construction of a glossary of key terms and concepts. The central conceptual focuses of the project – generosity and dissonance, performance, internet – are defined; these definitions will serve as the foundation for framing the project’s approach and the subsequent analysis of artistic examples drawn from my practice as well as contemporary digital performance and art more broadly.

The second chapter, ‘Chapter 2: Weaving: a theory and approach’, outlines the methodological impetus of this project, defining my conceptual framework and artistic approaches. Here, I define a practice as research approach that uses “weaving” to enact a feminist epistemological approach through artistic practice. Weaving brings together multiple feminist scholars,

most importantly combining Mieke Bal's interdisciplinary methodology of "travelling concepts" (2002) with the work of Donna Haraway (2016; 2014; 1991; 1988) as well as cyberfeminist Sadie Planet (1998). This weaving provides the methodological underpinning for working across disciplines as well as between practice and theory. It is through weaving that I bring these thinkers together to construct my own intervention into the critical junctures of art and theorising; society and technology; knowing and doing. Weaving is the means for moving from, and with, these meeting points.



Figure i.1 – still from 'cut', part of *(tfw) spin measure cut* (2016). Jane Frances Dunlop. See Appendix A.10

My approach with weaving, theoretically and in my artistic practice, foregrounds frictions produced in the intersubjectivity of relation, a necessary concern of a project focused on interpersonal relation and one that concentrates on the intersection of emotion and performativity in exchanges situated on internet communications. It is in this way that this project, both the written thesis and the body of artistic work, connects the broader political concerns of an intersectional feminist practice to those of internet communication technologies as well as emotion. Together, the first two chapters clarify the conceptual and practical terms of *how we are together* and situate this project within broader art historical and disciplinary contexts. The final three chapters explore different facets of internet-situated

performance to expand upon and further clarify how these practices respond to, and make use of, new digital forms of relation.

Part 2: Critical Analysis further develops the key conceptual insights of this project: the “sites” (Chapter 3) and “shared moments” that ultimately constitute “together” in internet-situation performances. In this second half of the written thesis, my artistic practice stands alongside the work of others as my written analysis reiterates and renders explicit the findings of my practice. Chapter 3 focuses on the site-specificity of internet-situated artworks. The proximity implied by internet relation, and the intimacy it creates, is demonstrated to be key to how performance effectively situates itself within internet communications. This chapter returns to the concept of dissonance laid out in Chapter 1 and uses it to explore how experiences of proximity mediated by internet communications create a sense of presence in shared sites online. This chapter brings together different conceptual “proximities” in performance – Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s “periperformative” (2002) – as well as network theories – “paranodal” from Ulises A. Mejias (2013). By doing so, it provides new insights into how internet-situated performance creates a sense of presence through screen-based artworks. The tension between proximity and presence, demonstrated theoretically and artistically, enables this chapter to explore in further depth the relationship between generosity and dissonance.

Having addressed how internet-situated performance creates site(s), Chapter 4 analyses how these works operate within asynchronous performance times to create what I term a “shared moment”. The chapter revises Richard Schechner’s three performance times – set, event and symbolic (2003 p.8) – for an internet context. In doing so I argue that the shared moment is a symbolic time constituted through an interwoven generosity and dissonance. Here, the “nervousness” defined by Gertrude Stein in her essay ‘Plays’ (1988) becomes a way to understand the affect of asynchronous time on the relation mediated by a performance. ‘Nervousness’, used to describe a spectator’s feeling of being out of sync emotionally with the action of a performance, highlights the centrality of the audience performer relationship to internet-situated performance. It illuminates an important parallel between performance and digital philosophy: the shared moment, like

the connection in communication theory, inevitably involves frictions that complicate the transmitting of information. This is key to understanding how dissonance operates as a quality that refers to interwoven technological and emotional affects. Chapter 3 and 4 establish how internet-situated art responds to the specific temporal and spatial incongruities that are part of the overlapping impacts of internet communication technologies and the politics of emotion.

Chapter 5 returns full focus to practices of relation – which until now have operated as productive forces as opposed to the object of analysis. In this final chapter, I define the specific mode of together produced through dissonance and generosity as practices of relation. Beginning with Margaret Gilbert’s discussions of together in her essay ‘Walking Together: A Paradigmatic Social Formation’ (1990), I outline how an expanded sense of “together” is produced through the emotional politics that stick to internet-situated sites and senses of relation. This chapter addresses how together is created as an emotionally (and simultaneously politically) significant experience through internet-situated artwork. I argue that performing relation through dissonance and generosity contributes to a new and more nuanced understanding of together.

how we are together

This project investigates the inevitable friction or noise that always exists in relations of generosity and collectivity, both in subjective and technical terms. The structural, methodological and epistemological terms of this research are all grounded in feminist theories. Thus, while the critical analysis is not specifically gendered, this project is born out of – and structured through – feminist scholarship and artistic practices in the 20th and 21st century. In my critical and artistic research, I draw on feminist tactics and approaches, which influence the shape, scope and direction of my work. These theories inform both the methods and the objects of my study: it is through critical feminist perspective that I will position the importance of practices of relation, and *how we are together*. Feminist theories are filled with accounts of frictions within relation: I draw on some of these in order to

elucidate how generosity and dissonance are simultaneously technological, emotional and cultural phenomena. Generosity and dissonance create a framework for practice and critical analysis that addresses the imbrication of the technical and emotional infrastructure of the internet, contributing to our understandings of those intersections.

In the introduction to a special issue of *Theater on Digital Feelings*, co-editors Miriam Felton-Dansky and Jacob Gallagher-Ross highlight the emotional experience of both audiences and performers who, together, produce a meaning that is, in turn, reflective of their social context and conditions (2016 p.1). With their titular “digital feelings”, Felton-Dansky and Gallagher-Ross propose a structure that accounts for the new ways feelings are brought about by digital technologies and for attending to the specific and important ways that theatre and performance enable us to understand these new feeling structures (2016 p.3). My work continues this project, using artistic research to further investigate how performance enables an in-depth and in-situ understanding of how feelings and relationships are augmented through digital technologies. Focusing specifically on internet communication, this project contributes to the investigations into digital cultures that have been a recent area of attention in performance studies. This interest is not surprising: as already acknowledged, performance is at its most vital as it intersects with the daily life and the digital is an unavoidable preoccupation of the contemporary world. Throughout what follows, I present methods and concepts for understanding – as well as intervening – in this context in new ways. The weaving of the practice as research methodology at the centre of this project provides an innovative approach to artistic research while also illuminating how we are together in internet ubiquity, and offering new insights into performance studies as it intersects with digital culture.

Dissonance and generosity can be understood as approaches to – and results of – the promiscuous traffic of the epistemological project of performance studies. They are concepts that, by definition and function, traverse theory and practice, and are indicative of the approach to knowledge making that underscores my work. A practice as research PhD, by nature of the fact that it inevitably argues for and provides new knowledge in form and practice as well as simply in content, is engaged with these questions.

Therefore, the feminist (queer and anti-racist, the undeniably performative) terms of this project are its epistemological aims and intentions. In her vital work 'Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspectives': Haraway writes that '[t]he alternative to relativism is partial, locatable, critical knowledges sustaining the possibility of webs of connections called solidarity in politics and shared conversations in epistemology' (1988 p. 584). Haraway's emphasis on 'situating' resonates throughout this work: from the term 'internet-situated' to the focus on 'practices of relation', these are means for locating the knowledge claims of my project through their contingencies.

Through a body of artworks created with a practice as research approach and grounded in the theoretical examinations outlined here, this project aims to understand what constitutes relationships via the internet, and how art can and does respond to this social context. The focus on generosity and dissonance that emerged from my artistic research provides a generative framework for assessing how together is both a source of open cohesion as well as of friction and difficulty. Dissonance, in common use, refers to a lack of harmony in music. Musical dissonance can be jarring, and evoke an almost physical reaction: a technical malfunction creates an affect. Dissonance also implies cognitive dissonance, the consequence of holding contradictory beliefs. Haunted by these meanings, "dissonance" is well placed as a word to capture the effects of technological frictions as they entangle with tensions of social relations. Generosity stages a terrain for ideas to act and interact with each other, it pushes for artistic practices that elude concrete meaning. The artistic works traced here are a means for troubling the ease with which we articulate both our similarities and our differences. Artistic practices operate in this contradiction: necessarily the expressions of one (or a few) people that also aim to grapple with issues that resonate or gain relevance beyond them. Together, these concepts are a means for investigating *how we are together* through the mediating apparatus of the internet.

Interlude

the feeling of feeling alongside
It is about systems for feeling
feeling the consequences of things
It is the consequential
Gathers consequence

& so, it is how to track
systems of objects,
a way of thinking about all the systems of objects

a way of thinking about all the systems of people.

systems like modes of relation

modes of relation like practices of feeling

practices of feeling like being emotional.

Marking it, marking the moment when it is not here or is there.
Is the splitting of things into their allocated part and parting.
The particular feeling of feeling the edge of it,
of finding an edge that is an end
that is as far as it goes.
Doing the work of knowing where this part ends
The part between the parts
Where do you put the between
when it all comes one after the other
and it is so hard to tell.
When isn't it hard.

a choreographer describes their work

as the constant leap off the edge of

the ideological contrition of the present. And then, though the ground moves to
appropriate the jump, always there is the moment when perhaps you will not be
caught.

'spin poem' from *(tfw) spin measure cut* (A.10)

PART 1: CONTEXTS AND PROCESSES

Chapter 1. Contexts & Influences: situating *how we are together*

It matters what thoughts think thoughts. It matters what knowledges know knowledges. It matters what relations relate relations. (Haraway, 2016 p.35)

Generosity, on the contrary, is not reducible to an economy of exchange between sovereign individuals. Rather, it is an openness to others that not only precedes and establishes communal relations but constitutes the self as open to otherness. (Diprose, 2002 p.4)

In this chapter, I will clarify the central terms of my research and situate them within broader histories of critical discourse. I draw primarily on performance studies, but also on cultural studies more broadly to clarify how I approach emotion, the internet and performance. My aim here is to offer historical and disciplinary context to this project's key conceptual concerns, locating my work within broader artistic and academic discourses. At the centre of this chapter are initial definitions of generosity and dissonance, the key concepts that operate throughout my thesis and practice. Much of what follows is concerned with defining the operations of the terms dissonance and generosity. They operate as specific concepts that I develop to address the overlapping effects of emotional and technological friction; this enables me to then focus on how internet-situated artistic practices respond to these effects. The next chapter will investigate the practical and conceptual operations of these two terms in relation to my methodological aims; however, it is necessary to first define them and to set out the terrain within which I will work with these ideas, practically and theoretically. Thus, this chapter provides preliminary definitions and focuses on establishing the interdisciplinary context of my project while also providing clear definitions of the concepts I will work with.

This chapter is organised in four sections, which each address key areas that inform my artistic research. In the following chapter on 'Artistic Research & Theory', I outline my approach and position the influences and contexts discussed here as one of three key strands within the 'weaving' of my artistic research process. Here, I provide the foundation for both understanding that approach, as well as the insights that follow from it. The first section of this chapter is an overview of the art historical context that my artistic research, and the other contemporary artworks I discuss throughout,

developed out of. Here, I address contemporary histories of networked performance to clearly establish how ‘internet-situated performance’ is defined. This section traces the links between the artworks and experimentations that most directly inform my work, providing context for my artistic research and for the artists whose works I explore in the coming chapters. The artists and artworks referenced here, and throughout the written thesis, are collected chronologically in Appendix C: this provides further art historical context for understanding ‘internet-situated performance’. This first section sets up the following three; it demonstrates how concerns about emotion, performance and technology convalesce in artistic practice.

The second two sections focus on the intersecting areas of concern for this thesis – emotion, via generosity and dissonance; performance, in particular presence and liveness within the art forms – and clarifies their use within this thesis. Here, I address how performance operates both as an artistic category and as a generative process intertwined with daily life. The relation between spectator and performer is integral to the artistic as well as social operations of performance. For this reason, performance provides a valuable frame through which to approach the new contingencies of relations that emerge within internet-situated contexts. In this chapter, I locate my work in the broader field of performance studies: I acknowledge contemporary debates on “liveness” but focus more extensively on “presence” as a definitive quality of performance. Liveness and presence, as well as adjacent critical discussions of ephemerality and a performance’s remains, define the types of relation that constitute – and are constituted by – performance. An expanded definition of presence, therefore, broadens how we understand the relations practiced and performed in social interactions.

Following this, I provide an overview of digital and media theory on the internet. This provides clarity for contemporary readers on how I will discuss digital technologies and the internet throughout this thesis, and acknowledges the lack of consensus that creates opacity in the language surrounding new and emerging technologies. In keeping with the broader methodological agenda of the project, I highlight how the language that refers to the concrete or material processes and hardware of internet technologies also slips easily into more metaphorical terrain. To this end, I focus on “networks” and

“interfaces” as digital technologies as well as contemporary metaphors for understanding society and social interrelation. Finally, anticipating that these technologies and the way we describe them will continue to evolve, this section – alongside Appendix D’s specific glossary – gives future readers a sense of how these terms operated over the period of my research (2014 – 2018).

I. ART PRACTICES & HISTORIES

Internet art, internet performance

Internet art histories have been thoroughly captured and catalogued elsewhere (Bosma, 2011; Kholeif, 2016; Greene, 2004; McNeil *et al.*, 2013; Kholeif, 2014; Cornell & Halter, 2015). My aim here is not an encyclopaedic history of art practices that use the internet as a source and context for performance. Rather, this thesis focuses on investigating, through practice as research, how the performance art responds to and engages with the entanglement of emotion and technology present in contemporary lives. Within this in mind, this section locates this written thesis and my artistic research, as well as the contemporary artworks I offer a close study of in the following chapters, within a broader history of contemporary art practices. In the chapters that follow, I focus on works that engage the artistic possibilities of existing internet communication platforms; the artists I focus on, and my own work, use software interfaces to enable, frame and suggest particular modes of interactions. It is by stretching the parameters of familiar interfaces that internet-situated performance art influences cultural imaginaries of technology. Performance enables artistic practices to expand the sites and temporality within which our practices of relation occur: resituated within internet communications, it enables new insights into social practice in digital ubiquity. Internet-situated performance art brings our attention to the ways in which our relations are enacted through mediating technologies, challenging us to create new understandings of *how we are together*.

Early collaborative documents and Instant Relay Chat performances – such as Roy Ascott *La Plissure du Texte* (1983); Robert Adrian’s *The World in*

24 Hours (1982); Hamnet's 1993 version of *Hamlet* titled *Hamnet* (The Hamnet Players, 1993); and *The World's First Collaborative Sentence* (1994) by Douglas Davis – find their effectiveness in the sense of simultaneity of intervention they evoke. Making use of internet communication technologies that have now become commonplace, all of these works foreground the experience of a connection in real time (a term I will return to in Chapter 3). The sense of immediacy has evolved with technology's development; it is now an accepted effect that has been incorporating into daily expectations of communication. Since the mid-1990s, artists have investigated the effects of our changing relationships to mediation. In *The_Living* (1998), artist Debra Soloman used early video conferencing software to create a performance installation. The installation enabled visitors to livechat with the artist, who could be seen responding on a handheld device from a series of 'impossible' scenarios (on her bike, on a boat) (Bosma, 2011 p.90). The work commented on the increasingly pervasive communication tools, and the building sense of being permanently accessible to one another, by constructing absurd scenarios that no longer seem as ridiculous.

Although these platforms were not yet ubiquitous aspects of Western life, Soloman's *The_Living* demonstrates how the artistic appropriation of technological platforms makes use of, and troubles, the intended operations of digital platforms. *The_Living* anticipates the widespread adoption of these platforms. More than that, it engages with the complex impact of mediating technologies on daily life as Soloman performs her 'availability' from ludicrous contexts. It affirms a widespread connectivity that has increased since Soloman's work, while also rendering it comic. It creates distance, enabling the audience to see the technologies they are increasingly entangled with. Contemporary artistic internet-situated interventions stretch possibilities of technological forms in order to draw attention back onto systems, and their imbrication with daily life. My own artistic research, and the work of the contemporary artists I engage with in the chapters that follow, likewise draw attention to ubiquitous connectivity.

In my work, and the work of the other artists I discuss throughout, the use of existing platforms is a means for engaging with the practices of relation that are instantiated by new technologies. By using existing platforms, my

practice as research approach to *how we are together* is able to investigate how meaning is constructed through these tools and how that construction informs relationships situated on the internet. This attention to the everyday, the widely used technological interfaces that mediate relation, is also part of a feminist approach to technology that takes the technological personal, in the same way the personal is political. Emotional and technological systems are so entangled within one another that their separations are false impositions. This entanglement means that any understanding of emotion or relation in contemporary digital ubiquity must consider the others. In order to understand the impact of one system (be it the internet or gendered inequity), it is necessary to address their entanglements. By discussing practices of relation, and making those practice the central object of my analysis, my project brings awareness to how these modes become intertwined in the actions of our relationships.

For this reason, my inquiry and artistic research focuses on already existing social platforms and the artists who make use of them. However, of central importance to the development of internet performance art and its intersection with feminist artistic practice has been purpose-built platforms. Key examples, such as Helen Varley Jamieson and the cyberperformances that occurred on *UpStage* or Ghaislaine Boddington's *body>data>space* collective, use purpose-built platforms to reframe performance. Both are exemplary critical and practical interventions into definitions of performance through the use of new digital technologies. Their work marks a different tactic in approaching the increasing influence and ubiquity of the digital; for *body>data>space*, the aim using performance to explicitly address the bodies at the centre of technological developments. Their projects are almost always purpose-built, and draw on a range of digital technologies: some, such as Joseph Hyde's *me and my shadow* (2012), use the internet to connect various sites while others focus on virtual world building and material experiences.

The work of Helen Varley Jamieson on *UpStage* more closely resembles artistic strategies of my own artistic research and internet-situated performance. In *make-shift* (2010-12), a networked performance series created with Paula Crutchlow, the two artists used *UpStage* to bring their different domestic spaces together in the online performance site (Crutchlow

& Jamieson, 2014). This involved mixing together videofeeds of direct to camera address (an internet-situated performance tactic I will discuss in more depth shortly) with other digital forms (avatars; instant relay chat) within an online performance space. The artistic explorations in *body>data>space*'s various projects or the work of Helen Varley Jamieson on UpStage can broadly be defined as what I term 'internet-situated performance' as these works focus on digital mediation of relationships through performance event. Still, I will largely confine my focus to existing communication platforms or works with a clear relationship to the digital mediation of relationship. This provides more immediate insights into social practices of relation mediated by the internet as they become interwoven artistic processes.

Although still relevant and related to my area of research, for similar reasons I also will not focus on artists that make use of gaming platforms or social media such as Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. These platforms provided a more 'gamified' experience of the social: the parameters that limit and control how a person engages shape specific kinds of exchanges that reflect the culture of each platform. Further, the corporate identities associated with the platform exert a powerful influence on how artistic meaning can be constructed within these platforms. Artistic engagements with these platforms – like those that engage with digital communication tools – stretch the possibilities of their possibilities but often are confined to reactionary meanings. The close relation between social and artistic use that has been central to my work (which I discuss further in 'III. Performance and Presence' of this chapter) is present in these artworks. However, addressing and deconstructing the specific corporate identities that inform both the aesthetics and functions of these platforms is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Still, many social media platforms also have an important role in the mediation of social relationships. Second Life, although no longer as prevalent as a mainstream platform, was a site of extensive social relation and has a rich history within internet performance practice. Key examples of artistic performance in Second Life include *Reenactments* (2007 – 10), in which Eva and Franco Mattes re-enacted major performance art works; the work of performance troupe Second Front (Lichty, 2013 p.130–1; Second Front, 2007); Paul Sermon's telematic interventions between Second Life and 'real

life' (Sermon, 2008; Sermon, 2007); Lynn Hershman Leeson's *Life Squared* (2008), which restaged and archived Leeson's work in Second Life. More recently, Angela Washco's performances as part of *The Council on Gender Sensitivity and Behavioral Awareness in World of Warcraft* (2012) or Larry Achiampong and David Blandy's use of *Grand Theft Auto* in their *Finding Fanon* films (2015 – 17) provide examples of how artists create digital performance via videogames (sometimes mediated through the internet). These artists are also interrogating how digital platforms mediate our lives, interactions and meaning-making. Their work participates in the further extension of performance into digital contexts by re-using and appropriating existing tools as artistic mediums.

Similarly, the use of social media platforms for performances – such as Jayson Musson's *Art Thoughtz* series on YouTube (2010 – 12); Amalia Ullman's *Excellences and Perfections* on Instagram (2014) – provide specific performative intervention that responds to the interfaces that frame them. These performances do sit within the broader category of internet-situated performance; they are sited within the internet, and within the relationships it mediates. However, I will focus in what follows on how the more basic tools of internet communication – messages, videostreams, emails – can be deployed and redeployed. By focusing on artworks that specifically deploy conventional, and mundane, internet communication systems, it is possible to turn my attention to *how we are together*, and to the ways that artistic modes of 'together' complicates the possibilities and assumptions of each of these platforms. This is a recurring quality in the work that follows, and is central to how my practice as research methods investigate how our relationships are formed and forged in internet-situated contexts. My own work focuses primarily on the interfaces of videocall as well as the computer screen. These are, I argue, the private and personal sites of our engagement with digital technologies.

Camgirls, women in front of the camera

The artworks that are the subject of analysis in the later chapters of this thesis, both my own and those of other artists, focus on how the ubiquity of

digital communication technologies enable attention to our practices of relation, their politics and their troubled aesthetics. This is a concern I share with other performance art practices that make use of the internet: artist Annie Abrahams makes works that are specifically concerned with ‘communication and the difficulty to communicate at all’ in contemporary technologies (Packer, 2018). Emblematic of this is Abrahams’s ongoing collaboration with Lisa Parra and Daniel Pinheiro. Since 2015, the artists have created an online performance series called *Distant Feeling(s)* that capture exercises, sometimes referred to as séances, in which they try to feel each other at a distance (Abrahams, 2018). The documentation of these performances is tiled videofeeds with the faces of performers, eyes closed. It is eerie and intimate, watching the small adjustments that each individual makes as they sit ‘trying to feel the others presence’ (Abrahams, 2018). The performances mine the intimacy of the computer camera; it is this intimacy – the possibility of ‘feeling together’ – that makes the computer camera a central part of internet communication. The tiled faces represent the overlap, the attempt to ‘feel with’ as it is captured by the computational processes that mediate it.

The feeling together, and at a distance, that Abrahams and her collaborators stage is one example of how recent performance art uses direct to camera address to extrapolate the intimacy of videocall and livestream into a performance framework. It is a quality that has been exploited from camgirl livestreams through to contemporary YouTube videos; the framing a person sat staring at their camera is part of a digital ubiquity’s performance of everyday life. Abrahams’s work – like my own – uses that ubiquity to interrogate the relationships created, implied and contained by the computer camera’s framing. It emphasises feelings, the emotional, as they entangle themselves with technological mediations. This highlights the relations that exist in, through and on the internet; it gives equal weight and value to the technological and emotional systems that structure our relation.

The legacy of this contemporary art history, and its paralleling intersection with use of new technologies, is apparent in the work of many contemporary artists. Capturing seemingly mundane presence within personal spaces is a historical trope of feminist performance art practices. It serves to interrogate both the spaces a body is located in as well as the technologies

that capture and represent that body. In the twentieth century, artists who are women have often been at the front of experimentation with new forms of technologies: specifically, the availability of materials for film, video and photography as well as the minimal requirements of performance art (one can make artworks using only one's own body) have all been ways to both challenge exclusion from the sources of formal training for traditional artistic practices as well as to re-claim the modes through which women's bodies are captured and reproduced culturally. These twentieth century artists, and their adoption of new representational technologies, informs late twentieth and early twenty-first century artistic interventions into the internet. This observation extends to the work of artists of colour, who have similar motivation – both exclusion as well as the necessity to challenge representations. In her landmark study of feminist performance art practices *The Explicit Body in Performance* (1997), Rebecca Schneider investigates how women centre their bodies within their performance practices. Focusing on the performance work of artists such as Yoko Ono, Karen Finley, Carolee Schneeman, Annie Sprinkle and Ana Mendiata, she argues that it is through the fraught negotiations of culturally dominant representation, and the aggressive and transgressive re-presentation of those codes, that artists deploy their own bodies to trouble the meanings that accrue to them (Schneider, 1997 p. 176). The feminist potential of reframing, of claiming the right to both answer as well as create the gaze that sees you, figures strongly in the performance art practices Schneider traces.

As Laura Mulvey's influential essay 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema' unpacks, the camera provides a specific frame to a viewer's perspective: a 'male gaze' that objectifies the women framed (Mulvey, 1989). Peggy Phelan, in the chapter 'Spatial Envy' in *Unmarked: the Politics of Performance*, links Mulvey's writing on the gaze with performance via the film work of Yvonne Rainer (Phelan, 1993). Phelan addresses the absent female protagonist of Yvonne Rainer's *The Man Who Envied Woman* (1985), using Rainer's film to address feminist approaches to the gaze, as well as the implications for the spectator, in film and in performance. Further, Phelan importantly extends the feminist politics of an engagement with the gaze in her attention to the intersectional politics – the interlocking systems of power

and oppression that include race and sexuality as well as gender, that a gaze can both reiterate as well as disrupt (Phelan, 1993 p.90).

The gaze, and its politics, extends to performance and is challenged by the work of feminist artists who complicate the terms of that gaze not only by taking the position of the image maker but also in the ways they position their own bodies in front of the camera, appropriating and interrupting that gaze. Thinking through contemporary and recent historical examples, Schneider's work can be extended to inform our understanding of how artists such as Ana Voog and Annie Abrahams located their bodies within the browser window. Within my own practice, it is the resonance between 20th century feminist performance and video art practices and the visual logic of camgirl practices that provides the context and inspiration for my work. It is the legacy of these artists that situates my position in front of the camera as a complex engagement with histories of seeing and being seen.

In late twentieth century video and film based performance practices, mundane presence within a space, often private, was a reoccurring mode of interrupting the assumptions about who and what is worth seeing. This is apparent in the work of Nancy Holt and Yvonne Rainer discussed at the beginning of this section, as it is in the work of most of the artists addressed here. These artists, by placing themselves within their domestic spaces or through acts that are banal and mundane, experiment with how they can reproduce themselves through new technologies. The treatment of personal space and the appropriation of technologies serves to connect the experimental film performance works of artists such as Yvonne Rainer and Nancy Holt, as well as Ana Mendieta and Rebecca Horn with early camgirl streams by Jennifer Ringley's in *JenniCam* and the camgirl performance art of Ana Voog's *Anacam*. Mendieta and Horn, like Rainer and Holt, create performances for camera that are simple yet expansive and evocative of a clear sense of intimacy. Rebecca Horn's *Berlin Exercises in Nine Pieces* (1974 – 75) presents a series of short films in which performers move around a room, with very little fanfare, wearing Horn's sculptural contraptions. In Mendieta's *Silentua* series, the artist intervenes in landscapes through puddles, mounds, and fires all shaped as her body. The work of both these artists, like Rainer and Holt, are haunted with a sense of voyeurism as well as

the clear volition of the artists who author them. The slow and persistent presence of these women in front of, as well as behind, the camera, anticipates Ringley and Voog's projects. In *JenniCam*, Ringley captures an unadulterated version of her life: the images are as often empty spaces as they are of her and anything interesting or salacious. Voog pushes this further, with the various tactics she uses to frame and produce her camfeed as art. She manipulates colour and adds effect – similar to Mendieta's *Butterfly* (1975) – in order to draw the viewer's attention to her agency in authoring what is seen.

This is also present throughout the work of late twentieth century artists working with photography and film; in the work of Francesca Woodman, Rebecca Horn, VALIE EXPORT, Pipilotti Rist and Cindy Sherman a similar feminist reclamation of representation through seizing the means of presentation is occurring. Likewise, contemporary artists on the internet make use of readily available digital video technologies to present self-authored representations that disturb and disrupt codes of gender, race and sexuality. Contemporary performance artists that mark the imbricating of these histories include Faith Holland; Shawne Michlain Holloway; Molly Soda and Evan Ifekoya. As with the confrontation with the gaze present in women's photography and video art in the twentieth century, these artists make use of the frame provided by the internet. They repurpose that frame, re-rendering its usefulness for their own purposes. The casual confrontation with the viewer belies a complex engagement with the representation (and re-representation) of the bodies of women and people of colour, problems that persist and entangle themselves in new ways with the internet.

The contemporary artworks discussed throughout can and should be understood as part of a contemporary lineage of performance art projects that are entangled with feminist theories and practices. The feminist performance art practices of the 20th century inform the way in which female artists are able to centre – and absent – their own bodies within their work. In my own work, my body and my face addressing the camera appears again and again; this positions me as author, explicitly engaged with the technologies I use, while also enabling me to draw on the tools and visual logic of contemporary communication practices. Foundational to this work are the feminist theories

and artists that inform my work – and much of the work I analyse. As the following chapter makes clear, the feminist politics and ethos that frame the work of this thesis are primarily and most importantly operating as a structural engagement with how knowledge as well as how relationships are created and conducted.

II. GENEROSITY & DISSONANCE

Generosity and dissonance are tactics for addressing the ways that artistic practices situated in the internet understand, participate in and account for the relationships that they create. My definitions of generosity and dissonance build on intersectional feminist theories and practices that emphasise how interpersonal relations frame subjective emotional experiences and their interactions (Ahmed, 2004; Diprose, 2002; Haraway 1988; Haraway, 1991; Irigaray, 1984; Phelan, 1993). I argue that these terms are tactics for emphasising – through theoretical and artistic practices – the affectivity of relation; as such, they can be used by artistic practice and research to provide insights into the emotional infrastructures constituted through social practices. The relational nature of emotions, how their meanings are collectively constituted and reiterated (as I will discuss through the work of Sara Ahmed), informs my use of generosity and dissonance as aspects of both general and specific exercises of interaction. As I will discuss in the next chapter, the feminist approach of this project is primarily epistemological; the ways that knowledge does and does not account for and challenge systems of inequity are why it matters ‘what knowledges know knowledges’ (Haraway, 2016 p.35). As such – although I begin, as it were, with feminism – this project draws on and is indebted to queer theories and critical race studies. Here, a feminist approach to emotion aims to account how practices of relation – the (re)iterative ways we conduct our relationships – rely on and subvert systems of expectation and inequity.

Within performance studies specifically, the work of theorists such as José Esteban Muñoz and Eve Sedgwick Kofosky provide vital insights into queer feminist approaches to emotion. Their work, and the work of others such as Sara Ahmed and Rosalyn Diprose, is used here to underline how

feeling is situated within culture: these thinkers bring our attention to how the meaning that accrues to a particular affect is constructed with – or against – personal and social history. Here, the ‘strategically universal’ proposed by Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing in *Frictions* provides a tactic for addressing the conflicting requirements of an analysis as it engages with the particular and the general (Tsing, 2011). Universals, writes Tsing, should be addressed ‘not as truths or lies but as sticky engagements’ (2011 p.6). Feelings are ‘sticky engagements’, operating as the product of a friction between the personally and the socially specific. By working with generosity as well as dissonance, my aim is to include that friction in my analysis and thus to keep any universal statements strategically sticky with the particular. In the next chapter, I clarify what I mean by practices of relation further. For now, I will define practices of relation as the ways that relationships are performed through interactions.

Defining generosity

Generosity is a possibility that characterises all relationships: not simply as an exchange but as an openness to possibility in that exchange. It names a complex quality of interpersonal relationships: it is not the reciprocity and social obligation implied by gifts and giving. A gift can be generous, but is not always, as is demonstrated by the collection of essays in Alan D. Schrift’s *The Logic of the Gift: Towards an Ethics of Generosity* (Schrift, 1997). Throughout *The Logic of the Gift*, it becomes clear that whereas ‘the logic of the gift’ is one of debt and obligation, the possibilities of generosity – let alone its ethics – are much more indefinable. My use of generosity aims to disentangle the term from this ‘logic of the gift’ that I argue, continuing Rosalyn Diprose’s feminist critique in *Corporeal Generosity* (2002), over-emphasises relations of indebtedness that rely on, as well as reproduce, asymmetrical power relations. It is the instability of generosity; its existence within the exchanges of relation, and refusal to be contained to a clear act such as giving, that make it useful here. Generosity is a way of being in relation, an intention that is not always conscious but that manifests through awareness and openness. Generosity is a situating practice; like the feminist

epistemological approach proposed by Donna Haraway (1988), it accounts for the particularity of my position and its relation to yours.

I will return to generosity's role in the feminist epistemological approach of this thesis in the following chapter. My purpose here is to clarify the concepts of generosity I draw on, providing a definition as well as context. My use of generosity is indebted to the work of Rosalyn Diprose in her book *Corporeal Generosity* (2002): Diprose theorises a 'corporeal generosity' that unites social justice and feminist epistemological projects by defining the term as a feeling constituted through experiences of social relation. In that book, Diprose provides this definition of generosity:

Generosity [...] is not reducible to an economy of exchange between sovereign individuals. Rather, it is an openness to others that not only precedes and establishes communal relations but constitutes the self as open to otherness. (Diprose, 2002 p.4)

Following from Diprose, generosity here defines a mode of being in relation that occurs at an intersubjective level. It is a sense of equity practiced and constituted through relation. Diprose focuses on the constituting experience of generosity at a corporeal level: the exchange is not predicated on individual sovereignty but rather the constituting of communal relations. Resituated to internet specific communication practices, and the modes of relation they instantiate, I argue that generosity is key to the generative processes through which we perform a sense of being together across the different subject positions, temporalities and locations digital technologies mediate.

Further inspiration for my use of generosity comes from David Román's "critical generosity". In the introduction to *Acts of Intervention: Performance, Gay Culture and AIDS*, Román outlines the practice of 'Critical Generosity' that informs his critiques of performance work created in response to the AIDS crisis (Román, 1998 p.xxiv – xxix). Again, generosity here refers to an epistemic situating: it informs a critical approach that attends to the social and political specificities that produce these works. He writes:

[...] critical generosity pays attention to the conditions and constraints of contemporary cultural production and to the potential of cultural production to intervene in the political and public worlds under which people now struggle to live. (Román, 1998 p.xxviii)

As with Diprose, Román's generosity refers to a way of being in relation – to 'conditions and constraints', to 'potentials' – that is oriented toward a sense of social justice. Jill Dolan takes up Román's 'critical generosity', in *Utopia in Performance* (2005) and elsewhere (2012), arguing for its potential as a practical means for enacting a feminist politics and epistemology in the relationship between critic and artwork (Dolan, 2005 p.33). For both, generosity is a queer and feminist strategy: it is a challenge to 'constraints' that marginalise as well as an affirmation of the potential of new (queer, feminist, intersectional) ways of seeing and knowing.

In this expansion of criticism, generosity's operations are more complex and elusive than an exchange or a gifting. Generosity here refers to how criticism can operate with an openness, an attention to the difference that can and does influence perspective, value, possibility. Román's definition echoes Donna Haraway's formulation of 'situated knowledges' (1988): both emphasising the essential value of projects that account for their position and, in doing so, challenging stagnant epistemologies that ignore or perpetuate marginalisation. Repositioning generosity as an artistic tool as well as a critical practice, it provides means for considering how the practices of intersubjectivity that underwrite performance can be practices that support and enact a queer, feminist and anti-racist equality of exchange. That is, at its end, a wildly utopian project. But as the work of queer and feminist performance studies has already argued (Dolan, 2005; Muñoz, 2009), utopia is a place that performance strives for and thrives in.

Hole-in-Space (1980)

Within an artwork, generosity is a quality of the relation the work establishes. Neither the intention of the artist, nor the will of audiences or participants are necessarily sufficient to create a "generous" work (both can help as well as hinder). Generosity is a quality that accrues to the practices of relation that a work instantiates: it comes out of the connections between all involved in a work. Kit Galloway and Sherrie Rabinowitz's 1980 installation *Hole-in-Space* is an example of how generosity can be supported by the intention of either the artists or the audience, while also exceeding the

intentions of both. *Hole-in-Space* is a landmark telematic performance that occurs in New York City and Los Angeles. During *Hole-in-Space*, Galloway and Rabinowitz installed a satellite video feed between two department store windows, one in each city. Awareness of the installation spread via word of mouth over the three days it was installed and by the final day there were crowds of people at the installations in both cities.

Anna Couey, writing about the work in her chapter for the anthology *Women, Art and Technology*, recounts that some of those present had called each other long distance to arrange to meet together in the space of the screen (2003 p.56–57). The novelty of the experience of being together, despite also being very far apart, is evident in the documentation of the work. Video documentation of the installation can easily be found on YouTube: in these videos, a split screen shows black and white images of New York City and Los Angeles with crowds of people laughing and waving to one another. It has a celebratory feel and, in interviews, the people present reflect on how amazing it is to have a sense of physical proximity with those that are far away (Galloway & Rabinowitz, 2013). *Hole-in-Space* is predicated on an affective experience that is now an incredibly familiar part of video chat; one participant interviewed in the documentation anticipates this as he predicts that videocalling in the style of Galloway and Rabinowitz's livefeed will become a typical communication tool in the future (Galloway & Rabinowitz, 2013). Galloway and Rabinowitz's work anticipates future practices of relation, making a work that is actively engaged with how emerging technologies shape the interactions and communications of individuals.

Hole-in-Space is an artwork that offers an excellent example of generosity while also anticipating the contemporary communication frameworks that will stage similar relations, albeit in a different cultural moment. The performance of relationships between the two cities generates a generosity in the conviviality and openness with which the strangers in the documentation greet one another. The exchanges it stages are open and particular to those involved: strangers, young and old, family members and friends all connect across *Hole-in-Space* and each experiences the effect of the work, of the others, differently. Generosity is a mode of exchange, exchange is always already central to the operations of performance, a form

that anticipates the presence of both audience and performer open to the possibilities of its event. As I will elaborate shortly, performance relies on intersubjectivity, an experience of presence that accounts for another. *Hole-in-Space*, which is only one example of Galloway and Rabinowitz's *Public Communication Sculptures*, instigates a relation that offers a historical precedent for some of contemporary works dealing with internet-enabled communications and the performances situated within them.

It is this constituting and experiencing of communal relations I will track into contemporary internet-situated performance. I argue that generosity is central to many internet-situated artworks and highlighted by the ways in which these works reframe practices of relations by constructing shared moments and site between different temporalities and geographies. This is seen in work such as Leah Lovett's *Contra Band*, a 2014 performance between Rio de Janeiro and London (discussed in Chapter 5), as well as in works performing the relation on slow intimate scales, such as Rhiannon Armstrong's *The International Archive of Things Left Unsaid* (2015, discussed in Chapter 3). I argue that generosity, as a quality of and tactic within an artwork, uses its openness to others as a means for understanding the intersubjective relation implied by presence. This openness, and the possibilities it affords, informs processes of weaving central to my methodology: it offers the means for different positions and perspectives to enter the epistemological and artistic fray. As a practice of relation that 'is not reducible to an economy of exchange' (Diprose, 2002 p.4) but still informing an approach to exchange, it is an opportunity to shift the stakes of what occurs in that relation. Rather than emphasise personal sovereignty, it highlights contingencies.

Socially situated art

Relation is a highly charged concept in contemporary art. Much thought has been given in recent years to how social practice or relation can constitute the object or product of a given artwork. My own use of the term is intended to straightforwardly signal practices of social interaction, but is still inevitably understood in relation to this body of literature. The discussions of

relational, dialogic and participatory arts practices and their political power represented by these authors constitute an important line of art critical thought. These debates operate to highlight the intersections of politics and art in art criticism and performance studies. However, the understandings of these intersections put forward are markedly different.

Nearest in language but furthest politically from my project is Nicolas Bourriaud's *Relational Aesthetics* (2002). In it, Bourriaud discusses art practices that focus on 'human interactions and its social context' as their object (Bourriaud, 2002 p.14); his aesthetics are largely divorced from the political implications that are central to the discussions of theorists such as Claire Bishop, Shannon Jackson and Grant Kester. While the emphasis on the 'intersubjective' is conceptually aligned with my work, more so than practices more blatantly enacting social interventions, the apolitical nature of 'relational aesthetics' is at odds with my own focus on relation. I align my position with curator Helena Reckitt, who in 'Forgotten Relation' critiques Bourriaud's theory for its attempts at an apolitical approach to relation that, among other problems, erases the history of feminist art practices that operate in similar lines (Reckitt, 2013). Reckitt's article also draws attention to the (domestic) labours associated with, and often rendered invisible, in these art works. Reckitt's counter-history and critique of relational aesthetics demonstrates the ways in which the gender politics of domestic and care labours are dis-associated with relational aesthetics in Bourriaud's work. Her essay restores these art practices to this art historical lineage.

Shannon Jackson's *Social Works* (2011) likewise attends to how the aesthetic and socio-political are imbricated in the labours that support artistic work. Framing the relationship of performance to the uptake in 'social practice', she writes: 'one way of characterizing the "performative turn" in art practice is to foreground its fundamental interest in the nature of sociality' (2011 p.2). Jackson's approach in *Social Works* highlights how this slippage operates in the terrain of artistic practice and emphasises how sociopolitical facets of relation practices are ignored by Bourriaud. Further, Jackson's attention to the support work that surrounds artistic practice – the work that keeps the gallery clean, safe and open – demonstrates the importance of situating work in order to understand the politics that support as well as

complicate it. Jackson's extended consideration of the relations an artwork instantiates anticipates the entangled and interweaving of the knowledge practices that are the basis of the methodological weaving laid out in the following chapter. By attending to the social, that which is both within as well as around a given artwork, it is possible to emphasise how meaning is produced in the frictions of relation. And, importantly as this is how Jackson departs from Bourriaud, it is this that locates that meaning within the frictions of interrelation between an artwork and its situation.

The extensive attentions that socially-engaged or relational artistic practices have garnered in the last two decades are indicative of the intense and lasting influence of an artistic paradigm concerned with sociality. As the social expands to include an augmented sense of reality with the increased ubiquity of digital technologies, it is essential to address how these practices continue to evolve with and respond to those contexts. Thinking through these two intertwined terms as the friction and flow of both the relationships as well as the aesthetics performed, my project investigates artistic responses to the social context of new technologies. By focusing on how internet-situated performance art responds to and creates experiences of togetherness through the dissonance of digital mediation, it contributes to our understandings of the interrelation of contemporary sociality, art and technology. In my work, and the other examples that are considered in the chapters that follow, the frictions of sociality are present in dissonance and generosity. In the inquiry of my artistic research, social contexts and conventions provide a starting point that brings both generosity – through open relation – and dissonance – through the tensions of relations – into the fray.

These writers lay the groundwork for contemporary consideration of art's role in the construction and constituting of relation. Extending from this critical and art historical context, my approach is distinct insofar as it defines the practices of relation with which it engages through the intersections of the emotional and technological infrastructures that mediate them. This enables me to both address the already identified need for a consideration of relational or participatory practices in internet art as well as to situate it in a broader consideration of the emotional politics of internet-situated relation that traverse the on/off line sites of augmented reality. Josephine Bosma (2011),

Maria Chatzichristodoulou (2013), Rachel Greene (2004) and Christine Paul (2003; 2015) have brought attention to this knowledge gap, which my project addresses. Internet-situated art practices provide an interweaving of social context with the aesthetic; in these artworks, the ways that 'relational' is mediated by the technological becomes not just a tool of social exchange but also material for artistic use. It is through this artistic use that the political implications of exchange practices are demonstrated to be central to these artworks.

Generosity & Ethics

Generosity defines the approach to the relation performed within all aspects of my practice. Generosity here describes the openness to ideas and possibilities generated through exchange and relation between individuals as well as research materials. As already discussed, it is a mode of giving or openness that can be material and abstract, and is motivated by a broader agenda than a singular relationship. The sense of, and responsibility toward, another person that is part of the practices of relation I focus on here implies an ethical dimension. Dissonance is a concept that emphasises how systems and practices of relation are specific to (social, political, cultural) context. A full engagement with what constitutes an "ethical" relation is beyond the scope of this thesis. Still, it is necessary to acknowledge that many of the theorists I work through – and my own work, as a result – are indebted to Emmanuel Levinas and his concept of an ethical intersubjectivity. Levinas's work is central to Rosalyn Diprose's formulation of "generosity" and his ideas on alterity reappear in performance studies as well as digital media, particularly as it relates to presence (Giannachi & Kaye, 2011; Lehmann, 2006). Further, Levinas's notion that part of the ethical relation is an acceptance of an ultimate inability to fully understand anticipates the entangled definitions of generosity and dissonance I propose here.

There are two key aspects of Levinas's ethics that are important to acknowledge here for their influence on the theorists I draw from as well as for their resonance with my own larger project. In the introduction to *The Cambridge Companion to Levinas* (2002), Simon Critchley and Robert

Bernasconi trace Levinas's understanding of an ethical intersubjectivity. They argue that, in his 1951 essay 'Is Ontology Fundamental?' (Levinas, 1989), Levinas foregrounds both the tensions of difference as well as that difference's centrality for understanding. Critchley and Bernasconi write that for Levinas 'the ethical is an adjective that describes, *a posteriori* as it were, a certain event of being in a relation to the other irreducible to comprehension' (2002 p.12, emphasis in original). While I will not use the term ethical, it is the attention to relation and difference highlighted here that influences the theorists I draw on and, hence, my own work. This description of the ethical brings to the fore two important aspects of Levinas's ethics as it informs the theorists I will draw on. The first is Levinas's attention to the tension produced between the difference of subject position within an interaction. This tension is a friction within relation that, rather than obstructs, is necessary for an ethical relation.

Secondly, friction is a matter of comprehension and, as such, it can influence what we know and how we know it. As will be discussed in the next chapter, the role of relation and artistic practice in creating intersectionally feminist epistemologies is of central importance to the methodological impetus of this project. Diprose, in her chapter 'Thinking through Radical Generosity with Levinas' (Diprose, 2002 p.125-144), provides a reading of Levinas as proponent of feminist philosophies, and as part of the larger epistemological project of *Corporeal Generosity*. Returning to Bernasconi and Critchley, the potential and influence of Levinas for supporting the potential impacts of the practices of relation is evident:

Levinas's point is that unless our social interactions are underpinned by ethical relations to other persons, then the worst might happen, that is, the failure to acknowledge the humanity of the other. (2002 p.13)

Here, Levinas's ethical relations bring these concerns back into contact with everyday practices and their larger implications. All of this foregrounds a reoccurring concern within intersectional feminist projects and this thesis specifically: how to dismantle or at least disrupt the ways that systems 'fail to acknowledge the humanity of the other'.

Generosity implicates us in the practices of others, through the openness of necessary change. It is a means of accounting for, and

producing positively, difference which also can demonstrate how we are already part of the projects that make us uncomfortable. Our discomfort and unease is the affective and emotional confirmation that we are related, implicated in one another's emotional lives. This is important to understand the practice I will outline in the following chapter: generosity does not aim to smooth difference but is an approach that accounts for the frictions of the difference encountered and interwoven with an interaction. It is for this reason, and in this way, that generosity produces dissonance. Both terms move: they are discursively produced and they are part of the flux of relationships. Generosity is an openness to this, to dissonance and the difference it implies. In this way, it confirms the stickiness of relation and does not reject instability or multifaceted meaning-making.

Defining dissonance

If generosity defines my approach, dissonance is understood as the inevitable consequence of a social encounter that acknowledges and exists with difference. Generosity has a connotation of ease and conviviality. It is a word that implies many of the utopian qualities of collaboration and collectivity. Dissonance is a means to disturb the ease that might erase difference in order to produce a generosity that, as Donna Haraway puts it, 'stays with the trouble' (2014; 2016). Dissonance emphasises the inharmonious or discordant: with it, I want to add imperfection of relation to the functions of generosity in the work of forming together. Importantly, dissonance implies an imperfection that I will use to align the noise and friction of technological communication (Chun, 2016; Galloway, 2012; Mejias, 2013) with the various ways (near) failure characterises performances (Bailes, 2011; Carlson, 2002; Stein, 1988) as well as our experiences of relation. Throughout the thesis, I will return to these theorists to demonstrate the ways in which the frictions of technological and social relation are interwoven through artistic practices that are situated on the internet. This thesis investigates why and how that dissonance is valuable as a tactic for understanding and approaching relations situated on the internet.

Dissonance can be understood as one approach to what Donna Haraway, with reference to the work of Marilyn Strathern, terms the 'muddles and tangles' that productively trouble attempts to create universalised perspectives (Haraway, 1991; 2014). Strathern and Haraway are among the feminist scholars whose approach to knowledge making and understanding inform my own work both philosophically and practically. They draw attention to the tensions that belie a universal perspective, and call for a productive engagement with those tensions. Their emphasise on the 'muddled' or 'tangled' is an acknowledgement of the difficulties that come with resisting universalising perspective. In a sympathetic theoretical move, Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing's *Frictions: An Ethnography of Global Connection* argues for friction as a critical strategy for nuancing universals (2011 p.6). Acknowledging that universals have a value in research, Tsing's book uses friction to provide a theory for situating those universals: these 'engaged universals' are complicated by attending to the frictions between macro and micro contexts that universalising concepts often erase.

Here, I use friction primarily to describe technological difficulties. However, as this project both studies and further entangles social and technological systems, Tsing's use – the friction between different conceptual scales and research paradigms – provides intricacy to my use. The epistemological friction that is Tsing's focus works in resonance with my own use. These theorists are concerned with capturing tensions as much – or more so – as they are interested in establishing finite theories. Haraway's work, alongside the other feminist epistemologies such as Mieke Bal's *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide* (2002) as well as Diprose's *Corporal Generosity* (2002), form the basis of my methodological impetus, which I articulate through weaving as a process of artistic research in the following chapter. Dissonance is a performative quality that informs the aesthetics of this project, aesthetics that are extrapolated from the kinds of contact different bodies and objects experience. As many artists and theorists have shown, anyone who is not white, cisgendered and straight-presenting runs the risk of the technical difficulties that result from inbuilt assumptions in technologies' cultural models (Blas & Gaboury, 2016; Chan, 2014; Chun, 2009). Dissonance is a term that addresses the already occurring ruptures of

experience and perspective as they intersect at the point of an artwork or performance.

This project uses generosity to consider the artistic possibilities of dissonance, both in performance and communication technology. In *Off the Network* (2013), Ulises A Mejias's study of the political and social value of contending with sites that are defined in opposition to the internet, Mejias argues that we need to understand that noise communicates presence (2013, 17). This noise as presence communicates difference, communicating 'alternative subjectivities' (Ibid. p.16–17). It is the possibilities of these alternative subjectivities that dissonance makes apparent in the generosity of relation. By linking difference with openness through dissonance and generosity, the technological functions of internet communication become metonymically related to the emotional and affective experiences they mediate. Relation, as network connection and as affective experience, is always subject to imperfection and irritations. This emphasises how we are performing our relationships through these technologies; it highlights the conventions and assumptions systems operate with and foregrounds the necessary give and take of spectator-performer relations.

Performance is created in the space between the performer and the spectator. The contemporary performance and performative art practices are often characterised by the way in which they draw attention to this relation. The tensions created, between the expectations or lack thereof, by a performance's (in)ability to reproduce theatrical conventions, confirm a work as performance while also troubling the category. Similarly, noise – in the context of technological communication – is a result of the imperfections of a connection, a failure to perform as expected. It confirms that there is a connection being made between two parties even if that relation struggles or fails to seamlessly occur. The awareness of being inside a system of relation, be it a digital communication operating through the internet or performer-spectator relation of performance, is the focus of this project and central to how generosity will be understood within it. Dissonance, here, is a way to unite formerly moments of friction with those of communication technology while connecting them to the effects of generosity and the relation it implies.

III. PERFORMANCE AND PRESENCE

Defining presence and its impact has been of central importance to performance studies as a means of understanding what constitutes a performance and how it operates. In Peggy Phelan's important chapter 'The Ontology of Performance' (1993 p.146 – 166) in *Unmarked: the Politics of Performance*, she argues that presence creates performance's political potential in its disappearance. Phelan suggests this disappearance, the temporary nature of the presence it instantiates, is what enables performance to escape the logic of capitalist reproduction (1993 p.146). Disappearance, and its relationship to representational visibility and the politics of subjectivity, is the central concern of *Unmarked* but it is in this final chapter that Phelan explicitly ties performance's present and presence with its ephemerality. In later critical counter-moves, Rebecca Schneider (2011) and Jose Muñoz (2009), as well as Diana Taylor (2003), return attention and political potency to the array of ways in which performances do not disappear.

This "remaining" of performance is central to understanding how definitions of presence extend to internet communication's usage in performance and which continue the discipline's broader project of cultural and social intervention. Performance is, in the work of all of these theorists, an art form that exists as critical dissonance with normalising narratives. It has an art form with a strong history of queer, anti-racist and feminist agendas; these histories are accounted for in the work of the academics I have just mentioned as well as many others (Case, 2009; Dolan, 2005; Muñoz, 1999; Román, 1998; Sedgwick, 2007; Sedgwick, 2002). The mimetic repetition of experiences performed through this critical genealogy onto the internet enables me to continue working in this agenda, albeit in new forms and configurations.

As I will expand upon in the follow chapter, the methodological and epistemological framework of this project is the weaving of an artistic research process. It is a means to emphasise the importance for movement of ideas as it produces generosity, through a collectively constructed relation, and dissonance, through the friction produced by the points of contact within that relation and with the technologies that mediate it. Anticipating this, the

movement inherent in the meaning of a performance as it is constructed between an audience and a performer can be understood as part of the dissonance I discuss here. Dissonance, as a spectatorial experience, resonates with what Jacques Rancière refers to as “dissensus”. In his book *The Emancipated Spectator* (2009), Rancière defines dissensus as the instances of disagreement between spectators as well as between spectators and artists as to the meaning of a work: dissensus ‘means that every situation can be cracked open from the inside, reconfigured in a different regime of perception and signification’ (2009 p.49). He argues that this dissensus is key to the political possibility afforded to the subjectivity of an “emancipated spectator”: she is able to construct her meaning, constructed from an artwork’s relation to her given context and existing knowledge (Ibid. p.49). However, Rancière’s emancipated spectator is only one articulation of the counter-construction of knowledge and meaning that operates in the arts, particularly in performance.

Jose Muñoz’s theorising of “disidentification”, in his book *Disidentification: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics* (1999), operates similarly to Rancière’s dissensus. However, Muñoz demonstrates how such a tactic can and does operate in queer, feminist and anti-racist performance art practices. Muñoz’s concept also emphasises the agency and political possibility of constructing new and different meaning from the materials generated by culture. Unlike Rancière, Muñoz addresses the real and daily experiences of difference and discrimination that inform dissensus and necessitate disidentification. Muñoz writes:

Disidentification is about recycling and rethinking encoded meaning. The process of disidentification scrambles and reconstructs the encoded message of a cultural text in a fashion that both exposes the encoded image’s universalizing and exclusionary machinations and recircuits its workings to account for, include, and empower minority identities and identifications. (1999 p.31)

Muñoz is specifically writing about performances practices, and survival tactics, of queers of colour. His work attends to the frictions that occur in difference, the abrasion that are danger as well as those that inform and influence new practices. The friction produced at the point of contact between culture and those excluded also provides the basis for generating new

materials, ideas, and systems. Like the epistemological approaches that opened this chapter, disidentification moves ideas; it ‘scrambles and reconstructs’. The agency to produce meaning, to move existing meaning into new territory, is central to how these concepts work as internet-situated performance responds to the imbricated politics of the emotional and technological. Dissonance and generosity extend the work of both Muñoz and Rancière by generating sites for and through this ‘scrambling and reconstructing’. Spectator and artist are equally entitled to (re)construct meaning, to weave new modes of relation into and out of those that exist.

Internet-situated performance

The work I refer to as internet-situated performance can be contained within the broader category of internet performance. By focusing on internet-situated performance, I intend to separate out work that addresses our specific practices of relation within the communication practices that occur on the internet. These works respond to social practice “situated” on the internet, that is to ways in which our communication through these technologies is generative of our experiences of being with one another. This section will deal predominately with performance as a conceptual category that unites artistic and social practices, whereas the discussion of performance in the following chapter will focus on performance as a central part of my practice and approach.

As Shannon Jackson writes in the introduction to *The Builders Association: Performance and Media in Contemporary Theater*, theatre and technologies ‘have been in each other’s pockets from the start’ (Jackson & Weems, 2015 p.6). Categories shift as technologies develop and artists respond to them. As is always the case with performance, things repeat but with difference. This difference, the differences between different performances and different spectatorial positions, makes performance the ideal terrain for thinking through what I have termed dissonance. Dissonance, understood as potentially operating in the relations staged by a performance, enacts the complexity that romanticising “difference” can homogenise. It emphasises both the positions of subjects in relation to one another as well as

the ways their relations are facilitated or constituted. Presence is a quality of performance that enables us to focus on how relation occurs in internet-situated performance. Definitions of presence adjust themselves to contemporary communication technologies, as with the evolution of liveness traced by Philip Auslander in *Liveness* (2008). Auslander, in the preface to the second edition of *Liveness*, writes that the new edition aims to further emphasise how 'liveness describes a historical, rather than ontological, condition' (2008 p.xii). Despite the reflectivity about the historically situated nature of definitions of liveness – and, relatedly, presence – Auslander's book is ultimately about how 'mediatization impinges upon live events' (2008 p.183). Presence in internet-situated performances is an intervention into, or perhaps even a paradigmatic repositioning of, debates on liveness that were central to performance studies in the 1990s.

Steve Dixon, in *Digital Performance* (2007), traces a critical genealogy from photography through Peggy Phelan and Phillip Auslander's 'liveness debates' into his own analysis of more recent digital performance (2007 p.122). Dixon demonstrates how the debates between these two theorists inform a contemporary understanding of performance without providing a definitive solution to the problems they raise. Similarly, Rebecca Schneider's engagement with the critical tension between Phelan and Auslander underlies the ways in which both theorists truncate the possibilities of performance through an over-emphasising, by Phelan, of disappearance and, in Auslander, liveness as contingent on mediatization (Schneider, 2011 p.91). Phelan and Auslander mark an important critical conversation within the discipline of performance about the impact of new media technologies as well as broader value of the sense of presence that marks audience-spectator relations. Still, their work – and the tensions between their perspectives – provide the basis of a critical consideration of these issues within performance studies. Building on these theorists, my work emphasises how the context of a digital ubiquity augments relation and marks every moment with the possibility of mediatization. As my discussions in the following chapters will demonstrate, the result is a complex presence that stretches how performance accounts for both the ephemeral as well as the live.

More recent approaches to performance and technologies are better able to investigate how artistic practices operate in the imbrication of on/offline existence. Performance studies approaches to presence, and the complicating influence of digital media, is addressed by Richard Fewster in his section on 'Presence' in *Mapping Intermediality in Performance*:

In the context of networking and social media, presence is increasingly defined by participation, rather than by shared physical or even temporal space. Notions of presence, then, exist increasingly as transitional spaces between the live and the digital more than as an absolute ontological condition. (2010 p. 47)

Fewster's emphasis on participation echoes my foregrounding of the centrality of practices of relation. He also, importantly, explicitly privileges participation's interpersonal exchange over temporal or spatial proximity. In internet-situated performance, the 'transitional spaces between the live and the digital' coalesce into the augmented, the simultaneously digital and live, that now characterises the dominant sites of everyday life. Presence occurs through the software of interfaces as well as in the augmented reality of life (and relations) conducted in constant proximity to the internet. Understood this way, it is an effect that moves beyond the traditional markers of physical presence to the intimacy of proximity that signals a new mode of performative presence. In internet-situated artworks, this expanded experience of presence provides a point of intersection between social and artistic performance.

One possible definition of the 'transitional spaces between the live and the digital' where presence occurs is the interface: the designed site that mediates our usage of the hardwares and softwares of the internet. As I will discuss in the next section, an interface is a process or site of connection between two things. Presence is a confirmation of relation and, as such, the interfaces that mediate relation are integral to internet-situated presence. Interfaces, as the points of contact between systems that enable them to interact, become the stage for relation and presence within the internet. Presence's definition with digital performance has been discussed extensively throughout digital performance and art theories (Bosma, 2011; Manovich, 2001; Paul, 2003). Most notably, for my project, is the affective and relational quality of presence foregrounded in Gabriella Giannachi and Nick Kaye's work

on digital performance (Giannachi, 2004; Giannachi & Kaye, 2011; Giannachi *et al.*, 2012). Their approach emphasises presence as a complex and dynamic phenomenon that ‘occur[s] in and through networks of temporal and dynamic relationships that are in action or movement’ (Giannachi & Kaye, 2011 p.3). This dynamic movement leads Giannachi and Kaye to locate presence not in ‘the settled occupation of a unique location’ but in what they refer to as ‘performative and temporary acts with regard to place, position and so relation’ (Giannachi & Kaye, 2011 p.3). Building on this, the generosity and dissonance I track throughout the following chapters focuses in on particular facets of the phenomenon of presence in order to better understand how social life and artistic practice are entangled through it.

Presence clarifies debates about liveness and situates mediatised or internet-situated performance more firmly in the critical analysis of performance I have already outlined. More importantly, it is an aspect of interpersonal relation, the practices and outcomes of which I focus on throughout. Presence is a quality that is both producing and produced by a relation between people. It suggests relation and denotes a connection produced by two (or more) people’s proximity to each other. In *Postdramatic Theatre* (Lehmann, 2006), Hans Lehmann provides a theory of theatre as postdramatic, marking theatre’s movement away from narrative and representation, as well as a heightened reflexivity about form (Lehmann, 2006 p.27). For Lehman, presence is a ‘mutual challenge’ between the spectator and the actor or performer in which ‘it is no longer clear whether the presence is given to us or whether we, the spectators, produce it in the first place’ (Ibid. p.142). He focuses on how spectator and performer actively engage each other and argues for the relational or mutually constituted nature of theatrical presence (Ibid. p.142). This tension, of presence given and produced through spectatorship is, I argue, important for emphasising agency in the relationship staged by performance.

Alongside the larger debate addressed to defining presence in performance, it is necessary to acknowledge the role that “telepresence” has on the definitions of presence operating within my thesis. Telepresence is used to refer to the remote influence or experience as part of presence. It is influential in anticipating the presence I have framed here: Lev Manovich

defines telepresence as the ability to ‘perform remote actions’, elaborating that it is ‘to see and act at a distance’ (Manovich, 2001b p.165). His definition emphasises the splitting of attention and actions between multiple locations, implying but not explicitly naming the appearance of simultaneity that is often part of these works. Kris Paulsen’s *Here/There: Telepresence, Touch, and Art at the Interface* (2017) provides a history of telepresence in video art. Her art historical genealogy provides a compelling case for the term’s continued use, specifically for addressing touch and tactility in as an important aspect of telepresence. Ulises A. Mejias, with a more poetic definition that has a closer proximity to some of the qualities of co-relation or presence as a performery quality that I have discussed, describes telepresence as ‘the experience of being somewhere where our bodies are not’ (2013 p.58). Telepresence as a concept is central to the work of early internet and network artists: *Hole-in-Space* is one clear example of telepresence, others include: Paul Sermon’s *Telematic Dreaming* (1992); Eduardo Kac and Ed Bennett’s *Ornitorrinco* projects (2017); Bia Medeiros and Corpus Informáticos (Medeiros, 2005). All used communication technologies to define the connected experience that their works were creating. As such, like the history of those art practices, it is an idea that influences and informs my use of presence.

However, I will simply use presence. One reason is that, as I will unpack further in ‘Chapter 2. Weaving: a theory and a practice’, the practices I focus on trade in multiple kinds of presence including “real life” and the effect of presence despite asynchrony. For my purposes, presence is more apt for describing the experience of together internet technologies enable, as it maintains the slippage between real and virtual that is important here. I argue that the term telepresence is overly determined by its relation to pre-digital technologies and to practices associated with the novelty of presence across distance, as opposed to the everyday occurrences by which we are present with and for one another. Telepresence separates one type of presence from another. I focus instead on how presence operates as a singular term for the complex ways we experience a sense of contact with one another; in my artistic research, I use of widely available internet communication technologies. For this reason, I address presence as a quality of performance and relation that can be experienced between multiple contexts.

III. INTERNET-SITUATED

This section addresses the “internet” aspect of internet-situated performance, as well as a constellation of language that is taken from contemporary media theory and used throughout this thesis. I will define “internet”, “network” and “interface” in order to establish the contemporary technological context in which this project is situated. In Appendix D, I take this further and define many of the specific programs and platforms discussed here for a future reader who might not be familiar with the applications that were widespread at the time of writing. This section provides an overview of terms associated with the internet, situating their concrete meanings and the more abstract connotations attached to these terms. Networks and interfaces describe the functions of the internet as it relates to the connecting of different people and locations. They refer to concrete aspects of how the internet operates as a communication technology. These concepts have also come to have broader conceptual and metaphorical traction. They are terms that refer directly to actual (infra)structures that organise and influence how communication, and therefore relation, occurs on the internet.

These terms also enable us to think more metaphorically – and therefore expansively – about relations, how they are performed and what kind of systems their performances create or reify. The simultaneously concrete and abstract usages of language associated with the functions of the internet draws attention to the ways in which these systems are practical as well as metaphorical. This proximity is useful and important for understanding how conventions of the internet become practices of interpersonal relation and vices versa, as well as how we can trace those conventions through an artistic practice. Tung-Hui Hu, in *The Prehistory of the Cloud* (2015), writes on the slippage of networks from systems to metaphors for society; in *The Interface Effect* (2012), Alexander R Galloway posits the interface as an allegory, tracing both the technical as well as philosophical implications of the term.

My use of many of the terms that follow could often be prefixed with digital: I am largely talking about digital interfaces, digital networks. They are digital in the sense that computers and computational processes are central to

the processes and contexts I am describing. Digital ubiquity is a way of describing the cultural and social conditions that internet-situated performances and their attendant interpersonal relations are located in. This is, in many ways, the given condition of the present and particularly of the European and North American contexts that all of the work I discuss was made in. The intense influence the digital has on contemporary culture is the subject of contemporary media theory as well as related fields such as digital humanities and digital philosophy (Berry & Dieter, 2015; Berry & Galloway, 2015; Galloway, 2007; Gitelman, 2006; Hayles, 2012; Kember & Zylinska, 2012). “Digital” is the context of this project: unless explicitly stated otherwise, the possible proximity or connotation of a digital influence should be assumed.

Still, I generally refrain from labelling things digital and instead assume that the digital is implied as the context for processes and practices addressed. This digital ubiquity can be referred to as the ‘postdigital’ (Berry & Dieter, 2015) a term with similar connotations to Nathan Jurgenson’s use of “augmented reality”, discussed in the introduction (2011). Both terms refer to a cultural moment in which on/offline (or on/off digital technologies of any kind) is no longer a relevant distinction. Although postinternet is also used to refer to this digital ubiquity (Connor, 2014 p. 57), it has a more convoluted history in relation to art. Postinternet art has been used to refer to both any internet related art as well as a subsection of artistic practices that turn the virtual materials of the internet into concrete objects within a gallery setting (Archey & Peckham, 2014; Kholeif, 2016; Kholeif, 2014). It has also been the subject of critique and contention (Chan, 2014; Berry & Dieter, 2015). For this reason, I use postdigital and augmented reality to refer to the broader social, cultural and political context of pervasive internet use.

Internet

The internet, which is the context for the internet-situated performances that this project investigates, is the most straightforward to define. The internet is a communication system comprised of hardware and software. The world wide web serves as interfaces for connecting to, and using, the internet. Historical accounts of the developments of the internet from military and

academic networks are present in the majority of media theory that addresses the internet as well as networked art histories (Bosma, 2011; Dixon, 2007; Galloway, 2004; Gitelman, 2006; Greene, 2004; Malloy, 2003; Manovich, 2013, 2001a; Paul, 2003; Plant, 1998). I will focus on how performance and artistic practices use, for producing and presenting work, software interfaces that require the internet. The performances that I will address are largely situated in these interfaces: they make use of internet-enabled communications (FaceTime; Skype; iMessage; WhatsApp) as well as browser-based streaming tools (GoogleAir; YouTube Live) and publishing platforms (YouTube; Vimeo) while also referring to the broader social and cultural context that the internet has produced. These interfaces will, to a large extent, mean that my thesis as well as the artworks discussed and produced are easily dated to the specific years it was completed in. Appendix D provides context on communication softwares mentioned above, bridging the gap between the moment of research and future engagements with this project. The internet is a network of networks; it is made up of both hardware and software. The world wide web, like other software interfaces, operates through the software that uses the networking of the internet (Gitelman, 2006; Hu, 2015). It is within the structures and systems of communication that rely on the internet to function that the artistic practices I define as 'internet-situated' are located. They are placed within the systems – social and technological – of ubiquitous and daily internet communication.

The site specificity of internet-situated performances, discussed in Chapter 3, means that these works respond to the contemporary possibilities of internet communication. These possibilities are rapidly changing. Networks and interfaces bridge the internet conceptually with some of the central concerns of performance through their attention to processes of relation and connection. The technological noise and friction that becomes entangled with emotion to form dissonance is often a produce of disruption to the network or the interface. Internet-situated performances focus our attention on how the network and the interface, as well as the interpersonal relations mediated by these systems.

Networks

Networks have, at present, a critical and cultural ubiquity that arguably parallels the rise of the internet. The internet as *the* network, or network of networks, has altered how we understand our relation to one another. Its prevalence and importance is in its ability to reference both the relations between humans and the technologies that frame them. A central point made by many contemporary network theorists is that the internet is neither the first nor likely the last system for networking humans (Berry, 2014; Berry & Galloway, 2015; Galloway, 2007; Gitelman, 2006; Mejias, 2013; Rose, 2015). The conceptual problems presented by networks and interfaces provide insight into the ways in which contemporary technology and contemporary cultural theory are deeply imbricated. Concepts of the network have been theorised with incredible influence by Deleuze and Guattari in their treatment of the rhizome (2004); Castells in his work on the network society (2011); and Bruno Latour with Actor-Network-Theory (2007). These theorists all emphasise the network as a metaphor for thought as well as social relations that are, to a greater and lesser extent, influenced by the increased ubiquity of the internet within our daily lives.

Networks, as descriptor of the systems of sociocultural relation and connection, can be applied quite broadly. As Mejias points out, the metaphor of the network has been actualised in the internet: He writes: '[...]before the network was merely a metaphor to describe society, now it has become a technological model or template for organizing it.' (2013 p.9) The separation, a position outside the network or the pervasive presence of the digital, can no longer be assumed. Instead, contemporary life is positioned inside a social and cultural system informed by and permanently interfaced with digital technology and the internet. Recent treatments of the network have strived in various ways to move beyond the network and to suggest strategies for resisting it: throughout her work, Wendy HK Chun argues that both networks and the capitalist systems are based in habit and habit is 'leaky' (Chun, 2016; Chun, 2015). She writes that 'network', as a defining concept, emphasises connections but forecloses the possibility of disturbing the network: 'we are

now forever mapping, forever performing – and so, we are told, forever empowered – and yet no more able to foresee and intervene decisively into the world we live in’ (2015 p.294).

Here, and elsewhere (Chun, 2016), Chun is able to emphasise the in-built contradiction of the promised utopia of network technologies. Her work addresses contemporary actualities of what Gilles Deleuze termed “control societies” (Deleuze, 1992): she is able to show how systems exert control while also highlighting how the ‘leakiness’ of these systems can provide a point of tactical engagement with them (Chun, 2015). The inability to intervene is, for Chun, a consequence of the habitual nature of digital communications: it is when ‘new media’ is no longer new that it becomes difficult to disrupt. It is here that artistic practices provide a significant contribution to the operations and understandings of digital technologies. The use of everyday platforms and familiar modes of communication by artists is an intervention into the persistent repetitions of networked systems. By making use of the ‘leakiness’, the ways in which these systems exceed themselves in expected and unexpected ways, internet-situated performance draws our attention to how these systems are constructed by, and constructing, our relations.

An emphasis on the leaky, the malfunction or misoperation that is more aptly named the actual daily operation, is where artistic practices come to situate themselves within these technologies. Ulises A. Mejias (2013) theorises the ‘paranodal’ as spaces off the network (an idea I will return to in more depth in Chapter 3); Galloway, having thoroughly addressed the network in various works (2012; 2007; 2004), calls for an anti-reticular philosophy in a 2015 interview with David Berry (Berry & Galloway, 2015). The presence and prevalence of this work foregrounds how metaphors of the network resonate with contemporary cultural thought while also demanding, as Galloway’s engagement with the anti-reticular confirms, that we challenge or complicate its pervasiveness. It is my contention that the relation created by, and mediated through, performance provides a site that can interrupt and reimagine how the social is constituted through its connections.

Interfaces

Interfaces are a visual point of contact on the screens of our various devices as we use different software applications. They are a way of enabling a person to use and manipulate specific computer processes: an interface is the point of connection between the person using the computer and backend processes of a program. When I say internet-enabled communication or interfaces, I mean: communications software (such as FaceTime, Skype, iMessage, WhatsApp) that operate through their connection to the internet. Gillian Rose – in her discussion of friction, networks and interfaces – emphasises that interfaces are an intersection of different decisions and thus complicate a sense of their stability as cultural objects (2015 p. 341). She claims the interface is the site wherein content is embedded, via devices and software, ‘into specific social practices of meaning-making’ (Ibid. p. 341). Therefore the interface – like any process of relation – refers to both a process and location of social and cultural situated information. As with Mieke Bal’s ‘travelling concepts’ (Bal, 2002), Rose understands contemporary cultural meaning to be capable of – and often necessarily in – movement.

Galloway, throughout his book *The Interface Effect*, emphasises interfaces as processual and insists that they should be taken as mediation and effects, not as things or as media (2012 p.36). One of his central critiques of prior theories, particularly Friedrich Kittler and Marshall McLuhan, is that they suppose technology as prior to the processes that it mediates (Galloway, 2012 p.6). His argument for the ‘interface effect’ positions computers as a process, the practice between states: the emphasis, for Galloway, is on computers as effect and as practice as opposed to presence or object. An emphasis of the mutually constituting relation of culture and technologies, and therefore the processes of relation that are predicated on these technologies, is a principle assumption within the digital theories I will draw on.

Performance is its own kind of interface: a frame that enables interactions on set terms. It is an experience of something constructed in the “real time” of a particular process, software or otherwise. It defines the processes created and then instigated by people. Software is a score, even if it is more complex than those of Allan Kaprow’s ‘happenings’ or the chance

choreographic scores created by the Judson Dance Theater. Lev Manovich, in *Software takes Command*, historicises software's development and its influence on our contemporary 'software society' with its 'software culture' (Manovich, 2013 p.33). Manovich argues for the central role of software in shaping the conditions of contemporary sociality. In his book, Manovich uses 'software performance' to emphasise the fact that 'what we are experiencing is constructed by software in real time' (2013 p.33). A relation is being constructed, in 'real time' (a phrase whose complexities I address in Chapter 4), by the software of the interfaces as well as by the mediating intentions of an artwork. Further extending Manovich, software as a performance enables attention to the repeating conventions of the form.

Conceptually, the interface has a more expansive definition that has already been referred to with the work of Alexander R Galloway as well as Gillian Rose. Galloway's approach emphasises how the interface can be approached as a discursive territory. Taken with Rose's attention to the ways agencies intersect through interfaces, Galloway's conceptualisation demonstrates how the digital sites of relations are imbricated in the practices of relation in internet-enabled communication. It is this interplay of agency and process that makes the interface so fascinating for this project, both in how performance makes use of the specifics of a digital interface's design (the recognisable desktop layout of a Mac; the specific browser framing of Firefox or Chrome) to render a screen as the site of a performative exchange as well as in thinking through the conceptual consequences of that interaction. The interface, as a result, is exemplary of the proximity of the abstract and the concrete in these systems.

This notion of software 'performing' is also important in considerations of the archiving or preservation of these works. In a conversation conducted for the exhibition catalogue of the Whitechapel Gallery's 2016 exhibition *Electronic Superhighway* (2016 p.216), Dragan Espenschied and Heather Corcoran discuss 'performing' as a way to conceptualise the relevance of internet and digital art on software processes that quickly evolve. 'Performing,' for Espenschied is the operation a computer undertakes: 'The computer *performs* to make that JPEG visible' (Corcoran & Espenschied 2016 p. 216, emphasis in original). Here, the digital processes that support and display an

image (or a video, or any digital representation) can be understood as performance. The computer re-enacts the .jpg each time it is opened. This (re)performance enabled by the digital processes is an integral part of my own artistic work as well as the works I discuss throughout this thesis. As I will demonstrate, the digital performance Espenschied ascribes to the .jpg can be extended to the re-playing as re-performing of a livestream video (as discussed in Chapter 3).

The aim of this chapter is to lay the groundwork for what follows, so that as this thesis starts interweaving my practice with the analyses of other internet-situated artworks, it is clear where the ideas that guide my processes begin. The key terms defined in this chapter are collected in a glossary at the end of this thesis. These definitions are meant to provide clarity in the complex, just as this chapter has been intended to situate my work within a broader history of critical thought as well as 20th and 21st century art practices. These foundational works – both artistic and theoretical – frame the investigation documented here. Building on these artists and scholars, I am able to ask, how do artistic practices respond to, and make use of, the new digital forms of relation? To answer this, I focus on performance – in art and in society – and the practices of relation it produces through the lens of generosity and dissonance. Generosity here is a critically engaged feminist practice, a way of situating knowledge as well as drawing on personal experience through practices of relation. It is both complicated as well as strengthened by dissonance, which here names the emotional and technological frictions that characterise practices of relation as they are mediated by the internet. Dissonance emphasises on the processes of the internet alongside its materials. This is what distinguishes internet-situated art; it is able to draw attention to the way in which the social and the technological are entangled within each other and, as a result, pose an opportunity to question and intervene in *how we together*.

Interlude

The way we happen upon our own ideas,

Which we have made,

Again & again.

As if they are new.

The ways we make our own ideas temporarily new.

Before we realise that we plagiarise ourselves.

Borrowing from others

& stealing from ourselves.

Stealing from others

& borrowing from ourselves.

Appropriating. Misunderstanding. Taking.

If I take your idea and also leave it behind, does that count as stealing?

Can I steal it, even if you would let me have it?

Just so you wouldn't know

Which parts of my idea were yours until you saw them here.

In something I've called mine.

I've been thinking about the way we

– you, me, anyone –

draw others into our obsessions.

& the ways that we

– you, me, anyone –

tell ourselves that our obsessions are somehow special,

somehow fascinating enough to be worth pulling people into.

From *exercises in long distance charisma* (A.6)

Chapter 2. Artistic Research & Theory: weaving *how we are together*

This chapter discusses the following examples from my practice:

exchanges (A.2); *exercises in long distance charisma* (A.6); *what parts of your idea are mine* (A.7); *i'm not done/2* (A.4) and *(tfw) spin measure cut* (A.10).

[The] promiscuous traffic between different ways of knowing carries the most radical promise of performance studies research. Performance studies struggles to open the space between analysis and action, and to pull the pin on the binary opposition between theory and practice. (Conquergood, 2002 p.145)

There is the obsessive, addictive quality to spinning yarn and the weaving of cloth; a temptation to get fixated and locked into processes, which run away with themselves and those drawn into them. (Plant, 1998 p.62)

'[P]ractice as research in the performing arts pursues hybrid enquiries combining creative doing with reflexive being, thus fashioning freshly critical interactions between current epistemologies and ontologies' (Kershaw, 2011 p. 64)

In this chapter, I will address the 'weaving' that is the basis of my approach to practice as research. This project is invested, artistically and epistemically, in the slippage between the concrete and conceptual that characterises many key ideas in both digital philosophies as well as performance studies. The Derek Conquergood and Baz Kershaw quotes that provide two of the three epigraphs to this chapter explicitly address this proximity of different modes of knowing and making as a central quality of performance studies. Taking inspiration from Sadie Plant – who provides the third epigraph – and other feminist scholars, I approach this hybridity through a model of weaving. As this chapter expands upon, weaving as an approach to practice as research provides a way to intertwine academic and artistic research processes. Weaving is both the framework and impetus for my artistic research methodology. It is a model for understanding how I conducted the research that resulted in the body of artworks and written thesis that comprise this PhD.

Weaving occurs as a central motif in my work, both a model and a metaphor for explaining how ideas are generated and material created. It

captures the wandering of a discursive process, while also adding a materiality and gestural quality to that process. As others before me have identified (Boddington et al., 2006; Haraway, 2016; Paavolainen, 2017; Plant, 1998; Bal, 2002), weaving holds the possibility of multiple threads and thus implies the strength and frictions of things – different contexts, people or concepts – as they come together. In a project addressing the impacts of internet communication technologies and the politics of emotion, weaving as metaphor and model can attend to the movement of relation within those overlapping concerns. It is a generative process, a process in which pieces come together in new totalities, where threads can be traced through an array of work. As the model of my artistic research process in Section I shows (see Diagram 1 on pg. 73), it is a process that moves back and forth between the various components of a project and pulls them into tight – sometimes friction-filled – relation.

In June 2016, I exhibited (*tfw*) *spin measure cut* at Seventh Gallery in Melbourne. The exhibition included several components: central to it was a multi-channel video installation in the gallery, made up of two video triptychs looping on three screens. The exhibition also included a triptych of performative video works, created in the gallery and projected into the front window of the gallery as well as presented in an online installation. In (*tfw*) *spin measure cut* (A.10, see Figure 2.1 on the following page), weaving is a crucial feature structurally as well as aesthetically: the ‘textile triptych’ literally weaves together found video footage to create a new visual language for exploring the interrelation of digital technologies, bodies and the labour of women’s relation. These videos then ‘weave’ through the performance triptych, appearing in the online installation and gallery projection as the work moves in and out of online and real-life spaces, marking their entanglement. This technique, of weaving videos of woven material through real and online sites, repeats in *hurl outward at a certain pace* (see A.11) as well as *arrangements for a temporary space* (see A.12).

The title references contemporary internet shorthand (*tfw* stands for “that feel when” or “that feeling when”, an oft used internet acronym) and the gestures of the Greek Fates (who spin, measure and cut the thread of a person’s life). The textile “weaving” of video turns the metaphorical weaving of

ideas, spaces, art and academic forms into an aesthetic model. It is a literal, visual performance of what is occurring conceptually in the conversations and exchanges of my practice, in the processes that entangle on and off line in the sites and shared moments of an internet-situated together, and in the relation between the artistic research and written analysis of this thesis.



Figure 2.1 – still from ‘cut’, part of *(f)w spin measure cut* (2016). Jane Frances Dunlop. See Appendix A.10.

In the first section – ‘WEAVING: practice as research’ – of this chapter, I define a methodology for a practice as research approach informed by performance studies and visual art approaches. My use of weaving as a model for my processes of inquiry is indebted to intersectional feminist theories of cultural and performance studies, which I bring together to form a methodology for artistic research. Here, the generosity theorised throughout this thesis provides a mode of artistic research that produces dissonance as a key and generative insight in the process as well as the objects of study. These concepts, and their centrality to my practice as research, provide new insights and possibilities for the practice of artistic research. I use the terms “practice as research” and “artistic research” interchangeably: both emphasise the centrality of artistic processes as both means as well as ends within a research process. Key to the contribution this PhD makes is the practical application of an entangled set of feminist approaches to knowledge through

artistic research. Central to all of this is ‘weaving’: the model for my practice as research process is one that weaves. Weaving functions conceptually, aesthetically and practically within my work. It becomes a thread that enables me to intertwine the various aspects of this work, making clear their relation while accounting for their difference, as I investigate *how we are together*. This methodology makes clear the relationship between the two components of my submitted thesis: how the written thesis supports the artistic outputs and vice versa. Importantly, it enables the reader to understand the line of inquiry that motivated the practice as research process, and produced my artistic research.

In the second section of this chapter, ‘WEAVING: a feminist epistemic paradigm’, I restate my methodology in relation to the feminist theories that inform it. The practice as research processes that govern my thesis, and the conceptual justification for them, are deeply indebted to and built upon feminist approaches to epistemology. As Derek Conquergood writes, the ‘promiscuous traffic’ of knowing is one of radical claims of performance studies; it is my intention to use that promiscuous traffic to enact a feminist epistemic paradigm through my practice as research. As discussed in the ‘Introduction’, the feminist politics of this thesis do not take the form of gender-bias analysis or an explicit centring of gender in my work. Rather, feminist theories are the basis for the knowledge claims of this work; an intersectional feminism provides – structurally and conceptually – both framework and justification for my focus on emotion and relation. For this reason, by focus in later chapters is on relation as opposed to analysis related to binary genders. I aim to amplify the claims of emotion and relation as modes of knowing, and to use those modes of knowing to engage with contemporary technology. This is an important aspect of this project’s feminist claims: my artistic research continues a tradition of feminist interventions into technology that seek to illuminate how technology is produced by and producing socially normative contemporary behaviours. The aim is to construct and enact a practice invested in the movement of knowledges as well as their points of contact. Within my artistic processes, this can be understood as a commitment to how artworks and their making constitute knowledge with equivalent weight to this written thesis.

The final section, 'WEAVING: conversation, exchange, performance', outlines the three key strands of my artistic research practice – “conversation”, “exchange”, and “performance”. Through a discussion of these methods, this section demonstrates how the weaving model operates practically in my research, and how it produced insights that are contained in both the artworks and the written thesis. In this section, I focus on how dissonance and generosity operate as tactics for, and outcomes of, this conceptual weaving. The three interconnected facets of my artistic research practice (conversations, exchanges and performances) demonstrate how the practical and conceptual concerns of this project operate through the relation weaving facilitates. In this section, I outline these practical tactics in order to set the stage for the conceptual revelations they provided, and that are discussed in the second part of this thesis. Thus, this chapter lays out how what Baz Kershaw terms the ‘creative doing’ and ‘reflexive being’ of practice as research operate through this thesis. It provides a key for following the thread of inquiry through the artistic research that accompanies the written thesis, and for understanding how the second part of this thesis captures the insights of those artworks.

1. WEAVING: practice as research

The terms for how artistic practice is used in research inquiries are numerous and their definitions shift with usage. The effort to define and distinguish these terms, as well as their regional and practical differences, is present throughout the literature on methodologies related to artistic practice (Nelson, 2013; Kershaw, 2011; Smith & Dean, 2009; Riley & Hunter, 2016; Michael Biggs & Henrik Karlsson, 2011). I choose to frame my methodology as practice as research or artistic research. These terms emphasise the centrality of my practice as both mode and output of my research inquiry. The straightforward expansion of “research” with art making – signalled by “practice” and by “artistic” – reflects the expanded process at the centre of this work. Whereas the final three chapters will elucidate the theory that builds from this body of work, here I will clarify the processes that generate both the artwork and the written thesis, as well as their inter-relation. The contribution

to knowledge I advance here takes form of the artistic works submitted, and in the conceptual work that is both informed by and inspiration for their process of creation. Here, I will lay out how my practice as research methodology functions practically within my work. The role of generosity as an open and situated mode of making and the dissonance that this openness invites as perspectives, possibilities and structures come into friction, is the practical grounding of my theoretical analysis. This section thus provides both a key to my methodology, as well as the means for understanding the line of inquiry that progresses across the body of artworks presented in the online exhibition *how we are together*.

My approach to practice as research is modelled on weaving, paralleling the aesthetic patterns that occur within my work. The emphasis on weaving is informed by feminist epistemological approaches that emphasise movement and the entanglement of different perspectives (Bal, 2002; Haraway, 2016; Plant, 1998; Tsing, 2011). Artistic research provides a means for bringing the work of these theorists together, and for actioning their ideas in the world. It is through the model of weaving I outline, as well as the concepts of generosity and dissonance that are key to my inquiry, that my project contributes to theories and practices of feminist knowledge making. Weaving, as a way of understanding the interconnected movement of ideas, owes its conceptual lineage to contemporary feminist theories. It is vital for understanding how the feminist epistemic of this project, and its approach, manifests in the artistic research and the insights each artwork produces. Weaving aims to make actual modes of knowledge making and understanding theorised by feminist scholars, seeking not only to analyse but also to enact new ways of knowing and being in relation.

To do this, I bring together the work of a variety of feminist theorists who focus on entanglement, context and multiplicity in feminist epistemological practices. Building on this work, I purpose a practice as research methodology modelled on weaving. This methodology deploys generosity and dissonance, focusing on the tensions and resonances of entangled ideas and the frictions between them. Central to this is Donna Haraway, whose work on situated knowledges is addressed in the previous chapter. I bring together Haraway's approach with Mieke Bal's 'travelling

concepts' and her writing on 'grappling' with contextually specific meaning (2002), uniting these ideas with Sadie Plant's writing on the metaphorical and material importance of weaving processes within feminist histories of technology to argue for weaving as a feminist epistemic model (1998). My practice as research inquiry, and the relationship between the written analysis and the body of artworks produced by that inquiry, foreground the privileging of multiple approaches and perspectives that is central to a feminist epistemology. It enables me to construct a clear line of research while also demonstrating the frictions inherent in the construction of knowledge, as my written and artistic outputs exist in dialogue: both resonant and dissonant.

This resonance and dissonance is captured by the tensions and unities present in a woven textile. The threads sit alongside one another, unified in a cloth but also distinct and producing frictions as they move against each other. In weaving, there are two kinds of threads: the warp and the weft. The warp are stationary threads that form the frame of a cloth; the weft moves between the various warp threads, its path is held in place by the warp and it binds the warp threads together. Thinking through, and with, weaving, demonstrates how an artistic research process binds together artistic outputs (experimentation and exploration; analysis and synthesis), influences (inspirational theories; artworks) and writing (analysis and synthesis; experimentation and exploration). As the diagram below shows (see page 74), these strands form the warp of my work: they are the parallel threads that run concurrent with one another and give shape to the inquiry that moves between. In his chapter 'The Production of Knowledge in Artistic Research' in *The Routledge Companion to Research in the Arts*, Henk Borgdorff writes:

'Artistic research [...] unites the artistic and academic in an enterprise that impacts both domains. Art thereby transcends its former limits, aiming through the research to contribute to thinking and understanding; academia, for its part, opens up its boundaries to forms of thinking and understanding that are interwoven with artistic practices.' (Borgdorff, 2011 p.45)

My use of weaving actively emphasises the 'forms of thinking and understanding that are interwoven with artistic practices', clarifying their value and application by bringing them together with feminist approaches that are likewise invested in opening up the boundaries that define knowing. Through

the line of inquiry the artistic research instigates, the modes of thinking and understanding that operate in the various methods are brought together into the single fabric of this project. The weft moves through the warp, bringing together different methods to create a work that includes the nuisances of these different threads as well as the outcome their entirety produces.

Hazel Smith and Robert T. Dean capture the dynamic nature of practice as research process in their introduction to *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts* (2009). Smith and Dean prefer the term 'practice-led', which they complement with 'research-led practice' (Smith & Dean, 2009 p.7-9; 20). Their multi-directional 'iterative cyclic model' demonstrates the multiplicity of paths within the possibilities of artistic research and can, I argue, sit comfortably as one model of practice as research. The diagram of research processes they provide maps how ideas move into artworks, returning to ideas and cycling through theoretical outputs (Ibid p.20); their model foregrounds the dynamic and mobile nature of practice as research (Ibid. p.19-25). Within Smith and Dean's modelling, my work could be classified as practice-based – which is generally used to emphasise studies in which the artwork is a form or output of the research and set in opposition to a practice-led approach in which the artwork leads to written insights. I use artistic research in order to acknowledge both the multi-directional relationship between these different approaches within my work, and to acknowledge that my practice is central to the research output. Within this thesis, the fragments of text that serve as interludes are the first sign of this active relationship between academic and artistic research. They demonstrate how themes and ideas moved from my theoretical research into my creative writing while also actively implicating the written thesis in my artistic practice. My artistic and scholarly voices become entangled, one situated within the other.

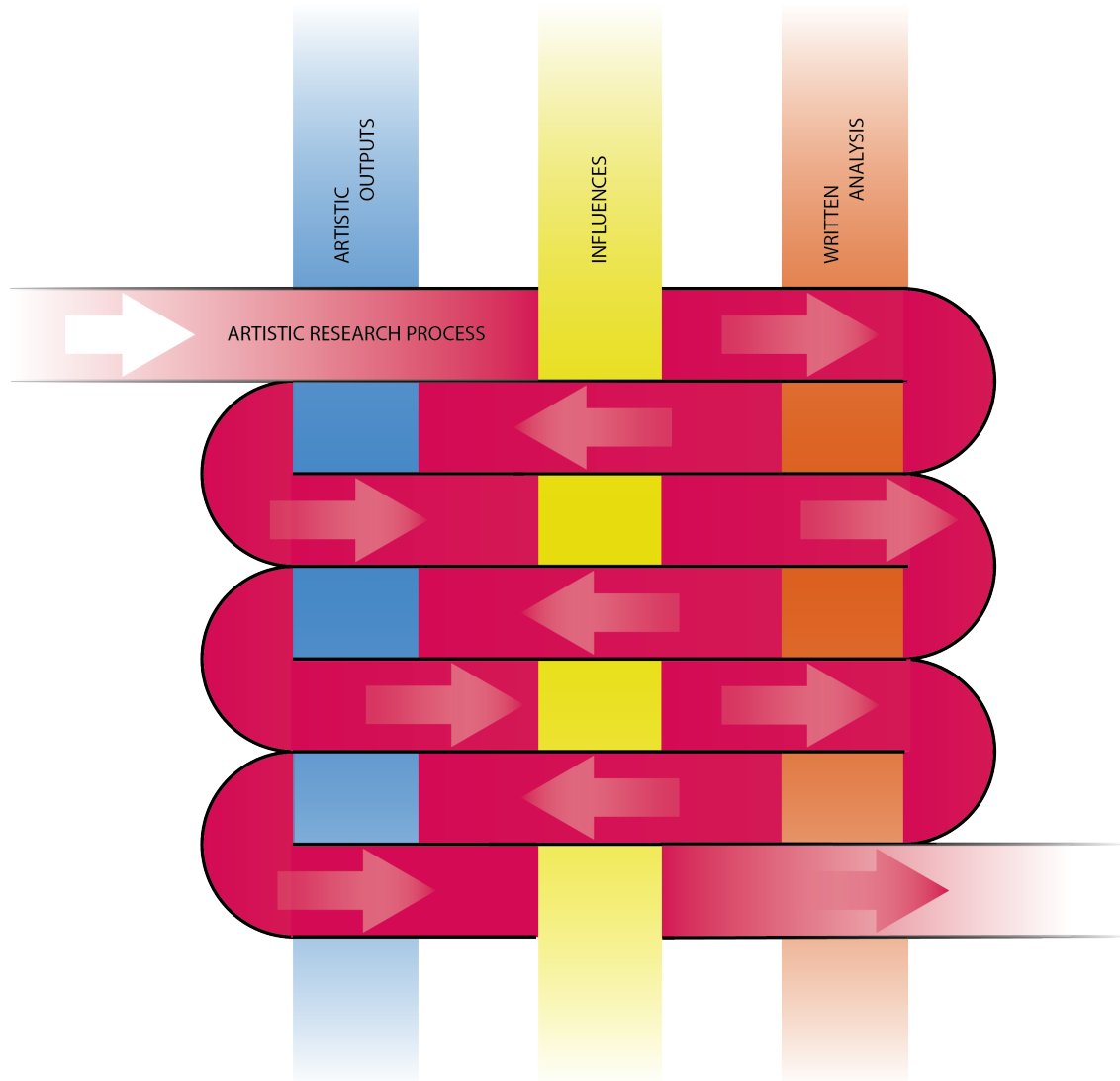
The warp threads represent the key methods that run parallel through my research and that are bound together by the practice as research process. These threads are "artistic outputs", "influences and contexts" and "written analysis". The artistic outputs account for the practical, aesthetic and intuitive explorations of research through the creation of artworks. The artworks produced provide insights into the inquiry through their processes of making

as well as in the reflection upon finished works. The artistic research process interweaves the insights gleaned from the process of making these artworks, as well as the critical impacts of their final form, with the situating support of the artistic and theoretical influences. It binds the influences, the artworks and the written analysis that constitute the artistic research process together in a single contribution. The influences and contexts thread accounts for investigations into the work of others. It brings together engagements with other artists, theorists and writers as they attend to related areas and themes: the previous chapter captures the key works and contexts that comprise this thread. This puts the artistic outputs and written analysis in relation to broader historical and conceptual legacies. Finally, the written analysis provides an exploration through synthesis of artistic outputs and influences. This thread represents the written processes that articulate the outcomes of the practice as research process by analysing the relationship between the artistic outputs and the influences.

The weft thread of the practice as research process moves across these warp threads; it moves over and under each in turn. It brings their insights into relation with each other: following the weft is following the line of inquiry that is shaped and supported by the processes represented by the warp. Between the warp threads, the weft of process crosses back past itself. These cross-backs mark the instances of refinement, revision, return and focusing during the artistic practice as research process and inform the weft as it moves onwards. The process of weaving occurs over time, but the result is not fully understood until the weaving has been completed. The aim is to enact, concurrently, an aesthetic and epistemological weaving that generates new objects through the relation of the strands pulled together. It is this thinking that allows me to conceive of the written and artistic portions of this thesis as comprising a single entity, while still accounting for the material differences between these threads. This model metaphor is also key to articulating the practice as research process that is the basis of these interwoven outcomes.

Diagram 1: Weaving as Artistic Research Process

THE ARTISTIC RESEARCH PROCESS IS REPRESENTED BY THE WEFT THREAD: IT WEAVES BETWEEN THE WARP THREADS, BINDING THEIR INSIGHTS TOGETHER INTO A SINGLE COHERENT CONTRIBUTION



THE WARP THREADS REPRESENT KEY METHODS THAT RUN PARALLEL TO ONE ANOTHER AND ARE BOUND TOGETHER BY THE ARTISTIC RESEARCH PROCESS:

ARTISTIC OUTPUTS: PRACTICAL, AESTHETIC AND INTUITIVELY MOTIVATED EXPLORATIONS INTO THE RESEARCH TOPIC

INFLUENCES: INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE WORK OF OTHERS THAT PROVIDE CONTEXT AND INSPIRATION

WRITTEN ANALYSIS: CRITICAL INTERROGATION THAT ARTICULATES LINE OF INQUIRY

In *Practice as Research in the Arts*, Nelson argues that the written thesis operates as what he terms ‘clew’ to the line of inquiry in a research project: ‘“clew” is subtly distinct from “clue” in specifically drawing attention to the *thread of the researcher’s doing-thinking* articulated in complementary documentation and writings.’ (Nelson, 2013 p.11, emphasis in the original). It is this ‘clew’, according to Nelson, to the line of inquiry that – once identified – can be traced through a work and used to decipher artworks that are often ‘complex, multi-layered and resonant’ (Nelson, 2013 p.27). Nelson’s clew is the conceptual resonances that exist in the collected materials of a thesis, enabling a reader to track the thread of process through the disparate parts of a work. My model aims to emphasise the clew as thread, pointing to the work it does to bind the discreet objects of this thesis into a totality. The clew here is *how we are together*; the explorations of this question serve as motivator for my artistic research. The frictions, the points of crossover during the weaving process, are vital to the evolution of the project. It is at this point that new perspectives and possibilities are generated.

This approach to practice as research produces new insights in multiple ways: in the instances of friction between the different strands as well as in the strength of the new “textile” that the process generates. Indeed, within my artistic research it is the friction produced between early artworks and my research into digital and performance theories that lead to dissonance, the central insight of my project. While the entangled effects of noise and emotional unease were present from the onset of my research in the reflections of *when we are together* or the experimental comparisons of *the point is that it is together/apart*, these were not the immediate focus of my investigations. My artistic research process took generosity as the central tenet to its explorations of *how we are together*, until the frictions that were appearing throughout my artistic investigations began to resonate with aspects of my research in ways that lead to the insight that generosity importantly includes dissonance. The critical analysis of the following chapters – which focus on three defining qualities of performance: site, time and the sense of common experience – addresses these insights by bringing together performance studies and digital theories to expand upon my artistic research.

Artistic Research; Written Analysis

Here, I will briefly contextualise the artistic output that forms the online exhibition *how we are together* and accompanies this written thesis (see Appendix A). Tracking the creation of the twelve works documented in the online exhibition *how we are together*, it is possible to identify the instances of insight that shaped my line of inquiry and the conceptualisations of the following three chapters. These insights are, as the following chapters will unpack, more complex than this overview can do justice to. However, narrating the chronological development of these artworks – and the parallel development of key conceptual themes – the operations of a practice as research approach and its cumulative impacts becomes clear. The chapters that follow clarify the insights of my practice as research process through a critical engagement with specific artworks in relation to the ideas that emerged from them. There, a comparative analysis of these artworks also serves to situate them within contemporary art practices. Here, a brief history of my artistic research during this PhD provides context for understanding the interrelation of these artworks, further clarifying the interweaving insights that developed out of my line of inquiry.

October 2014 – September 2015

The first four projects listed in Appendix A are the foundational works of this thesis: through their experimentations, I was able to refine my line of inquiry and add nuance and specificity to my investigations into *how we are together*. As the introduction narrates, *when we are together on the internet* (2014; see A.1) was a performance that occurred at the very beginning of my PhD research. In it, the concerns and questions that were the basis of my proposed research were reformed as a spoken-word performance. This process, the translation of theoretical and conceptual concerns between academic language and performance poetics, occurs throughout my practice. Rather than creating artworks that are illustrative of conceptual concerns, it uses the porous possibilities of performance to represent critical thought in ways that stretch meaning and grope through instability. The segments of text that serve as interludes, taken from various performances, are intended to bring this instability of language and meaning back into the written thesis. This

first work of *how we are together* chronicles the thinking that is the origin of this project, holding it in its original confusion and ambiguity. Further, its presence within the exhibition, and in the 'Introduction' as well as 'Conclusion', situates my own subjective position as artist, writer and researcher in relation to the broader concerns of this thesis.

My work with Mira Loew, present from the beginning in our *exchanges* (2014 – 2018; see A.2) and in the work produced during our residency with *I'm not done/2* (2015; see A.4), is a through-line in this thesis. The final work, *arrangements for a temporary space* (2017; see A.12), was also created in collaboration with Loew and she appears, as audience-performer, in *exercises in long distance charisma* (2016; see A.6). As I discuss later in this chapter, my work with Loew is a vital part of my artistic practice. Our exchanges, and the mediated collaborations that form our shared practice, were one of the catalysts for this research project. The *exchanges* and the outputs from *i'm not done/2* are exemplary of these processes; they demonstrate an internet-situated collaborative practice.

The durational nature of my relationship with Loew, and our work together, provided continual insights into not only *how we are together* but also how we sustain that together. In the exchanges documented in *exchanges* as well as in *i'm not done/2*, we established practices of relation that were a response to both the mediation of digital technologies as well as to the ways in which our friendship was already existing in these spheres. *what parts of your idea were mine* (2016; see A.7) and *arrangements for a temporary space* mark instances of our ongoing collaborations that occurred later in my artistic research: this collaboration, and the reiteration of ideas through it, mark a clear instance of the return and revision that is an aspect of the weaving of my practice as research. It is a relationship that weaves across my artistic research. The model of practice that developed out of my work with Loew is both intuitive and generous: an instinctual use of mediating technologies that is governed by an openness and care for the other. In this chapter, and 'Chapter 5. Together', my work with Loew draws attention to generosity and returns it repeatedly to its openness as a means for understanding the presence of another that is central to *how we are together*.

An awareness of presence, acknowledged and experienced within internet-situated performance, gained a clear form at this stage of my artistic research. It is central to my work with Loew, and also appears in the work *how not to perform* (2015; A.3). *how not to perform*, developed early in my research process, represents the first explicit engagement with presence. In it, the effect of dispersed sites and time on presence that are central to the insights of this project become apparent. This online performance was created as I considered the tension between absence and presence within these works, especially in relation to 'liveness' and embodiment in performance. Through direct address as well as a requirement of action on the part of the audience – in the navigation of the work – the centrality of the screen as site, and the ways in which address is able to bring asynchronous times into a shared moment, began to appear. In 'Chapter 3. Sites', the expanded site-specificity of *how not to perform* is discussed alongside *hurl outward at a certain pace* (2016; A.11). Taken together, these two works demonstrate how insights into how sites constructed between dispersed locations, and the dissonance that attends to those sites, evolved through my artistic research.

October 2015 – March 2016

It is in these early works, and my ongoing collaborations with Mira Loew, the focus on how practices of relation formed and informed an experience of presence particular to the internet begin to take form. These works were key in enabling an understanding of how the terms of relation are shaped by digital contexts; the practical engagement with these sites, and with my own relationships within them, directly formed the trajectory of my research process as I reflected on how presence together was felt through the internet. The artworks that followed responded to these insights, as I refined an understanding of how we are together on the internet. The next works within my artistic research, *the point is that it is together/apart* (2015; see A.5) and *exercises in long distance charisma* (2016; see A. 6), investigated how relationships were held and what the mediating impact of the internet is. It is through these works, specifically *the point is that it is together/apart*, that dissonance entered my research as the role of noise within mediation and the parallel effects of emotional frictions became increasingly clear.

Both of these works focus on how practices of relation are situated on the internet, using my own personal relationship as the terrain of these explorations. In *the point is that it is together/apart*, I experimented with parallel performances that captured different but related ways in which my computer and the internet could frame my performance and its reception. In these parallel performances, the effects of mediation through lag and latency as well as the interference of noise became a central aesthetic feature of the work. My experience of this noise, of the differences between the processes of mediation as well as the multiple versions of a performance that could be captured, focused my attention on how the material reality of the processes of being together were performed by these noisy interruptions. It is at this point in my artistic research that the resonance of technological and emotional tension became readily apparent, provided a means to refine and complicate the ideas of generosity in relation that my work had begun from. At this point, I began to theorise dissonance as a companion concept to generosity. The artistic processes investigated in the central artworks of *how we are together - minor fabrics* (2016); *exercises on nervousness* (2016); *(tfw) spin measure cut* (2016); *hurl outward at a certain pace* (2016) – provide the aesthetic and conceptual insights of my artistic research process that my written analysis is able to extend through interweaving with other artistic examples and critical theories.

Early versions of the first and second chapter had been drafted during the same period: they lay a foundation for the work of this thesis, and have been revised since to account for the insights of the artistic research process and of the final chapters. Here, the interweaving of the practice as research process between artistic outputs, influences and written analysis continued: while the artistic outputs were the primary source of insight, research into artistic practices and theoretically relevant materials continued as did my written analysis. *the point is that it is together/apart* and *exercises in long distance charisma* served as vital entry points into the line of inquiry that would elucidate dissonance and its functions. Concurrent with these works, Loew and I made *what parts of your idea were mine* (2016; see A.7); this work was a co-authored artistic meditation on our mediation, created and presented in relation to the collaborative practices of (Play)ground-less. Although this

work does not include the explicit technological engagements of other aspects of *how we are together*, it makes evident how work repeats across my practice and is revised and resituated in new ways to illuminate – through shifting form and context – the malleability of meaning. It also marks my continuing collaboration with Loew and our relationship to (Play)ground-less: these artistic modes of together and their continuity lay the groundwork for *arrangements for a temporary space* (2017), the final piece of my artistic research process and the central example in the final chapter's treatment of together.

April 2016 – September 2016

The central period of artistic creation, during which the central artworks of this PhD were produced, was April 2015 – September 2016. The evolution of the artworks created between April 2016 and September 2016 (*minor fabrics* (A.8); *exercises in nervousness* (A.9); *tfw spin measure cut* (A.10); *hurl outward at a certain pace* (A.11)) demonstrate the process of reflecting and re-situating that occurs in the weaving of artistic research. The insights of these works, and the influence they exerted on the conceptual development of this thesis as captured within the written analysis, was vital to the evolution of these ideas and to the contributions this project makes our understandings of contemporary internet art and life in digital ubiquity. By building from the insights and processes of earlier work, this period of creation refined the artistic insights of earlier works. It is here the reflection and return of the weaving process, as it doubles back to continue forward, is most apparent. At the same time, the third and fourth chapters started to take form as they responded to developing insights.

In April 2016, I performed *minor fabrics*. The first “live” performance of my artistic research, this work sought to extend the direct to camera performances of early works into a live setting. In it, I also used new tactics to overburden the network connection. Whereas previously, I had created looped calls between various digital devices in a kind of internet hall of mirrors – see *the point is that it is together/apart* (2015); this tactic also appears in (*tfw*) *spin measure cut* and *hurl outward at a certain pace* – here I layered multiple videos of the same performance created in real time. The following month, in May 2016, I performed *exercises in nervousness*. This performance

used a similar score to *minor fabrics*, but performed for a live irl (in real life) audience as well as an online one. Together, these two works enabled me to investigate the performerly experience of *how we are together* in live contexts as well as the relationship of the documentation of an event to the event itself. In making these works, the nervousness (a term I appropriate from Gertrude Stein) of relation through the mediation of the internet became increasingly apparent, as I discuss in Chapter 4. Here, it is important to note that these works developed in response to the increasing attention to dissonance – technological and emotional friction – that had appeared in prior work.

During this period, I presented papers on early versions of Chapters 3 and 4. These papers discussed the early outcomes of the artistic research I was undertaking as well as serving as provocation for the works that were created during the same period. ‘Proximity and Dissonance in Internet-situated Performance’ was presented at *Conventions of Proximity in Art, Theatre and Performance* – a symposium held at Birkbeck, University of London in May 2016. This paper, later published in *Performance Research*, is the basis of Chapter 3. In it, I discuss *exercises in long distance charisma* and provided the early conceptualisations of dissonance. The paper was written following the performance of *minor fabrics* in April 2015: in it, I began to clearly define the concept of dissonance that had emerged from my practice as research. Further research, and reflection, resulted in an early version of my attempt to connect Gertrude Stein and noise when I gave a paper titled ‘Nervousness as/is noise’ at the International Symposium of Electronic Arts 2016 (ISEA2016) in Hong Kong. This paper, presented between *minor fabrics* and *exercises in nervousness*, was vital for clarifying the centrality of the noise produced in *minor fabrics*.

Whereas *minor fabrics* had been an experiment in the sustained and exhaustive production of noise in internet-situated performance, *exercises in nervousness* was able to build on the insights of that performance as well as a critical engagement with Stein and communication feedback. As a result, the two performances, and the research process between them, enabled a clarification of dissonance as a quality of internet-situated performance that is produced through the entanglement of performer and mediating device. These works make clear that the specific interruptions of internet

communication disrupt the clarity of relation while also confirming the presence of the mediation that maintains the experience of together. The initial stages of these chapters, and the theoretical research that informs their reflections of the artistic research at their centre, is interwoven with the creation of a series of artworks. It is this parallel and entangled process that the weaving of my methodology aims to capture: the frictions of simultaneous processes and their inter-influence.

The final two works created in this period, *(tfw) spin measure cut* (A.10) and *hurl outward at a certain pace* (A.11), are instances of the return of weaving modelled above. With these works, I refined aspects of earlier artworks in order to revisit their insights and clarify the sense of *how we are together* these works were beginning to construct. *(tfw) spin measure cut* was in part my artistic reflection on developing ideas of my methodological weaving. It also, in the performance triptych that was created in the gallery, revisited the looping of video calls originally used in *the point is that it is apart/together*. In that early work, this feedback loop was a means for exploring how voice and presence is mediated in a variety of ways when it is situated online. In *(tfw) spin measure cut*, I returned to these artistic tactics to focus in on site and presence across platforms. Here, the gallery space and the textile triptych on display is mediated and remediated to explore how presence in the gallery translates into presence in online. The intention was to interweave the online and physical installations, through a series of performance gestures that pulled the textiles videos threadlike from the gallery through the internet and back into both. The performance triptych was shown both as a video installation in the front window of Seventh Gallery as well as online as an installation.

Reflecting on this process, of intertwining online and gallery sites, was the provocation for *hurl outward at a certain pace*. This work centred on an exploration of the tactic of video looping that is part of *the point is that it is together/apart* and which reappeared in *(tfw) spin measure cut*. Responding to the insights of *(tfw) spin measure cut*, *hurl outward at a certain pace* uses this performance tactic to focus in on the mediation of site – both as it connects us outward to others as well as in the connections that fold back towards one's self. Site, and place or space, had been early motivators of this project – as is

apparent in *when we are together*, discussed in the introduction. Still, the process of arriving at the engagements with site central to *hurl outward at a certain pace* – and discussed in detail in Chapter 3 – was vital in providing an expanded sense of *how we are together* informed by the entirety of the artistic research process. Both *hurl outward at a certain pace* and *(tfw) spin measure cut* are abstracted meditations on being together, as well as where and when that together is. They refine the performances of earlier works, providing further insights into the particularities that occur in the frictions between positions united through internet-situated performances.

It is through the findings of these works that I was able to refine my understanding of dissonance and generosity in performance to focus on sites and temporality. Following this period of intensive practice as research, I wrote ‘Chapter 3. Sites’ and ‘Chapter 4. Shared Moments’. These chapters respond to insights that developed out of these artworks. They expand upon these works, and the line of inquiry that runs through them, in order to clarify key aspects of my research. Thinking, and writing, on the artistic research of this period enables this thesis to track the interwoven relationship between the work of other artists as well as the conceptual and theoretical material that provided important and productive frictions as my investigations into *how we are together* developed.

Final Stages

All of this was necessary for developing *arrangements for a temporary space* (2017; see A.12), and for writing ‘Chapter 5: Together’. *arrangements for a temporary space* makes use of my independent artistic research, and my collaborative relationship with Mira Loew: it brings the insights of the period of artistic research in 2016 back into the fray of collaborative exchange for a final ‘test’ of togetherness. Various technical challenges, discussed in ‘Chapter 5: Together’, solidified rather than disproved the work that had developed to that point. These difficulties enabled me to practically experience and engage with the line of inquiry that had developed out of my artistic research and led to the written analysis to that point. It was an opportunity to return to and test the hypothesis about how we are together that is the basis of ‘Chapters 3: Sites’ and ‘Chapter 4: Shared Moments’. This enabled me to synthesise the findings of the previous chapters with the practical artworks made with these insights

in mind. The compromises made by myself and Mira Loew in making *arrangements for a temporary space* (A.12) – the central case study in Chapter 5 – became moments of research insight, confirming my understanding of how togetherness was operating in digital ubiquity and its influence on the possibilities of internet-situated artworks.

This brief chronology of my practice as research provides a context for understanding the relationship between the written thesis, the artistic outputs and the research inquiry that both inform and support. Alongside Appendix A and the exhibition *how we are together* that is part of this thesis, it demonstrates the events that influenced this thesis and the progress of thinking on *how we are together* that this process enabled. The next section – ‘WEAVING: a feminist epistemic paradigm’ – takes up the work that begin this section, and expands upon how the weaving of practice as research laid out here enables and enacts a new epistemic mode based in feminist critical theories. It shows how theories serve as the artistic and intellectual basis for the practical insights of practice as research process that underpin my inquiry into practices of relation mediated by the internet.

II. WEAVING: a feminist epistemic paradigm

In her chapter, ‘Thinking through Radical Generosity with Levinas’, Diprose argues for a generosity that manifests as feminist knowledge making. She claims that the ‘transformation of ideas necessary to feminist and all critical thinking ‘takes place not in isolation but within the field of the other.’ (Diprose, 2002 p.126). It is precisely this which my work, in concert and solidarity with Kember and Zylinska, enacts. The artworks that comprise the practice as research of this project are doing this in two key ways: firstly, through a process of research that relies on the generative and experiential insights that develop through artistic processes. In my work, these insights are specifically tethered to emotion and how feeling – particularly a sense of together, is experienced. This produces a new kind of data: one that is entangled in an audience member’s experience. Secondly, the finished artwork[s] that are the result of this process are also iterations of it. They mark these insights, capturing the generative result within its own form, and

enabling others to experience what cannot be moved across into language. It is through this ability to be 'both the research process and the research outcome' that artistic practice is able, as Henk Borgdorff writes, to make its 'specific contribution [...] to our knowledge, understanding, insight and experience' (Borgdorff, 2011 p.57). This challenge to, and expansion of, knowledge formation appears again in the writing of Haraway and Bal as well as Ahmed's, and informs my own written analysis as much as my practice as research.

This project brings together concepts and concerns from multiple disciplines. It aims to track a path that, methodologically, weaves performance and digital cultural studies together while it moves between them. It operates through the relation of critical and philosophical discourse with less formalised process of social discourse in the form of conversation, exchanges – in various written and spoken forms – and performance. Weaving provides a tactic for negotiating the simultaneity of on/offline that characterises the contemporary augmented reality this project addresses, as well as the slippage between abstract and concrete of the terms associated with it. Generosity and dissonance mark two key and complimentary ways of knowing; generosity indicates an openness, a willingness towards a sense of together through shared ideas, and dissonance names the frictions inherent in collectivity, bringing complexity and difference to bear on ideas through the openness of generosity.

Here, generosity operates as motivator: it moves the threads of an artistic process forward and wills them together. Dissonance is the consequence, the insights found in being together are a result of frictions and noise that move off different positions. Generosity weaves the fabric, dissonance works in the tension of the threads one against another: both are vital to the finished product. In the quote that serves as one of the epigraphs of this chapter, weaving is described as a process that stabilises as well as unravels. Taken from *Zeros + Ones*, it comes from cyberfeminist Sadie Plant's compelling theorisation of the influence textiles and women's collective labours had on the invention of computers (1998). Plant demonstrates how weaving as model and metaphor enact this approach practically, situating the process in the intersecting histories of digital technologies and the "women's

work” of textile weaving or embroidery. Generosity and dissonance, as modes of knowledge making as well as relation, enact the temptation of being ‘fixated and locked’ – the will towards together of generosity – but instead ‘runs away’ – the resounding frictions named by dissonance (Plant, 1998 p.62).

In my work, this weaving functions to enact the generative and relation qualities of feminist epistemologies. The possibilities and importance of practices of relation as a site that generates knowledge and meaning is present throughout the work of the feminist scholars that ground my methodology. Sara Ahmed’s work addresses how emotions are generated through the interactions of people and culture (2004; 2008); Rosalyn Diprose’s definition of generosity, discussed in the previous chapter, foregrounds the potential of an ethical interpersonal encounter (2002); in the work of Sarah Kember and Joanna Zylinska, the interaction of new media and creative practice is vital as a means for producing things (ideas, artworks) that can intervene in the normalising forces of culture (2009; 2012). It is through these thinkers that I locate my own work, both topically, as a study of emotion and technology, as well as methodologically and politically as invested in feminist approaches to cultural objects and to the knowledge processes that render them meaningful. I do so to provide new insights into how practice as research can intervene in and enact new politics of knowing, while acknowledging how these insights are located within a genealogy of feminist thinking-doing.

Weaving is a way of conceptualising a relational and discursive approach rooted in feminist epistemological projects. It is language for thinking through how the various threads of this project are brought together: the ‘intellectual-creative practices that also “produce things”’ that Sarah Kember and Joanna Zylinska identify as the centre of their work across artistic and theoretical modes (Kember & Zylinska, 2009 p.10). There, Kember and Zylinska are describing practice as research: the process of making that, as it becomes entangled with thinking, can ‘produce things’. I take this to mean the objects that an artistic inquiry produces, but also the ideas that those objects are catalysts for. There are many ‘things’ in artistic research. Framing my own approach as weaving foregrounds the contact between those things; how

these objects interact with each other and the world concerns me, and is central to any thing they produce.

Dissonance is the key thing produced through my artistic research: understanding the relationship between generosity and dissonance has motivated the work of this thesis, and my investigations into *how we are together* through internet-situated performance. This attention to interaction is a way of situating in Donna Haraway's sense: understanding how context informs meaning, and imposes assumptions, to comprehend the situation of meaning. In *Staying with the Trouble* (2016), Donna Haraway expands upon her earlier work on "situated knowledges" (1988) with the model-metaphor of "tangles": 'I try to follow the threads where they lead in order to track them and find their tangles and patterns crucial for staying with the trouble in real and particular places and times' (2016, p.3). Thinking through situated knowledges is, in *Staying with the Trouble* and in critical response to Haraway's work (Haraway, 1988; Haraway, 2016; Goh, 2017; Lewis, 2017), informed by a feminist politic concerned with the dismantling historical hierarchies of knowledge by accounting for a broader set of perspectives and possibilities. For Haraway, this is a way of understanding the 'tentacular thinking' – that is, thinking that is operating with a multiplicity of orientations – necessary for situating knowledge through difference (Ibid. p.31). Here, the "real and particular" that focuses my work is the internet-situated. By attending to this through identifying and demarcating this set of art practice, generosity and dissonance emerge as insights into the modes of relation instantiated by internet communication. Weaving brings strands together, posing their relation while also allowing for the probability of unravelling into new formations.

Donna Haraway articulates the feminist necessity of situating ideas; of working with ways of knowing that acknowledge the processes and structures that produce these ideas as knowledge. The changing knowledges that Donna Haraway articulates echoes the model for interdisciplinary cultural studies proposed by Mieke Bal in *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide* (2002). Bal's approach to concepts reinforces the power of this situating by forming an interdisciplinary methodology that tracks the shifting meaning of an idea as it moves across different disciplines (that is, different structures for producing knowledge). Bal advances a methodology for

“travelling concepts” that focuses on how the movement of a specific concept enables a scholar to “grope” through the shifting definitions of key concepts as they move across disciplinary lines (Bal, 2002 p.11). Importantly, ‘groping is a collective endeavour’: it is the negotiation of contingent meanings, the acknowledgement that things do not ‘mean the same thing for everyone’ that makes interdisciplinary work important (2002 p.11). For Bal, attention to how a concept “travels”, how its meaning shifts within different contexts, provides a strategy for undertaking interdisciplinary work that acknowledges and makes use of the impact context has on meaning. For both theorists, there is a feminist emphasis on the relational nature of knowledge production. The emphasis on tangles (Haraway) and collective groping (Bal) casts this relational knowledge as something that is gestural, in process and in tension. It foregrounds a sense of embodiment, as it emphasises a materiality to both knowledge as information and as thought. This relational and tactile sense of knowledge and knowledge making is key to my use of weaving.

Weaving binds a feminist epistemology to the different forms artistic practices take, enabling me to highlight how information passes from one context to another. While textile metaphors appear across a range of theories (such as: Collins, 2016; Ingold, 2010; Paavolainen, 2017), weaving, as I outline it here, is intended to capture the practical aims and methods of artistic research into performance and the internet. As the theorists I choose to situate myself in relation to – Haraway, Plant, Kember and Zylinska – suggest, it is a practice that is grounded in feminist perspectives on technology and can thus be situated in a broader historical landscape related to cyberfeminism (Braidotti, 1996; Fernandez *et al.*, 2002; Kember & Zylinska, 2012) as well as more recent related interventions (Cubeoniks, 2014; Russell, 2012; Russell, 2013). While this critical lineage is essential to my work, I do not position my work as explicitly cyberfeminist. As discussed, it is my contention that it is no longer necessary to prefix concepts with “cyber” or “digital”. Further, my work draws on a range of critical approaches related to queer and intersectional feminisms in addition to – and in support of – my attentions to technologies.

Building on these theorists, I use weaving as a methodological approach that takes these lessons and applies these theories to practice as research. In working with weaving, the different threads of the artistic research

provide a means for situating my work theoretically and artistically within broader performance studies and digital humanities settings, as well as in relation to the progression of my own line of inquiry. Central to situating is relation: the warp and weft threads of my practice operate through their relation to one another. The insights of the artworks sit alongside the findings articulated in the following chapters: the art historical and research contexts of the previous chapters ground the making that is present within the exhibition, the artworks in the exhibition were instrumental in the findings of Part 2 (Chapters 3 to 5). The analyses of these chapters address time, site and togetherness: three key aspects of performance that are also vitally important to how internet-situated practices of relation function. The critical analysis within these chapters addresses why it is significant that these works are internet-situated. Central to all this is the frictions of these threads, between the assumptions about generosity that began my work and the revelations about dissonance produced through the investigations into *how we are together*. It is at the point of friction that my artistic research is able to extend the feminist epistemologies that are its basis: it is through practice, and the exploration of a generous, situated feminist groping, that I arrive at dissonance. Dissonance, as a concept for holding the emotion and technological frictions of interpersonal communications, is the basis of a digital feminist epistemology in practice.

These theorists provide a methodological precedent for feminist epistemologies that emphasises the mobility of knowledge, particularly as it is constituted through processes of relation. The embedded nature of the insights produced through practice as research are key to the contributions of my project, and to the way in which it is able to action these feminist epistemic models as a practical approach. The siting of my work on the internet, and more specifically in the communication tools that mediate contemporary relation, is exemplary of the practical manifestations of this. Internet communication tools, and the aesthetics of the camera address as an aspect of contemporary communication, is used throughout my work. The individual approaches of each artwork reflect the shifts in my line of inquiry, as I investigate particular aspects of digitally entangled relation and presence. However, this reoccurring technical and aesthetic choice locates my practice,

and my research, firmly within the context that it seeks to understand. This embeddedness reflects the situated and responsive nature of a feminist epistemic that functions through mutual influence: I respond to the context I work in at the same time that I acknowledge how my work is shaped by that context. Writing in *The Routledge Companion to Research in the Arts*, Henk Borgdorff states: ‘works of art and artistic practices are not self-contained; they are situated and embedded. The meaning of art is generated in interactions with relevant surroundings’ (Borgdorff, 2011 p.47). By deploying the techniques and technologies of relationships, I am able to investigate *how we are together* in ways that are embedded, surrounded by and interacting with these conditions. The corruption of objective data through this artistic meddling is important to the process, or irrelevant, depending on perspective: I am a product of my times, already entangled with the practices of relation that this project responds to. It is for this reason (and with this in mind) that artistic research provides a crucial insight into contemporary practices of relation mediated by the internet.

Within my own artistic research, weaving describes the interaction of various components of my methods and process: the interactions between artistic output and desk research as well as between the elements of each. The following section further expands on weaving as artistic research by exploring the methods of my artistic practice – conversation, exchange and performance – using specific examples from the body of artworks that accompany this thesis. Here, it is important to emphasise that the conceptual movement of weaving outlined above moves into the practical processes that are at the centre of this project. Conversations, for example, are understood to weave ideas with others, to pull at the threads of each other’s perspectives and take strands away to weave into our own work, which warp with the new frictions these threads bring. The metaphorical language describes the actual process, but also tethers the practical actions to the conceptual project.

In the previous chapter, I stressed that many of the terms central to this project are both concrete and conceptual objects. Terms such as network, interface, or performance refer to concrete actions or physical systems as well as to the more effusive theories or conditions. This doubling is intrinsic to the approach I will outline here: the weaving between practice and theory,

between disciplines. This is symptomatic of the 'promiscuous traffic' of performance studies referenced by Derek Conquergood in the epigraph of this chapter. He writes:

[The] promiscuous traffic between different ways of knowing carries the most radical promise of performance studies research. Performance studies struggles to open the space between analysis and action, and to pull the pin on the binary opposition between theory and practice. (2002 p.145)

Here, Conquergood highlights the methodological promise and potential of performance studies: the epistemological terms and possibilities of movement within the apparent opposition of theory and practice. In my project, the generative value of this movement is tied to its potential for performing feminist modes of knowledge through generosity and dissonance. The excerpts from the scripts to performances that are present through this thesis mark this approach, challenging the easy clarification of ideas through language, instead providing an approach to ideas that enable them to spin out in possible meanings. They weave: weaving, as artistic and epistemological model, is a way to 'pull the pin' – as Conquergood writes – while at the same time enabling friction between theory and practice.

This counter or parallel generation of knowledge is – for my work as well as Kember, Zylinska and the other theorists I discuss here – rooted in a feminist project that seeks to interrogate how knowledge is generated by extending what constitutes our knowledge-making practices. For Kember and Zylinska, the epistemic implications and applications of the insights provided by practice is central to their work. Writing about their collaboration research process in *Interfaces of Performance* (Chatzichristodoulou *et al.*, 2009), they demonstrate how their 'creative media' are a 'creative/critical practice' that intervenes in media practices (Kember & Zylinska, 2009 p.13). With 'creative media', they entangle artistic methods with media and theory to extend the impact as well as insights of their work. The importance and possibilities of a difference performance of knowledge resonances with my own methods: Kember and Zylinska capture how artistic research is both an investigation into the specific concerns of a project, as well as a means for producing new knowledge through its enactment.

This is key, to both my work and theirs: it is the performative potential of these methods that enables them to generate epistemic interventions in new forms. This is how they ‘produce things’, create insights whose scope exceeds the written analysis that captures it. Addressing imbalances of institutional inscribed power, such as those that surround knowledge, is central to an inclusive intersectional feminism that aims to empower historically suppressed ways of knowing, thinking and generating ideas. In this thesis, this commitment is apparent not only in the practice as research methodology, as the practical application and extension of interrelated approaches to feminist epistemologies. The structure and citational politics of this work extend this: the interludes and the exhibition place the artistic and theoretical aspects of my work on equal footing, as equivalent modes of knowledge making. Further, taking up a central tenet of Sara Ahmed’s *Living a Feminist Life* (2017), attention has been paid to the citational politics of my work: I have chosen to cite women as much as possible, and to focus primarily on artworks by women and people of colour. In form, structure and content, I aim to address the presence of new modes of knowing that extend traditional academic practices and foreground the work of women and people of colour.

Practices of relation

Relation is essential to this project because it signals the ongoing social interactions through which the politics of emotion – wherein the affects generated by interaction gain meaning from their broader cultural and social context – overlap with the systems of internet communication technologies. This attention to relation, and the social practices that frame and instantiate it, are key to the feminist ethos of this work. Through the feminist epistemic lens articulated earlier in this section, this focus on relation clarifies into generosity and dissonance. My artistic research and the accompanying analysis define and apply these terms as key to uniting feminist theories of emotion (Ahmed, 2004; Sedgwick, 2002; Diprose, 2002) with the concerns and contexts of digital ubiquity. They are terms that signal the entangled politics of emotion and technology that occur in social relation situated on the internet. In this

way, my artistic and theoretical considerations of relation can all be understood as practically, as well as conceptually, extending from the feminist epistemological model for 'weaving' outlined above. *how we are together* is, for this thesis, a feminist issue insofar as it requires attention be paid to how we feel and experience that together, and how those feelings are interwoven with a broader power and politics: specifically, here, that of technologies.

Relation, like gender (Butler, 2011), is performative. Relation is generative and ongoing: it is both constituted by its context as well as capable of (re)creating and (re)interpreting the paradigms that produce it. In her book *Beyond Unwanted Sound: Noise, Affect and Aesthetic Moralism* (2017), Marie Thompson expands on Raia Prokhovnik's *The Rational Woman: A Feminist Critique of Dichotomy* (2002) through recent affect theories to emphasise the generative integrity of relation as a feminist mode of knowing and understanding the world (Thompson, 2017 p.44-45). As with the other scholars whose work I weave together here, Thompson centres relation within knowledge production. Further, Thompson emphasises affect within relation as integral to this production. Defining this approach, Thompson highlights the 'productivity' of relation, its necessary process-based quality. She writes:

A relational approach, as the name suggests, begins with the relation, foregrounding its productivity. From a relational perspective, individual entities do not pre-exist their relations; rather, entities are formed and reformed through them. (2017 p.45)

Thompson's assertion that 'entities are formed and reformed through [relation]' echoes Rosalyn Diprose's claim that generosity 'precedes and establishes communal relations but constitutes the self as open to otherness' (2002 p.4). Generosity, for Diprose and here, is not simply relation. It marks a relation, and the formation of the subject through it, with an openness: this openness provides the point at which a social justice that understands and supports difference can begin. To this end, I argue that "practices of relation", a phrase that repeats throughout this thesis, are a feminist issue. They mark the ways in which relationships and feelings interact with social and technological structures; it is through relation that gendered inequities are imposed and it is also through relation that those inequities, and the structures that support them, can be undermined. By practices of relation, I refer to the

repeated actions through which a sense of being together is produced as well as the emotions associated with that practice.

Through focusing on practices of relation, my intention is to emphasise the parallel between personal or social interactions and the technological exchanges. By doing so, my work demonstrates the ways in which the personal has become technological – to rephrase the famous second wave feminist maxim. It is through the repeated practices of our relation with one another through internet communication that the social and digitally technological become imbricated. This is the key relation, that of emotional and technological systems, that this project tracks through its attention to how social practices of relation are occurring. The three interwoven approaches of conversation, exchange and performance formalise practices of relation as artistic strategies for making artwork within ongoing social and cultural processes; within what Raymond Williams refers to as “structures of feeling” (1977). As strategies interwoven with social relation, they enable me to interrogate the constructions as well as tensions and frictions of together. This is key to this project: how relationships are formed or enacted through negotiations of the technological and emotion infrastructures that support them. It is through the efforts of these practices that together is experienced, often as a temporary condition within the context of digital networks, but an important aspect of how mediating technologies have become part of our daily lives.

In practices of relation that occur through the internet, the specific digital processes that surround communications become intertwined with structures of feelings. Williams uses the term to highlight the ongoing processes of the social prior to their stabilisation through cultural interpretation (1977 p.132). Williams’s structures of feelings are the basis of understanding social practice in the present, as systems of relations evolve and adapt to contexts. It is in this present that, I argue, the social and technological relations stick – to use Sara Ahmed’s term (2004 p.89) – to one another. I will return to Ahmed’s stickiness, a term that emphasises the historically situated performative power of emotion. Here, I merely draw attention to how structures of feeling in the present are implicated and entangled within systems (emotional, social, technological) that mediate and enable relation. In

Part 2 of this written thesis, I address these processes through instabilities of site and time afforded by internet-situated performances as they contribute to experiences of being together. Structures of feeling are intended to mark the moving signifiers of experience; a concrete understanding is impossible as these systems continue to operate through the instinctual processes of relation that have yet to be identified formally as culture. Through defining and generating a sense of together that is situated on the internet, artistic practices engage with and respond to contemporary practices of relation. These relations are both generous and dissonant: the shared moments and sites constructed through the effort of relation always already include both an openness to the other as well as the friction of communication.

Williams foregrounds the multiplicity of perspectives and positions that underlines Haraway's situated knowledges and necessitates Bal's travelling concepts. With his structures of feelings, Williams provides a tactic for uniting the conceptual basis of weaving with the practical experiences, with the world as it is felt to be. In *Encountering Affect*, Ben Anderson offers a succinct definition of structures of feelings:

First, a structure of feeling *is* the affective quality that is common across otherwise disparate practices, events or processes. By which I mean that a structure of feeling is one way in which a dispersed collective is gathered and comes to have some form of coherence, if only a temporary one. Second, a structure of feeling gives a kind of unity to a multiplicity through that characteristic affective quality that cuts across, draws together, and holds together disparate practices, events or situations. (2014 p.119, emphasis in original)

As a quality that 'cuts across, draws together', the generative quality of structures of feelings echoes the weaving outlined above. It is the ability of these structures to gather 'a dispersed collective' which is key to their usefulness here. It emphasises the unity found through emotions and affect as experienced socially. Williams's ideas are useful for underlining the ways that social relations, and its (re)iterations, are determined in the present; they build on and repeat past practices, and enable us to imagine future relations. But ultimately, these practices are about how we are together as that experience occurs. I will return to this, and Williams, in Chapter 5 when I use the work of the following chapters to return to together.

By discussing relations and practices of relations, the intention is to come near to these structures while still focusing on the particulars of interactions. Put another way, dissonance and generosity could be understood as instances wherein individual relations are in the process of generating broader social structures of feelings. They do this through the particular instances of together they define. Relation and practices of relation here refers to the ways that relationships are performed through interactions; I will use them both, with the intention that practices of relation underscore the diversity of forms that relation can take.

By using generosity and dissonance to define the practices of relation and structures of feelings associated with these works, it is my intention to outline a critical and interpretative position that is informed by this multiplicity while still claiming its singular position. Aligned with Thompson as well as Diprose, practices of relation are an opportunity for a feminist intervention into the generative possibilities of social relation. Throughout, I will begin with relation as a way of tracking how generosity and dissonance are generated through the relations staged by the various artworks discussed. Whereas generosity focuses on the positive potential of those possibilities, dissonance locates relation in the conflicts of the present. This is vital to any intersectionally feminist project: dissonance pushes forward against the homogenising impact of false utopias, including the negative and friction-filled emotional experiences of diverse groups. It makes space for the experiences that I, as an able-bodied and cisgender white woman, can acknowledge but not articulate. Rather than accounting for the contingency that is central to Haraway and Bal, it enacts it through inclusion of the friction that contingency creates. This is evident in *hurl outward at a certain pace* (A.11), as noise and imagelag capture the friction of mediated relation, and in the blank faces of the audience turned performers in *the point is that it is together/apart* (A.5): their faces belie the boredom that can attend to other relationships. Dissonance emphasises the specific problems that attend to the relations in question: between audiences and artists or performers as well as between people and the technologies that mediate them. The restructuring of an understanding of the relations constituted by a work, with focused attention on

why those relations are constituted and in what manner, is central to my practice. Ultimately, the politics of my work operate at a smaller scale: a feminist weaving that generates dissonance as well as generosity. My work aims to connect a broader political agenda to the intimate and informal interactions of conversations or one to one web-based performances.

III. WEAVING: conversation, exchange, performance

My artistic practice as research proceeds from three main artistic methods – performance, exchange, conversations – which overlap within the body of work that accompanies this thesis. These methods, and their simultaneous use, interweave different qualities of relation through the practical process with which each artwork is created. Baz Kershaw writes, ‘a profound principle of practice as research in theatre and performance: that its methods always involve the dislocation of knowledge itself’ (Kershaw, 2011 p.84): the following section traces how my project goes about this dislocation and why. With conversation, exchange and performance, I aim to enact the dislocation of an approach to research that is both generous and dissonant in how it accounts for relations and their frictions. Throughout the chapters that follow, I will address how these approaches intersect in the works I created. By clarifying these methods, and specifying how they informed the insights and inquiry of this project, this section makes explicit the relation between theory and practice discussed in this chapter’s first sections. This relationship will also be evident in the analysis that follows, however here I want to emphasise the embodied and practical modes of doing that enabled the insights into site, time and togetherness tracked in the next three chapters. The outcomes of my artistic research, and the critical considerations of those outcomes documented here, provide insights into *how we are together* both in contemporary performance practices that make use of internet communication tools as well as in the relationships that are mediated by those tools. These insights reinforce the connections between artistic and social that are at the centre of performance studies, while also expanding the focus into evolving context of contemporary digital cultures.

what parts of your idea were mine (2016)

In January 2016, I performed with Mira Loew as part of a symposium on feminist collaborations and authorship hosted by Hemera Collective at Guest Projects in London. We were invited to respond to the themes of the symposium as well as to *(Play)ground-less*, a collaboratively created exhibition by artists Sarah Bayliss, María Angélica Madero, Ninna Bohn Pedersen and Belén Zahera at Space in Between, London (2015). Our engagement with *(Play)ground-less* took the form of borrowed images and text stolen from an early draft of their performance, which was performed via iMessage from their various locations (Madrid, London, Copenhagen, Bogotá). *(Play)ground-less* is a collaborative project that actively engages with and performs the particular relationships between the artists involved, and the role of internet communication in facilitating that. I will return to *(Play)ground-less* in Chapter 5, to discuss their virtual reality installation *Hollow Tongues* (2017). However, I want to focus here on how our collaborative, and separate, modes of operating engage with the practices of conversation, exchange and conversation that I will elaborate on in this section.

For the event, we created a performance with three main components. A video, created using materials from Loew and my ongoing exchanges and images contributed by the artists in *(Play)ground-less*, played on a large screen at the front of the space. Loew moved through the space, photographing herself positioned in relation to me, the audience, as well as the various artworks in the gallery (see A.7; Figure 2.2 on the following page). I performed a text that I had written, in collaboration with Loew, based on our email exchanges. Since the beginning of our collaboration in 2013, one central aspect of our shared practice has been an ongoing series of email exchanges. Each is numbered (eg. 'exchange 1'; 'exchange 2') as well as titled (for example, 'exchange 3: something with gestures' or 'exchange 21: emotional labours, feelings work'). At the time of the performance in January 2016, we were on 'exchange 20: systems of knowing vs perceiving'; as I complete the thesis in late 2017, we are on 'exchange 26: bodies are sticky'.



Figure 2.2 – *what parts of my idea* (2016). Jane Frances Dunlop and Mira Loew. Image: Rafa Prada. Permission to reproduce this image has been granted by Rafa Prada. See Appendix A.7.

Other artworks produced as part of my artistic research more explicitly interrogate the technologies that mediate relations; however, my collaboration with Mira Loew enables me to situate those insights in ongoing practices of relation that we have formalised as artistic tactics. My collaboration with Mira Loew is an important and ongoing strand of my practice, and material addressed in other works interweaves our shared artistic outputs with my independent work. For instance: the image that is the backdrop on my computer is from a work called *Elephants* (2015). Mira sent me an early version of the work in February 2015, which I made my desktop. As my desktop is a central site of my work, Mira's work appears constantly in my own: one of the many ways our shared practice entangles our solo works. For this reason, using a line from one of my performances (*exercises in long distance charisma*) as the title for one we collaborated on (*what parts of your idea were mine*) was an appropriate way to capture the movement of ideas between authors that the excerpt narrates.

This instability of ownership performs one function of generosity and its openness, as it enables ideas to have second (third, fourth, and so on) lives as they are given onto new projects and contexts. It is an example of generative possibilities weaving, whereby the movement of artistic research

binds the influences and effects of one part of the project into contact with another. Being generous with ideas becomes a means for enabling their circulation, which in turn interweaves projects, contexts and peoples. This is one facet of the conversational openness of the works I create and focus on. It gestures to the repetition with difference that is performance. The repetition with difference is also how performance is able to create change, to reconstitute collectively held practice in a new way. This occurs here on a very small scale, one idea changed slightly as a line migrates from an ostensibly solo work to become the title of a shared project. It both binds the two projects together and remakes the thought anew. It is this movement, a discourse that wanders from subject to subject both in its movement between Loew and myself as the subjects whose interrelation grounds the work as well as in the particular material addressed by the work.

Much of the text in *what parts of my idea were yours* is based on email exchanges and prior performances. One particular segment addresses, anecdotally as well as performatively, the effort to emphasise the movement of ideas over the potential ownership of them:

Early in our emails,
And we work through emails,
With them.
Exchanges
An ongoing accumulation.
The always mixing together of life,
Of feelings
Of fears and triumphs,
With the exercises
and actions of thinking
And making work
Which are,
anyways
almost the same.
Early,

In exchange 5: from space to place
(and each exchange is numbered & titled
while making this performance we finished
exchange 20)
which is called 'systems of knowing vs perceiving'
early in our exchanges, someone wrote:

I've been thinking about authorship. Do we co-author everything
when we collaborate? So, do I become a photographer & do you become a
writer?

Reading about intermediality & space & mobility.

Last thing I wrote in my notebook was

COLLABORATION IS A WAY OF MOVING IN SPACE.

Which I am now contemplating.

And so, this is a performance about that.

About how we move ideas for and with one another. (See A.7)

In the performance, it is not important who specifically wrote that email and who received it. Rather, the performance answers the question of the email by dispersing the authorship with 'someone': either of us. In the performance, Loew moves through the gallery taking photographs as she positions herself in space. For this reason, it is perhaps clear who the writer is, if they are not the photographer. *what parts of your idea are mine* demonstrates one instance where the approaches of exchange; conversation; and performances overlap within my work. The work brings attention to the possibility of authorship but refuses to declare it. In doing so, the performance – and the practice it comes out of – labours to hold our relation and inevitably also presents our separation. This is openness and also difference, generosity and also dissonance.

The first and second sections of this chapter make explicit how specific feminist epistemological theories form the basis of weaving as a feminist artistic research methodology, both practically and theoretically. In weaving, the conceptual and practical intertwine as the overarching line of inquiry that unites this project develops. Here, I look in more detail at different aspects of

my artistic research process, to identify more specifically how the operations of my artistic research can interrogate *how we are together*. I outline how conversation, exchange and performance occur separately, and together, in my artistic approaches and situate these methods within the context of other artists. This is a way of tracing how my specific methods engage in what Baz Kershaw frames as the 'vertiginous traverse between discursive and embodied ways of becoming/being, doing epistemologies and creating ontologies' that is central to practice as research (Kershaw, 2011 p.84). Conversations serve as origin points for the creating of performative works, as performances themselves and as central method for data collection in the informal interviews and reflective conversations. Exchanges are processes that generate material as well as performing relation online and in real-life. They are formalised structures that guide exchanges and distinguish them from conversations. The performances and performative artworks respond to the insights of the exchanges and conversations while also attempting to maintain the generative and discursive movement that characterises these practices of relation.

Conversations

Conversations can be a site: one is "in" conversation with others. Conversations are also subject to multiple owners; I have a conversation with you, you have one with me (although we might imagine ourselves to be having different conversations). As a tactic used in my artistic research, conversation refers to the informal process of discussion that is often framed by specific social relationships and contexts. Positioned as a starting point for artistic enquiry, conversation brings social exchange to bear on developing ideas. It interweaves the relationships and discussions of daily life with the processes of artistic development. Prior to the performances in the third section of *the point is that it is together/apart* (A.5), I had long conversations with each of the participants about relationships: ours specifically, more generally, and those mediated by the internet. These conversations centred on emotion and the complicities of digital relationships, framing both the context of my performance and also influencing my early understanding of this

project. Similarly, the performances that occur side by side in *exercises in long distance charisma* (A.6) are taken from longer conversations with Mira Loew, Jesse Black Mooney and Alanna Dunlop. These conversations created an intimacy of context for the performances in *exercises in long distance charisma*. They were key in situating the works within the overlap of relationships, emotional exchanges and internet communication technologies that is the focus of my research.



Figure 2.3 – *conversation: generosity + collaboration + ethics/intimacy*, hosted during *i'm not done/2* (2015). Hosted by Jane Frances Dunlop and Mira Loew. Image: Mira Loew. See Appendix A.4.

Conversations take on various forms in my practice. Firstly, conversations occur as informal collective performances, where a discussion is staged as an event in which people can move between participation and spectatorship. Drawing on feminist practices such as consciousness-raising as well as feminist artistic approaches and working in collaboration with Mira Loew (LADA, 2015; Malloy, 2003; Sarachild, 1970; Weaver, Ongoing), I have developed a model for hosting events that centre around a conversation informed by a single topic. These conversational models stage the 'collective groping' that Mieke Bal identifies as a strategy of interdisciplinary research (2002 p.11), and enables me to interweave the perspectives of others in my

own work. The attention in consciousness-raising to the personal as politically important, the anecdotal and subjective as embedded in a broader politic is central to the approach of my practice. Secondly, conversation is used in my video chat performance as a reflective practice before and after, in lieu of formal interviews: this was the case with *the point is that it is together/apart* (A.5) and *exercises in long distance charisma* (A.6). Conversations have a loose structure and may or may not actually relate to the performances they frame. Alongside self-interviews (conversations with myself), they have been a primary mode of reflective research informing the artistic outputs collected to accompany this thesis.

Conversation suggests a familiarity and intimacy that my work and many of the works I will discuss trade on. Often I have existing relationships with those I perform for, which influences the intimacy of the performance and subsequent conversation. This is the case with *exercises in long distance charisma* (A.6) also with *the point is that it is together/apart* (A.5), in which I perform for five different friends. Sometimes, conversation is simply conversation: those conversations had in public or private that inform one's thinking and provide the catalysts for new lines of thought. Both the conversations as events and the conversations as reflective process often slip into informal conversation, no longer framed by the project but still related to it. Conversation is a tactic that brings the interactions of relation into play with the artistic processes of my research; it enacts the entangled and situated theories of knowledge-making that are the basis of my methodological approach. This produces generative insights into practices of relation that exceed the specificities of my aims, and incorporate the intentionality of others into the artistic research process. Often, points from conversations become anecdotal material in a performance text. The excerpt from the text of *exercises in long distance charisma* considered earlier is one example: 'I think about the conversations we have had, about charisma./That I have had,/Had again /and again' (See A.6). In these ways, conversations are central to bridging the everyday use of communication structures with performance.

In relation to exchanges and performances, conversations are less structured or formalised. Still, as artistic research practices, they require frameworks. The practices I frame as conversation are informed by feminist

practices of consciousness-raising and their influence on artistic practices. Consciousness-raising is a model developed in American Women's Liberation movements in the 1970s. It was a tactic for creating a context where lived experiences of gender oppression, and the emotional impact of those experiences, could be discussed (Sarachild, 1970). It provides another practical model for centring knowledge-making on situated experience. Consciousness-raising is an investigation of how the personal is political; it mobilises the political potential of conversation in order to foreground that connection. It is a practice that not only resonates with the feminist epistemological theories that are the basis of my methodology, but also provides a practical and historical connection between those feminist approaches and artistic practices that make use of conversation with similar intentions.

Consciousness-raising gatherings were straightforwardly organised: they were conversations in which a topic – women's lived experiences – were addressed under the assumption that the insights of lived experience constitute valuable knowledge. Subjective experience, the feelings associated with that experience, as a means towards a broader engagement with a politics of difference is evident in contemporary conversational forms that bear historical and formal relation to consciousness-raising. The focus on practices of relation within this project aims to extend this practice, resituating it within internet communications. For this reason, conversation is a method in my artistic research: it unites the live exchanges of 1970s consciousness-raising with contemporary artistic reimaginings of these methods. Conversation is one way that we are together, and it can be a generous practice when it attends to the resonances and differences between people. It performs relation, constituting it through the exchange of information and thought. As an artistic method, it uses relation to build context through the necessary emphasis on position.

In the Live Art Development Agency (LADA)'s *Are We There Yet? A Study Room Guide on Live Art and Feminism* (2015), 'Long Tables' as well as 'Coffee Tables' and 'Cocktail Seminars' are presented as feminist artistic research tactics, captured in 'How to...' guides that echo Sarachild's 'Programme for Feminist Consciousness-Raising' (1970). The emphasis is

placed on an informal sociality that also creates a context for addressing the particularities of one's relationship to the world. The models laid out in LADA's *Are We There Yet?* all reference social spaces of discussion: a dinner party, coffee in a coffee shop or kitchen, a drink in a bar, to underline the informality of these conversations while also tethering the personal or intimate private space to the politics of discourse. The conversations I host, often in collaboration with Mira Loew, explicitly reference the model created by Lois Weaver for *Long Tables* (Ongoing); Figure 2.3 on p.103 was taken during a conversation we hosted together for *i'm not done//2* (A.4). The framework for Weaver's *Long Table* is available online; she closes a *Long Table* by urging others to make use of the form (Weaver, 2015). Weaver's template for a *Long Table* frames the conversation as performance; the first point on 'The Long Table Etiquette' list that accompanies the template online and is handed out at the event, reads 'This is a performance of a dinner party conversation' (Weaver, Ongoing). When conducting similar events (which I have done independently as well as with Mira Loew), I often project or circulate a list of guidelines: taking inspiration from Weaver, this provides a frame that offers clarity to those present about how they can engage or disengage with the event.

Weaver's *Long Table* is one example of a how conversation might be deployed as both artwork and feminist epistemic mode, a way to collectively interrogate ideas. There are many other examples of semi-structured conversation that forms a central part of the ongoing exchanges of contemporary artists. Within London alone, there are various reading groups and casually regular events where artists host one another to interrogate the terms of their work. At Chisenhale Dance Space, there are the ongoing Coffee Mornings: originally instigated by Gillie Klieman, these are informal conversations hosted by different artists on various themes. Slightly more structured is *Hotline*, an informal and itinerant performance/discussion event hosted by artists Jamila Johnson-Small and Sara Sassanelli. These practices are a testament to how conversation is important, for creating a social means for knowledge to be made, to circulate, to impact.

As with the feminist art practices laid out in LADA's guide, spaces of discussion have been the impetus of feminist internet art practices. A central

example is the FACES listserv, which was instigated through a series of dinners under the title 'Face Settings' hosted by Kathy Rae Hoffman and Eva Wohlgenuth beginning in 1996 (Malloy, 2003). These dinners were staged as an opportunity for women to discuss their relationship with contemporary technologies and how women could or did situate themselves in networked art practices. I argue that these conversational models operate as mode of, and rehearsal for, performative generosity in exchanges and performances. More recently, the Berlin-based collective ON/OFF's Conference Calls (Hugill, 2015) provides a web-based example of conversation as an artistic and discursive approach.

If generosity is an openness through which a person is implicated in – giving to and receiving from – a social context, then conversation is a discursive instance of that. Generosity is generated and enacted in conversations that are not aimed towards a discursivity of thoughts and ideas. Even in contexts where conversation formalises around a single theme, such as in Lois Weaver's *Long Tables* or the conversations I host, those themes operate as a starting point. They are addressed, pursued, interpreted or ignored as those participating feel is best. Conversations enact the feminist epistemology framed earlier through Donna Haraway and Mieke Bal. They weave different perspectives into collectively held knowledge, held together by generosity and creating dissonance. Conversation provides both a source of material as well a reflective process that gestures to the possibilities and difficulties of a relational and multi-vocal forms of knowledge.

Exchanges

Exchanges refer to processes of producing material and performing relation existing between small (usually two) groups of people. This aspect of my artistic research aims to formalise conversation – as an aspect of relation – into a tactic for generating artistic material. It also connects most explicitly to the operations of the network: information sent between two (perhaps more) nodes, or points. Exchanges are structured systems, with specified pathways that reproduce practices of relation as artistic processes. This mobilises the dissonance and generosity of relation as artistic and aesthetic tools. Unlike

conversations, these exchanges are not open to input from anyone. They can occur over a long duration and include time for pause and consideration between responses. Exchanges, as I will define them for this project, invariably occur in archive-able media (email, letters, audio recordings, blog posts) that can then be used to trace the progression of ideas. In artistic practices, the structure of an exchange is often organised through guidelines that influence format, length, location and duration. They operate in various degrees of private and public visibility, as well as various intensities of formalisation. Through exchange, the accumulating materials of daily relationships within digital ubiquity become the material for artistic research and artworks. As discussed in the previous chapter, this alters the ephemerality of performance; performance, in internet-situated contexts, is instead characterised by how it remains.

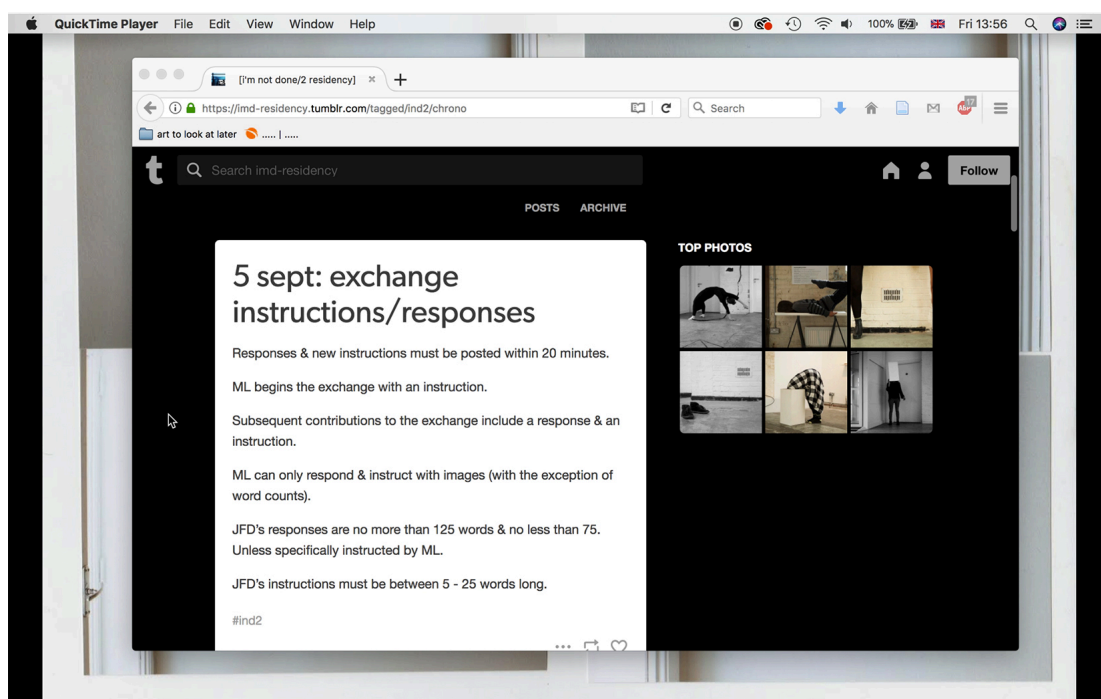


Figure 2.4 –screengrab from ‘exchange’ with Mira Loew for *i’m not done/2* (2015). Jane Frances Dunlop & Mira Loew. See Appendix A.4.

On the site <http://exchange-exchange.tumblr.com/>, I conduct ongoing public exchanges with photographer Mira Loew (a selection is archived in Appendix A.2; see Figure 2.4). The exchanges collected there are clearly formalised. They begin with parameters for what will be exchanged, with what kind of frequency and for how long. These exchanges exist as self-contained

works, each an instance where a particular theme and approach was explored. Besides being contained works, these exchanges also become the material of performances and performative artworks; this is the case with 'closing', the performance for the final night of *i'm not done//2* (see A.4). These exchanges are confined by parameters about who contributes what. They have a set location (usual somewhere public, where they could be witnessed in real life as well as online) and a shorter duration.

Exchanges generate material and capture thinking on a given subject at a particular time. The materials generated can be used as part of another work (the title *hurl outward at a certain pace* (A.11) comes from an exchange titled *#fastness* that Mira Loew and I conducted in summer 2016), or as the catalyst for a new exchange or project. However, each exchange is also its own work. As with conversations, social discourse is foregrounded as a defining feature of these works. The exchanges conducted as part of our residency with *i'm not done//2* at Guest Projects are a clear example of the interrelation between conversation, exchange and performance (see A.4). During three days of the residency, Loew and I conducted daily exchanges. We traded material every twenty minutes; the images and words produced taking the form of questions, instructions or responses. The three exchanges became the basis of a performance for the closing evening of the exhibition: the images created formed part of a video sequence which I performed a text comprised of pieces of writing from the three exchanges: 'closing', part of Appendix A.4, documents this performance and the video projection. The exchanges, however, continue to exist as an independent work alongside the performance that is based on them. They are an artefact of a particular period of interrelation between Mira and myself. They document the emotional and affective experience of that relationship by capturing, sequentially and with time stamps, how we were together through both the physical space of the gallery as well as the digital space of our Tumblr at <http://exchange-exchange.tumblr.com/>.

The practices that I will refer to as exchanges are anticipated by collaborative art projects located in early network communication technologies such Roy Ascott's *Le Plissure du Text* (1983) and Douglas Davis's *The World's First Collaborative Sentence* (1994). While these projects do not rely

on the specific and intimate exchanges, as my own practice and the more contemporary examples that I will address, they anticipate the kinds of work I will focus on in the attention to communication process as a generative site of collective artistic production. Both are framed by parameters that are informed by the technology as well as by the project's intention. Both are collectively authored texts in which participants respond to the work of the last person, thus continuing the project through formalised responses.

Ascott's *Le Plissage du Text* is a narrative authored in French and English, written from fourteen different locations with individuals in each location taking on different characters. Davis's *The World's First Collaborative Sentence* is an online collaboratively written sentence that began in 1994 and was 'restored' and presented – with link rot and missing text – at the Whitney in 2013. Both demonstrate an early attention in net art practices to how new technologies could facilitate unity through participation. Similarly to Galloway and Rabinowitz's *Hole-in-Space* (1980), the connective potentiality of a communication network takes centre stage in these works. Importantly, these works were created in the very early stages of the internet (or prior to, in the case of Galloway and Rabinowitz). They emphasise an ability to connect, a generosity both in contributions to the work but also as a locus for relation.

Unlike conversations, exchanges operate at a remove from daily social interaction. They impose an artistic framework on social discourse, so that its processes can become the material of a work. However, exchanges do not edit that material: they present it in its totality. This is key to what distinguishes it from performance. Exchange, as I have defined it here, is very much a product of contemporary internet communication. It collects and represents the results of processes that would have previously been confined to private correspondences. These processes restage communication practices situated on the internet. This restaging constitutes a method for creating work that is firmly embedded in a contemporary postdigital context and creates works that are in active dialogue with the real life digital practices and contexts of interrelations.

Performances

Performance is a definable art form, with a history of practices and conventions (some of which I discuss in the previous chapter). Within the artistic research methods I outline here, performance is a way of mobilising exchange and conversation that accentuates their generative qualities. In the previous chapter, I address performance from a conceptual perspective. I specifically focus on presence, as well as social and ethical in the context of internet communications. In the remainder of the thesis, I will use the examples developed through my artistic research and those taken from contemporary artists to address the different ways that experiences of togetherness are achieved in internet-situated artworks. These are performances and performative artworks that are often a product of the processes of exchange and conversation described above. Exchange and conversation can operate as discrete processes, as formal or informal methods for extending internet communication practices artistically. Performance, within my artistic research, emphasises interpersonal relation: it unfolds as a process experienced by multiple people from multiple perspectives, including that of the performer or the artist who necessarily addresses their audience (more and less explicitly). It is also why I use performance to describe these artworks, because their meaning and effect is generative and contingent on the relation between performer and audience they stage.

Artworks that are internet-situated tend towards performance because their engagement with processes renders them performative, generative. As already discussed, performance's proximity to everyday life is both the source of its artistic strength as well as its definitional confusion. Performance, as Richard Schechner demonstrates over the course of his seminal text *Performance Theory* (2003), is a diffuse category of events that is united not by liveness but rather through a relation to social practice that is ritualised or organised. One of the 'tentative' definitions Schechner provides for performance is '*[r]itualized behavior conditioned/permeated by play*' (2003 p.99, emphasis in original). He emphasises performance's relationship to social life as being one of both critique and idealisation, writing that

performance's 'social function is to stand apart from ordinary life, both idealizing it [...] and criticizing it' (Ibid. p. 14). This definition underlines the proximity of performance art practices to the real world, a nearness that is at the basis of performance studies as a discipline. That performance is lifelike is what enables it to intervene in social practices, that it is not life is how it offers an interruption to those same practices.

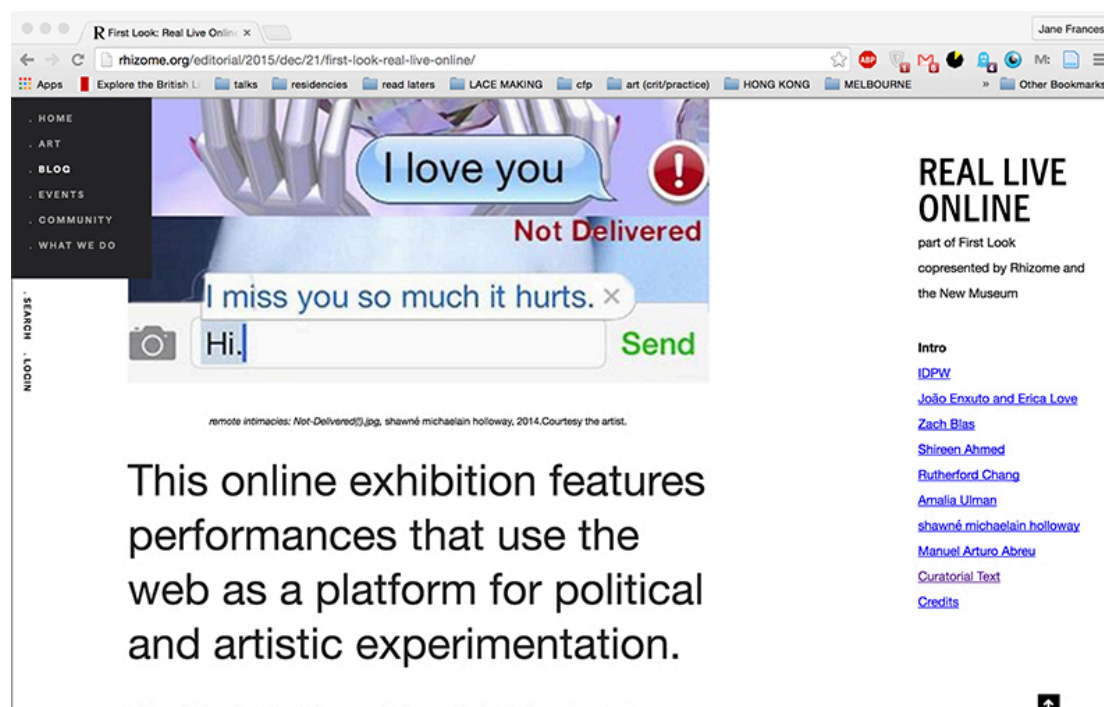


Figure 2.5 – screengrab of *Real Live Online* (2015) curated by Lucas G. Pinheiro and Devin Kenny. Screengrab by the author on 14 November 2017. Permission to reproduce this image has been granted by Rhizome.

Expanding Schechner's consideration of performance to the particulars of artistic practices that make use of the tropes of contemporary life online, performance as 'ritualized behaviour permeated with play' is demonstrated in the clear reference to the daily behaviours and "real life" practices the works reference. *Real Live Online* (2015) was an exhibition of performances presented by the internet art site Rhizome (see Figure 2.5). Lucas G. Pinheiro and Devin Kenny, in their curatorial statement for *Real Live Online*, use performance to describe art practices as well as social dramaturgies – that is, conventions of social discourse and relation – occurring online. From November 2015 to January 2016, the internet art site Rhizome hosted *Real Live Online* on its front page. The exhibition included eight works of 'live and

documented net performance’ and defined performance as ‘an expansive category that includes many aspects of everyday internet usage, from live-streaming gameplay to online relationships’ (Real Live Online, 2015). This definition of performance – an expansive category – appropriately meshes performance as a social function with its artistic practices.

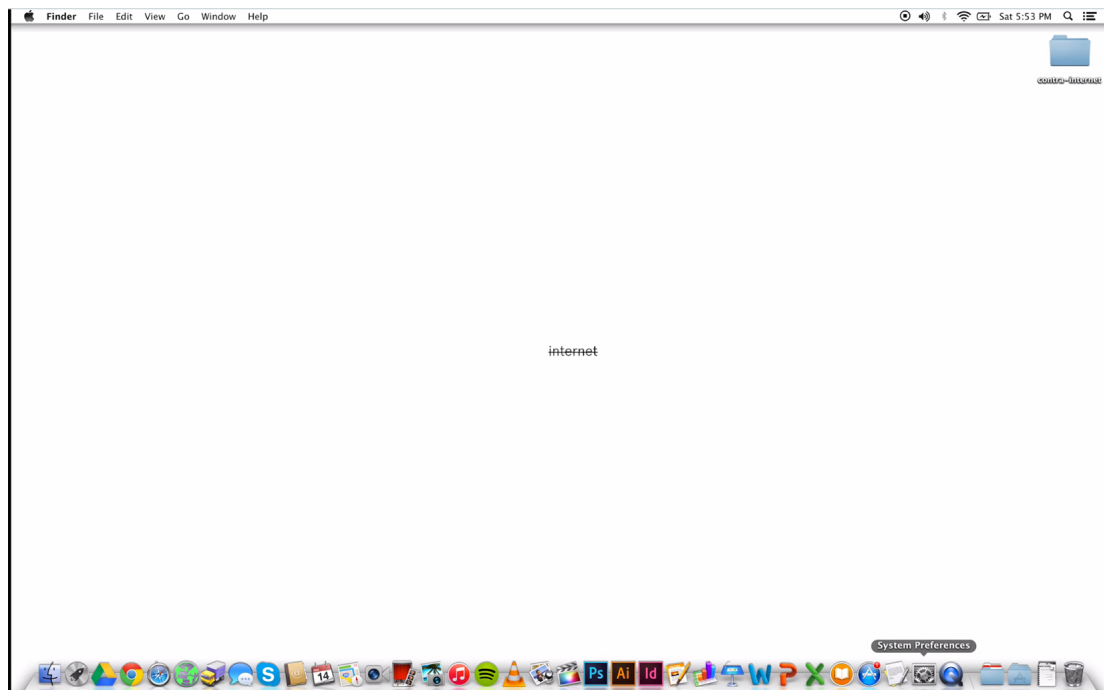


Figure 2.6 – still from *Contra-Internet Inversion Practice #1: Constituting an Outside (Utopian Plagiarism)* (2015) by Zach Blas. Permission to reproduce this image has been granted by Zach Blas.

Zach Blas’s *Contra-Internet Inversion Practice #1: Constituting an Outside (Utopian Plagiarism)* (2015), for example, is a desktop capture that resembles a standard research workflow: iTunes opens, a song is selected and starts to play while the spectator watches a copy and paste exercise performed on several texts (see Figure 2.6). Setting aside the textual content, the actions performed create a choreography that is on one hand recognisable as “work at the computer” while also performing a stylisation of that process: work at the computer as desktop choreography. Blas, in this performative video presented as a performance online by Rhizome, demonstrates how contemporary internet-situated performances play with the behaviours that occur on computers and on the internet.

Performance is generative and reiterative: dissonance is produced in the frictions between repeating performances and proximal performers. It is the marker of the particularity of the interrelation that is enacted by any one performance in its particular time. This is not to restate Peggy Phelan's assertion that performance necessarily disappears (1993 p.146), but rather to emphasise the generative quality of performance that asserts the past into the future through its re-enactment in the present, its particular now. In internet-situated performance, the sense of multiplying, layering, crossing times – remaining through performative re-enactment that Rebecca Schneider theorises in *Performing Remains: Art and War in Times of Theatrical Reenactment* (2011) – is evident on the transient screen sites that these performances travel between. Schneider writes that 're-enactment as a performance practice appears to "take place" in time, live, even as times that take place are given to be multiple, layered, or crossed' (Schneider, 2011 p.90). Schneider's re-enactment, and its particular or tricky relationship to time, site and liveness are useful for thinking through the repetition that is the same and yet different in much internet-situated performance art. Internet-situated performance practices provide a further expansion of Schneider's work, as they reposition performance in the real, digital world of internet ubiquity.

This is exemplified in the desktop capture performances, such as my *exercises in long distance charisma* (A.6, see Figure 2.7 on the following page) or in Blas's *Contra-Internet Inversion Practice* (Blas, 2015; see Figure 2.6 on p.112), which take place in a specific site that is able to repeat within the screen space. The audience and performer are present together in a shared moment that exists in asynchronous times. Each playing of the video re-enacts on someone's desktop the event that occurred on mine, on Blas's. It is both analogous with and yet more complex than documentation as if one desktop overlays another. When I watch Blas's video on my computer, the desktop over laying mine temporarily renders it his. A performance is occurring on my computer, one in which Blas re-performs his actions on my screen. The sites and shared moments are multiple and layered. It is not simply documentation but ritualised repetition with a difference: as you watch *exercises in long distance charisma* (A.6), your screen becomes mine. Of

course, it is not *actually* mine, but with the presence of my background and folders, of a cursor re-performing movements controlled by me, also it is not *actually* yours anymore. It is the site of my actions, re-performing a performance I did before and will do again. Rather than claiming these works as documentations of single performances, the overlaying of screen on screen re-performs the presence of the performer that confirms a particular relationship with the spectator. We are still present together at one event, but presence here means, and makes its affects, in a particular way.

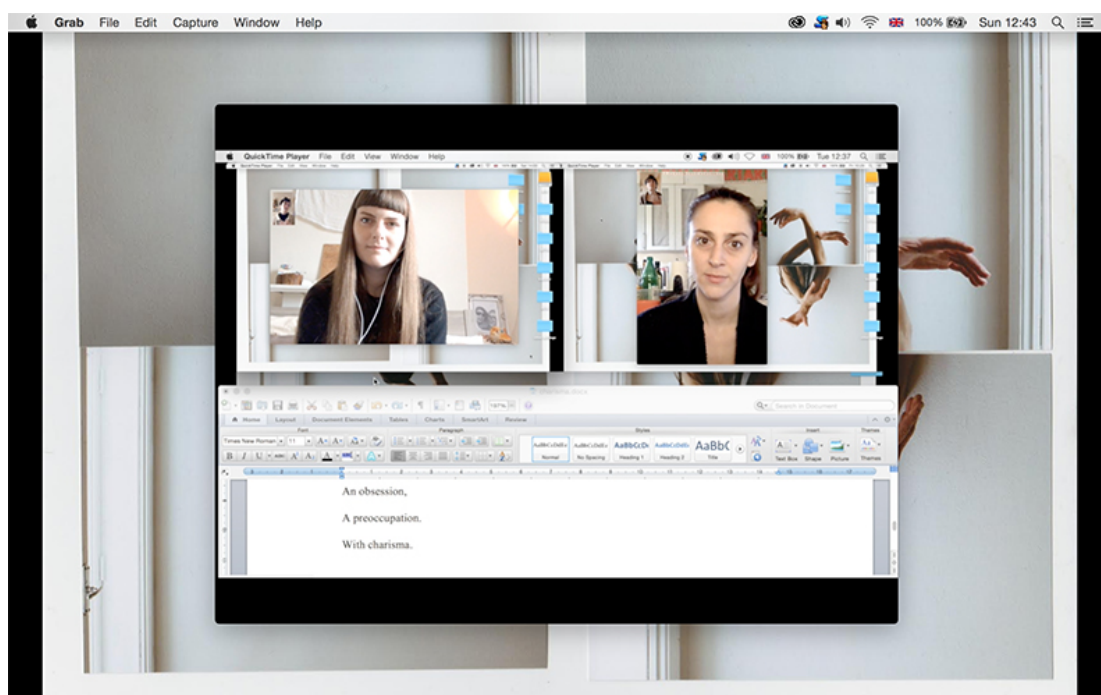


Figure 2.7 – still from *charisma (for jbm & ml)* (2016). Jane Frances Dunlop. See Appendix A.6

The re-enactment of performance takes on new dimensions as its repetition starts to circulate between the screens of our various devices. In internet-situated performance, an event reoccurs in its digital form; and perfect copies of original performances can be replayed with all their imperfections. This shifts the terms of presence, our presence for one another, as well as the ways in which an instance (social or artistic performance) repeats. Performance is a politically powerful art form because of its generative power; it is able to reiterate as well as provide new iterations. This is why how and where a performance repeats is important: the

repetitions, the (re)iterations, of internet-situated performance bring the impacts of digital technologies forward into the future.

The sense of multiplying, layering, crossing times is evident on the transient screen sites that these performances travel between. Rebecca Schneider, in *Performing Remains* (2011), investigates performance's tricky relationship with time through a focus on practices of re-enactment. Re-enactment is a performance practice that 'appears to "take place" in time, live, even as times that take place are given to be multiple, layered, or crossed' (Schneider, 2011, p. 90). Schneider's re-enactment, and its particular impacts on time, site and liveness are useful for thinking through the repetition occurs in much internet-situated performance art. This is best exemplified in the desktop capture performances, such as my own *exercise in long distance charisma* (see A.6) and *minor fabrics* (A.8) or in Zach Blas's *Contra-Internet Inversion Practice #1* (2015), which take place in a specific at once that is, and is not, repeating with each re-playing the video. Performance here includes the performative works that document digital performances such as those captured through desktop recording; all of the works I focus on are always negotiating the relationship between the performer or artist and the spectator. They do so through direct and indirect references to materials generated through exchange and conversation, locating social discourse in their process of production. In the context of internet-situated artworks, performances often occur in what *feel/s* like the same time. This is one of the ways, a key way, in which performance touches up against social life in internet-situated milieus.

Exchange and conversation are often interwoven with performance in the artworks I create. Even when they are not explicitly so, this approach still informs my work. It is the social relation implied, differently, by each of these approaches that is central to my practice and this project. In contemporary internet-situated contexts, it becomes clear that performance is able to construct the feeling of together. Historically, being in a shared space was a requirement of performance, a pre-condition to its operation. Roselee Goldberg, in *Performance: Live Art 1909 to Present*, states it is an artwork that is happening for the audience and the performer at the same time (1979,

p.98), a definition that my project actively works to complicate. However, Goldberg's definition – echoing Peggy Phelan – emphasises the importance of the relation between audience and performer in a work of performance, even as the terms of that relation evolve. The encounter's proximity to social life, to the contexts and formulations of our conversations and exchanges, is how performance becomes situated on the internet. The way that these performances generate a sense of together, across dispersed sites and temporalities, enables these performances to enrich our understandings of the technologies that mediate our daily lives. This is what enables my work to interweave the artistic with the daily processes through which we practice relation. And, this is how friction enters, as the tensions of relations and malfunctions of mediation become part of the materials that construct a work.

In the following chapters, I will focus on a critical analysis of specific examples from my own work as well as the work of others; in these analyses, the approaches outlined here will provide the basis for understanding how practices of relation weave into processes of art-making. Together, they provide a set of methods that emphasise discursive relations. Each differently highlights the way information, understanding and perspective move between position. In this way, they are able to create and cultivate the weaving that is so important here. Ideas move in conversations, change form in exchanges, are encountered in performance. This movement, this weaving, is often what renders the artworks I will discuss as performance or performative; they rely on the presence of audience and artist to form their practice of relation, inevitably generating further threads to trace. Robin Nelson, in *Practice as Research in the Arts*, writes that conceptual debate provides two key functions for artistic research processes: 'defamiliarization and affirmation' (Nelson, 2013 p.31). Key to my work in the next section is indicating the practical re-purposing and actioning of conceptual frameworks as the structures and impetus of practice as research. This is an important part of the contributions of this thesis, as its insights are developed from the 'defamiliarization and affirmation' made possible by an interweaving of practice with analysis. It is the tension, the friction, between the elements of

this work that enables my research to intervene in our understandings of *how we are together* on the internet.

It is through these approaches, and the ability they afford me to weave between the social and the artistic, that I am able to address the questions related to *how we are together* that frame this project. In order to understand the ways performative art practices shaped and forged within internet-situated contexts, it is necessary to both understand and participate in the social practices that constitute that context. These approaches enable me to do so, while also opening the project up to practices of relation that exceed those digital technologies that mediate them. It is through engagement with the functions of broader social structures in the internet that it becomes possible to understand how social relationships are formed and enacted within the technological and emotional infrastructures that support them. Ulises A. Mejias states: 'Our tools shape our ways of acting, knowing, and being in the world, but some of their influence can unfold without our consent or even awareness, and this determinism is particularly dangerous' (2013 p.xiv-xv). Donna Haraway, with credit to Marilyn Strathern, moves this further when she writes, 'It matters what ideas we use to think other ideas' (2016 p.34). Together, generosity and dissonance operate as practices of relation that address the affective and emotional terms generated by communication and exchange, while also situating relation (and the practices of conducting relationships, be it through performance or in real life) within a broader cultural discourse.

Interlude

Create a series of circles,

gestures toward my own presence,

presence particular that might be extrapolated

that is, extended,

pulled apart

into presence general.

My general relation with myself, with the site I move in,

spin in the small room of one gallery trying to understand what it is that moves off
and out from me,

send threads

out and through

the systems used to connect back with myself,

tripping through and with the language that frames the persistent exchanges of our
daily navigations out and back

through the spaces of these places we put ourselves into, so where do I go when I
come back round to myself?

From *hurl outward at a certain pace* (A.11)

PART 2: CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Chapter 3. Sites: proximity as where we are together

In this chapter, *how not to perform* (A.3) and *hurl outward at a certain pace* (A.11) are the key examples from my practice.

[Site's] model is not a map but an itinerary, a fragmentary sequence of events and actions through spaces... (Kwon, 2004 p.26)

Proximity, not objectivity, becomes an epistemological point of departure and return. (Conquergood, 2002 p.149)

Rhiannon Armstrong's *The International Archive of Things Left Unsaid* (2015) is a repository for secrets, using sound to create a slow-moving site of intimacy and secrecy that counters the usual pace of the digital relation. The Japanese art collective IDPW's *The Internet Bedroom* (2015) was part of the online exhibition of performances *Real Live Online* (2015), discussed in Chapter 2. In *Internet Bedroom*, strangers shared a bedroom over twenty-four hours as they slept together via videofeeds. In the resulting 1446 minutes of recording, often indecipherable shapes move in the pixelating video that documents a strange intimacy, uncomfortable to witness as it creates a composite practice of relation that confuses lines of private-public space public in augmented reality. In these works, the unique impact that internet-situated relation has on performance, and on *how we are together*, is apparent as these sites are constructed between multiple locations. These shared but dispersed performance sites alert us to the shifting possibilities of relations within digital ubiquity. Throughout this chapter, I consider a variety of artworks that use site-responsiveness in ways that challenge the easy or invisible operations of internet-mediated communications.

As the examples above and others discussed here will demonstrate, internet-situated performances rely on site. They produce a sense of relation through the construction of a shared site predicated, often, through exchanges that operate as performances. They expand the definition of site by constituting that particular "site" from multiple geographic locations: the distributed site of a networked together. A generous intentionality brings a site together; it is the friction of a composite of different positions making that together dissonant. The generosity and dissonance operating in these

artworks bring an audience's attention to how relationships are sited within digital communication systems. They highlight how site produces a sense of together; constructed both technologically and emotionally, this "shared site" provides a new way of performing relations. Expanding upon the work of Ulises J Mejias and Eve K Sedgwick, in this chapter I demonstrate how the proximity that operates in the formation of these shared sites represents a feminist intervention into mediated relations. The sites of internet-situated performance are produced through frictions that are consequence of dispersed positionalities. They are a product of the ways in which together is haunted, sticky with past association.

In this chapter, I will clarify how internet-situated artworks are situated; how they locate themselves, their audiences and their performers in the internet. The artworks discussed here make sites that are composite digital landscapes predicated on, and producing, a feeling of being together. These artworks construct sites that can be best understood as a contemporary example of site-specific art practices. This offers a unique perspective on how contemporary art practices engage with the internet. Internet-situated artworks, this chapter will argue, demonstrate how the feeling of being together in augmented reality is performed through sites of proximity. By this, I mean that the distributed site of an artwork is constituted through the proximity it mediates between disparate locations (and often, disparate times; however, I will explore how a shared time functions within internet situated performance in the next chapter).

To do this, I will expand upon practices of relation through a consideration of the sites (geographical locations, websites, browser windows, small and large screen devices) that these relations are occurring on and through. This chapter focuses on an analysis of artworks drawn from contemporary artists: Rhiannon Armstrong's *The International Archive of Things Left Unsaid* (2015); Sofiane & Selma Ouissi's *Les Yeux D'Argos* (2014); IDPW's *The Internet Bedroom* (2015) as well as *how not to perform* (see Appendix A.3) and *hurl outward at a certain pace* (A.11), examples from my artistic research. The comparison of the insights from my practice as research with other examples of internet-situated performance demonstrates how contemporary artistic practices produce shared sites despite

geographical and temporal distance. These new sites constitute an artistic response to the ways in which augmented reality expands presence, and how proximity mediated by distributed sites enables a sense of being together marked by dissonance.

Drawing on theoretical precedents from feminist approaches in performance studies (Sedgwick, 2002) and critical digital philosophy (Mejias, 2013), proximity's spatial metaphor provides a framework for understanding how potential resistance or critique operates within and in relation to those systems it challenges. The sites defined through proximity necessarily produce dissonance: this dissonance – technologically and emotional discord – is present in internet-situated relationships as well as in the artistic practices that respond to them. It constructs single sites from separate positions, positing them as a together whose instability and contradiction is precisely the point. The sites of these works are activated through their use, while also being subject to accumulating histories of contact – what Sara Ahmed refers to as a 'stickiness' (2004) – that renders them emotionally significant and historically charged. Ahmed's term draws attention to what accrues to the (re)iterations of meaning, especially emotional meaning. It is through this stickiness that seemingly innocuous feelings reproduce bias; like knowledge, feelings carry historical inequities forward. Thinking through the stickiness of site, and how shared sites can be constructed via generosity and dissonance, is a way of responding to this stickiness. It highlights the plurality (that is, the multiple virtual as well as geographical locations) that operates as the shared sites of internet-situated art; sites are produced through practices of relation that occur in multiple locations. At the same time, it finds a coherence in bringing together the shared site: it is not total contingency, but rather a situated knowing rendered practically as a digital space.

Understanding proximity as an experience of being together emphasises the gap that dissonance operates in. Together here is constituted through a sense of nearness. In being together, there is still the possibility of frictions. Returning to the model of weaving articulated in the previous chapter, proximity can be imagined as the relation between threads in a fabric. Together, bound to one another, but still capable of frictions and gaps; these areas of tension and cohesion produced through the back and forth of

conversations and exchange. The shared sites constituted through my own work and the artworks discussed here provide insights into how this friction contributes to a coherency that includes dissonance in the experience of together it proposes. This understanding of proximity foregrounds how the intersecting technological and emotional relations that constitute the sites of internet-situated presence create dissonance. Reading feminist theorist Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and critical digital scholar Ulises A. Mejias together, I outline how proximity operates as an actual and conceptual characteristic of networked relations. Together, these theorists enable me to position proximity as a critically feminist approach to digital relations. Using their work as a starting point, this chapter demonstrates how the friction of technological failure becomes an extension of the effort to be in relation with one another through these technologies. Bringing together theories that posit proximity as a feminist counter-performative relation (Sedgwick) as well as a characteristic of network resistance (Mejias), this chapter brings the imbricated functions of technologies and emotions within the sites constituted through technological (or digital) relations. Through the analysis of a variety of artistic practices and works, I demonstrate how generosity and dissonance operate in these sites, and the sense of together established through their shared creation. The proximity that operates in these shared sites, and its role in *how we are together*, connects these artistic practices to daily interactions and demonstrates the intertwined roles that generosity and dissonance play in digital practices of relation.

Les Yeux D'Argos (2014)

Les Yeux D'Argos (2014) is part of the Tate Room Live, a series of performances that are streamed online from a room in the Tate Modern. This particular performance is unique within the series because it includes another geographic location, a room in Paris from where Selma dances with her brother Sofiane in London. The fact that they are siblings adds a resonance to the long-distance performance, as if the audience is privy to a private family conversation conducted via Skype. The performance occurs in multiple locations, virtual and physical, that come together with varying ease and

effort. It is performed over the internet – streaming live and then archived onto the Tate’s YouTube channel. The recording is an exact index to the original stream, still sited within the web browser. I can watch it again and again as if was the first time, but each playing shifts with the various processes performed between my computer, the internet and the servers that host the video.

The encounter with the archived documentation constitutes a performance: when I play it on YouTube, it is re-enacted in the streaming video. It is no longer live but also it is not merely documentation of the live event. However, as discussed in Chapter 1, digital processes can be understood as performances: this artwork performs each time it plays. Tangled in with the specificities of the platform it is sited on, and the hardwired connections it travels through, it re-sites the work of the first performance in the present. The performance is captured and embedded in its site, where the same mistakes and successes can repeat in the same YouTube frame as the original performance.



Figure 3.1 – still from Selma and Sofiane Ouissi’s *Les Yeux d’Argos* (2014). Photo: © Tate, London. 2017. Permission to reproduce this image has been granted by Tate.

Sofiane and Selma Ouissi’s *Les Yeux D’Argos* (2014) begins with the friction of overlaying one location on another. In the opening moments of *Les Yeux D’Argos*, the audio lags and segments of their speaking disappear, so

that it is unclear what is supposed to accompany the passing subtitles. Throughout, the videofeed trips and pixelates (see Figure 3.1 on the previous page). The success as well as the failure of technology to perform as desired (which is to say, invisible or at least with visible ease) locates this performance in its mediation. These glitches, part of a purposeful design by the artist Yacine Sebt, are intended to draw attention to the technologies that mediate the performance and performers (Epps, 2016). The interruptions of friction highlight how the augmented reality – the imbricated on/offline of contemporary digital ubiquity – that the performance occurs in is constructed, as much by the emotional labour of relation as by internet cables.

The latency or lag of a videofeed that is the result of the physical infrastructure that the information passes through can be misconstrued as a loaded pause of a performer in their actions or conversation, a pause can become a lag. Both the technical and gestural are implicated in social and cultural understandings of our communication with one another. *Les Yeux D'Argos* is able to navigate the emotional and technological parameters of contemporary practices of relation not only because of its position but also because it is site-specific to that context, actively engaged with the ways its location influences the actions performed.

This is a performance that has been made with and for the internet. The same technologies that stream it are also used within it, as Sofiane and Selma dance between London and Paris for an audience who watches from other geographical locations. Watching *Les Yeux D'Argos* involves witnessing the fraught (near) presence of these two videofeeds – these two performers – as a digital proximity on screen brings them together. The two performers appear together on the screen in multiple ways. The two feeds are mixed together to give a poor approximation of Selma and Sofiane sat together. Selma appears on a monitor as Sofiane sits at a desk: the monitor is turned so that its length frames her face like an oversized smartphone. The performance implies the exchanges that undoubtedly served in its creation. The performance faces its own mediating processes; Selma and Sofiane bring screens into the room in order to bring each other into the room. They are not less present, but rather: the internet communications have changed how we define presence.

As Sun-ha Hong argues in his 2015 essay 'Presence, or the sense of being-here and being-with in new media society', presence is 'socially and historically parameterized': as new social technologies develop, how people experience the presence of others evolves (2015). The livestream art event becomes entangled with the videofeed that brings brother and sister together across distance. As the opening pixellation lays bare, this together is situated within internet communication that provides a proximity while also creating a dissonance, an emotion and technological friction that marks the strains of the relation we see. *Les Yeux D'Argos* is characterised by this evolving presence, the distributed site that constitutes a proximal together. It is made into the shared sites where this evolving presence operates. In *Les Yeux D'Argos*, the siblings dance with each other in a place they construct on the internet: they perform an amplified version of digital mediated family, in which technology becomes entangled with relation. It is sometimes the focus, and sometimes incidental, as they move. Alongside the choreography, fragments of text that address moving in different cities and rooms of their memories further emphasise the entanglement of site, emotion and technology within this performance.

Emotion

Emotions, writes Sara Ahmed in *The Cultural Politics of Emotions*, 'operate to "make" or "shape" bodies as forms of action, which are always oriented towards others' (2004 p.4). For Ahmed, the emotion enables us to think through the operations of otherness; how we produce and reproduce otherness. This is, for Ahmed and for my work, a feminist issue: the shaping of bodies through history is one manner that structural inequity repeats. Relationships play a central role in this reproduction; both insofar as our actions can re-impose oppression (gendered and otherwise) as well as in the manner that, through our relationships, we can intervene in that reproduction. With this in mind, I will focus on how internet-situated performance constructs sites for – and with – the practices of relation that the internet mediates *and* the emotions that get stuck to them. Feelings, and emotion, often gendered female and thus overly subjective, are a means for locating the points of

contact between lived experience and digital technologies. Culture and emotion are, as Ahmed demonstrates when she defines the term, “sticky” with the accumulation of histories and practices (Ibid. p.89-92). Sticky is what happens when our relations turn into affects that cling to objects, to people. This is how culture constructs emotions, how values and practices are built from our relations. Art generally, and performance specifically, trade on these accumulating histories and practices. This stickiness of the emotions that performance evokes, intentionally and unintentionally, implicates it in the larger, culturally specific processes of world imagining. In the example of *Les Yeux D’Argos*, the distance between siblings sticks to the performance and to my understanding of it: I am also a sibling, also living in a different country and navigating technologies that skip and pull as we stitch together our relationships.

To say that digital communication technologies are sticky is to underline how these technologies are socially and culturally embedded. It is how the personal and the political get entangled with the technological: through the pasts that accrue and their performative reiterations. It is the point at which a feminist intervention into digital relations is both possible and necessary. Internet communication systems and softwares mediate relations, and therefore emotions, and these histories accumulate. In talking about the stickiness of relation as it occurs across the internet, I want to draw attention to the way in which feelings about digital mediation become attached to the feelings of interpersonal relation, and vice versa. These works work because our relations are already interwoven with digital communications, therefore these sites are recognisably related to the locations where our daily lives unfold. To be situated in the internet is to be stuck in with the accumulating histories of contact in these spaces. By thinking through generosity and dissonance, it is possible to intervene in these accumulating histories. Generosity and dissonance are practices of feminist relation that result in feminist knowing: they function with an openness that locates difference and works with its tensions, enabling insights that account for a multiplicity of perspective and that appear in many different ways.

To be internet-situated, some aspect of the relationship between audience and maker must be situated within the movement of information

through the internet. I argue that as postdigital artistic practices proliferate, the distinction I am making is necessary as it is important to understand the process, intentions, and impacts of art based in internet communication as a distinct form of response and critique. Internet-situated artworks emphasise how the social performatives of relation and the technical processes of digital communication inform each other. In these works, neither the politics of emotion nor those of technologies are taken for granted. The overlapping of physical and virtual locations is characteristic of how real and virtual places come together in contemporary internet communication. It is what enables these sites to be constructed in the tension of multiple location. They generate – and are generated by – internet-situated practices of relation; these new locations are the result of the imbrication of emotional practices and experiences with digital technologies. This is why performance practises situated on the internet matter: they bring attention to the (re)formation of relation through digital technologies, as well as to how digital technologies are shaped by the relations they mediate.

Emotions influence, and are influenced by, communication technologies. Who feels, and how, becomes entangled with how we communicate and with whom. Feelings accrue to the tools that mediate them: videocall gains associations of distance, the melancholy of missing far away loved ones and the pleasure of seeing familiar names in an inbox. Tools shape feelings in return: a videocall becomes associated with frustrations as lag and latency make distance more apparent. They operate as an infrastructure of feeling within (augmented) social reality; socially and culturally situated, there is a shared understanding of how affect takes shape as feelings. I call this emotional infrastructure, the invisible systems through which our feelings operate as individual experiences with collective legibility. Infrastructure is often invisible, except when it ceases to function properly. By attending to the practices of relation that are performed in these contexts, and the ways in which artists appropriate the tropes of those practices, it is possible to gain insight into how emotion enacts historical inequities and how it could also be different.

It is at this point that dissonance provides new insights into *how we are together*; through the ability of my practice as research methodology to

investigate and intervene in socially and technologically entangled relationships. Thinking through performance, the ways that practices (re)iterate in relationships are brought to the fore. Network systems can accommodate a multiplicity of positions, and thus organise and reorganise many different configurations of site and of together. The dissonance provoked by the construction of these sites, and the generosity that provides cohesion to this dissonance, become apparent in artworks that repurpose contemporary tools of relation. These works demonstrate both the will towards shared space as well as the frictions that intention produces. The strategies of my approach work, in part, because they repurpose social infrastructure as artistic practices: this is what provides weight and integrity to the insights of my research, that they are formed within the practices that they engage with. These practices, at their best, demonstrate how normative modes of relation can be interrupted to make way for practices that generate more complex and generous understandings of personhood and relations.

Proximity

Proximity operates conceptually as a way to articulate non-normative relations to social and technological practices: it enables me to locate artistic practices and processes as near but not the same as the normative modes of communication. My practice as research investigations, and those of many of the artists I address, complicate the imaginaries of how communication functions (wherein the interface is rendered invisible by its ease of use). This serves as a critical but generous engagement with these systems, and with those that use them. Proximity enables me to work near the practices and processes that mediate daily relationships and forge new understandings of how they function, or how they could function. This is key to the feminist epistemological framework that supports my artistic research: it is motivated by a commitment to investigating context and creating work that enables audiences to infer as they wish, rather than demanding they adopt specific critical perspectives.

Here, proximity enables dissonance to operate as performative tactic while also making clear how dissonance is also a mode of relation sticky with

an accumulative politics of relation. Proximity explains the relation between the multitude of virtual and physical spaces that come together in the site constituted by an internet-situated performance. Site is both the sense of shared location, a together, established through relation as well as the hybrid physical-digital location that the work occupies. In all the examples of internet-situated art this chapter discusses, screens operate as mediating locations that bring the physical locations of artists and audience into proximity with one another through the construction of a shared digital space. The site of the work is an amalgamation of these various locations; it is composite space that creates a sense of being together through performance (however contingent and temporary that experience might be).

The frictions generated in the construction of these hybrid locations are integral to how and why these sites are significant. Created with – as opposed to against or through the erasure of – the near-failures and imperfection of being together, these sites perform the technological and affective dissonance that characterises digital proximity. My aim in this chapter is to define the operations of these sites, and the functional potential of proximity. In Chapter 5, I explore how the sites and shared moments defined here and in the following chapter are instrumental to understanding together as product, and producer, of generosity and dissonance. Technological friction, emotional unease and representational theatricality collude in artistic work that dwells on the possibilities of relation located in the imbrications of the real and the virtual.

These sites produce a sense of common space, which enables them to evoke what Phelan defines as the sense of being part of a ‘group of people in a room sharing an experience’ (1993 p.149) while redefining the liveness emphasised in the original. Phelan’s role in the broader performance studies debate on liveness is critiqued at length in Chapter 1. Still, there is a value to this contention that I would like to recuperate for a postdigital context: it is necessary to expand our understanding of the site where a ‘group of people’ share an experience of performance. Returning to Sun-ha Hong’s considerations of presence, what constitutes presence and its affects (such as the shared experience in Phelan’s example) is increasingly not confined to historically defined ‘material and semiotic “markers”’ (Hong, 2015). Internet-

situated art practices operate in the expanding definitions of presence that bring about new understandings of what constitutes both live as well as shared experiences.

Site

Site provides a conceptual tool for unifying the multiple locations, spaces and places that are at play in internet-situated performance. Site, as Miwon Kwon explores in her landmark genealogy of site-specific art practices *One Place After Another*, has been a central influence on contemporary art (Kwon, 2004). Kwon argues that site has come to operate in three key ways: as location, as the institutional frame and as ‘a *discursively* determined site that is delineated as a field of knowledge’ (Kwon, 2004 p.26, emphasis in original). Site, then, can be understood as a concept that points to how the actual placement of an artwork can be extrapolated out into a position within broader social frameworks while also being epistemologically generative. Expanding upon Kwon’s work – and resituating it within the postdigital and augmented context the artworks discussed here respond to, a context where the real is always participating in the virtual, and vice versa – this triple meaning of site enables an analysis of how location operates through mediated practices of relation. Site is valuable because it demonstrates how an artwork’s location is able to contain the conceptual instabilities that the works produces.

All of the works discussed here are creating sites that are ‘*discursively* determined’ within the internet. The artworks establish sites that are simultaneously conceptual, the affective presence imagined between multiple discreet locations, and actual, the particular location in hard and software systems. In Rhiannon Armstrong’s *The International Archive of Things Left Unsaid* (2015; see Figure 3.2 on the following page), the website becomes repository that both mediates the relation between the audience and the archive’s secrets as well as containing the information. Here, the conceptual archive becomes the site of actual relations.

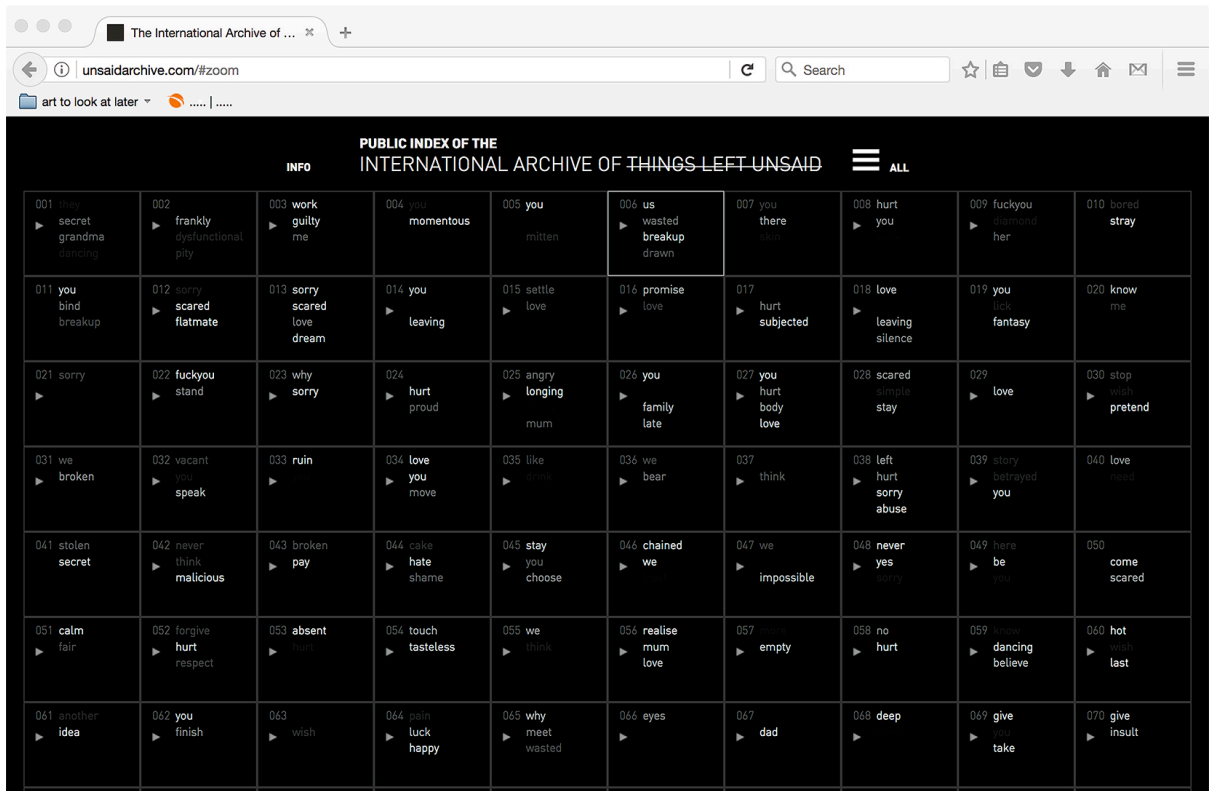


Figure 3.2 – screengrab of The International Archive of Things Left Unsaid (2015) Rhiannon Armstrong. Screengrab by the author on 17 March 2017. Permission to reproduce this image has been granted by Rhiannon Armstrong.

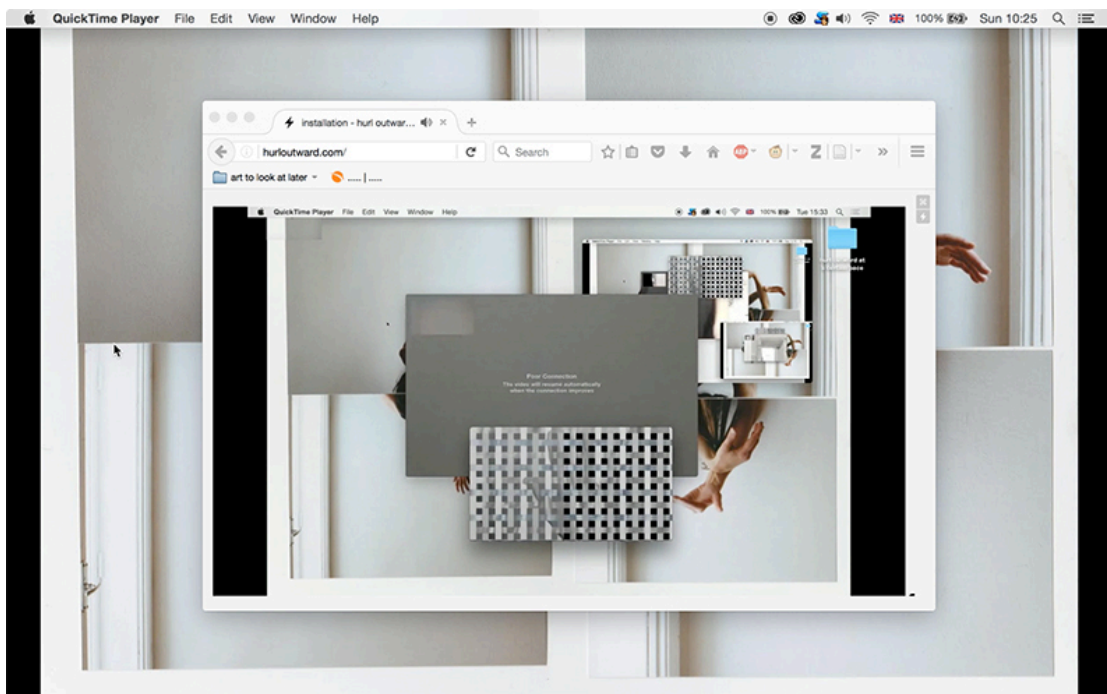


Figure 3.3 – still from *hurl outward at a certain pace* (2017) Jane Frances Dunlop. See Appendix A.11.

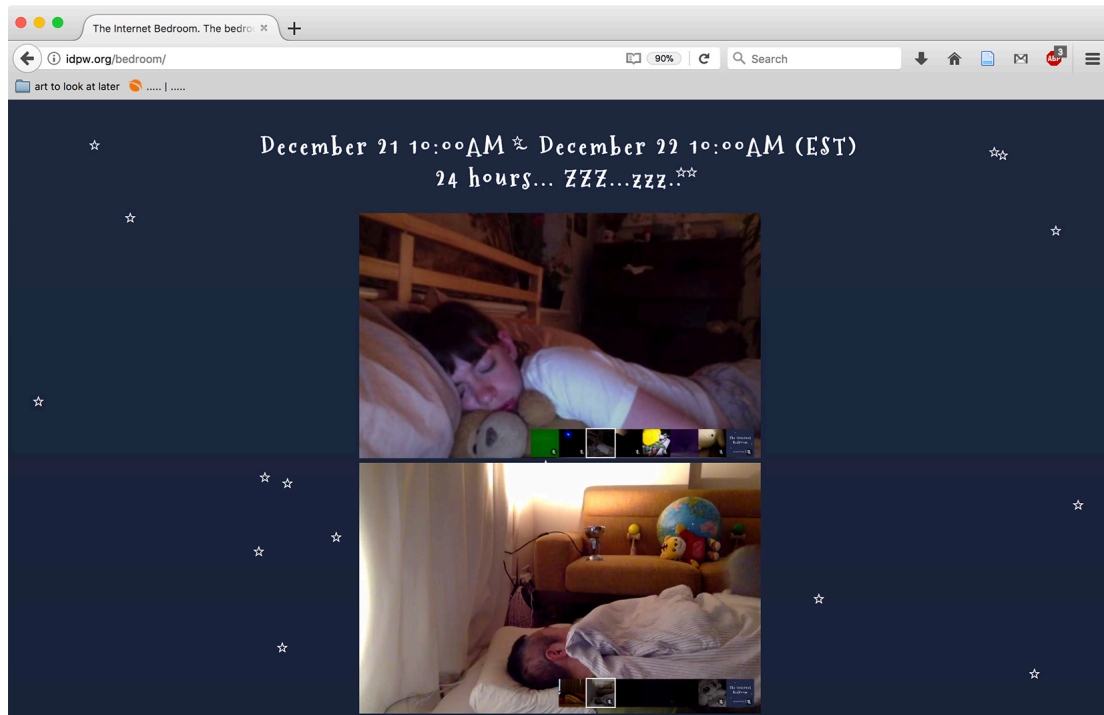


Figure 3.4 – screengrab of IDWP’s *Internet Bedroom* (2015). Screengrab by the author on 15 November 2017. Permission to reproduce this image has been granted by IDWP.

Alternatively, my *hurl outward at a certain pace* (A.11, see Figure 3.3) and IDPW’s *The Internet Bedroom* (2015; see Figure 3.4) both treat screen as a site of bodies: in *hurl outward at a certain pace*, the performer’s (my) body multiples as she navigates the gallery and in *The Internet Bedroom*, bodies sleep in side by side on screen. The screen is able to hold the really real bodies that connect out through the devices at hand. These works are all site-specific to the screens they appear on and to the internet connections that they use. They draw attention to how the screen, as interface, is a site for performing the processes by which emotional and technological systems become inextricably linked in contemporary culture.

The screen is a primary site for many of these works, but key to how they are operating is the fact that that screen – as mediator for the internet – implicates multiple places and spaces in the site of performance. Early in *One Place After Another*, Miwon Kwon uses the internet as a passing example of the contemporary operations of site, namely its discursive turn (2004 p.26). Part of the work I undertake here is expanding upon the connection between the internet and what Kwon defines as ‘discursive sites’, while also demonstrating how site in internet-situated practices is entangled with feelings

of presence and proximity. Kwon's definition of discursive site – the third in what she tracks as the evolution of site in contemporary art (the first two, as already noted, being location and institutional frame) – is valuable not just for defining site but for clarifying how site's discursive or conceptual functions align with the internet. Kwon writes:

site is now structured (inter)textually rather than spatially, and its model is not a map but an itinerary, a fragmentary sequence of events and actions *through* spaces, that is, a nomadic narrative whose path is articulated by the passage of the artist. Corresponding to the model of movement in electronic spaces of the Internet and cyberspace, which are likewise structured as transitive experiences, one thing after another, and not in synchronic simultaneity, this transformation of the site textualizes spaces and spatializes discourses. (2004 p.26, emphasis in original)

With these three definitions (location, institutional frame, discursive), Kwon provides a theory of site as a simultaneously concrete and conceptual term. Site is always already a source of dissonance, an idea and a location, and thus able to contain complexity and contradiction. Where Kwon posits a discursive site as transitive, I argue that a contemporary augmented context enables the formerly transient to be understood as a position. Site in internet-situated performance is a point where the flux of movement between physical and virtual spaces, through the soft and hardware of the internet and the various time-places of those that use it, is unified. Site defined in this way provides an example of how the weaving that opened chapter two is instrumentalised: the various threads of imaginary and actual locations become imbricated. The transitive nature of site might weave them together, lending motion in its generative process, but the interwoven site remains as a fact.

In *Les Yeux D'Argos*, the screen is the site of a composite of the videofeeds wherein Selma and Sofiane are together in the performance; their proximity on screen performs a presence that builds the site of the work in its shared moment. It is an emphasis on the immediacy of a proximity created by mediation that creates a sense of presence and foregrounds the emotional significance of the practiced relations. The operations of presence in, as it contributes to the site specific and site responsive qualities of, internet art has been a central concern of my artistic research. In early projects, I

experimented with the ways that performative techniques could be used to cultivate presence and enact the experiences of relation that occur via the internet. In *how to not perform* (see A.3; see Figure 3.5), the audience navigates a website while listening to a soundscape. The work aimed to draw attention to its site through the presence of an absent performer who guides the audience through their encounter with the work. The website becomes the interface for experiencing a presence – a sharing of space – that is not physical but is still predicated on a negotiation of that same site. Similarly to SuburbanBeast’s *rhiannaboi95* (2013), a livestreamed play performed via YouTube and discussed in the next chapter, the performerly address in *how not to perform* draws the audience into an encounter that weaves a shared space. The repeated acknowledgments of the distance as well as proximity between audience and performer evokes a feeling of shared space. It highlights the ways that the relationship it stages is, and is not, able to find affect in the encounter it mediates.



Figure 3.5 – still from *how not to perform* (2015). Jane Frances Dunlop. Appendix A.3

Sites of proximity

In IDPW’s *The Internet Bedroom* (2015), presence in the internet bedroom was established through the proximity of one videofeed to another. All lined up, the various streams of videofeeds create a bedroom where the pixelating of sleeping bodies generate a particular relation: the generosity of

sharing space with strangers in a public art piece, with a theatrical dissonance in the disconnect between the private intimacy and public broadcast.

Dissonance marks the point of intersection between disruption in technology and the experiences of the relationships that they mediate. It draws attention to how mediation amplifies the difference that is present in all interaction. As a descriptor of practices of relation, dissonance does not invent a friction but instead acknowledges the tensions always already operating in social relation. It is a term that underlines how the tensions of social relation align with the frictions of technologies. It emphasises how dissonance – as relational glitch, lag or latency – interrupts and exposes the systematic and smooth progress of communication.

A discussion of site is one that is grounded in spatial metaphors – this is the reason that proximity becomes an apt way of understanding the relationships that overlap in the site of an internet-situated performance or artwork. Reading Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's periperformative through Ulises A. Mejias's paranodal demonstrates how proximity can function as a tactic for expanding normative modes of relation, and why it can assist an understanding of how emotion and technology interweave. Together, Sedgwick and Mejias illuminate how the (mal)functions and (mis)operations of internet technologies and practices of relation are both implicated in, and can make use of, proximity as disruption. Their terms – periperformative and paranodal – enable us to understand how performance art practices, and the networks that mediate them, operate through declaring malfunctions (of an augmented site) as functional for *other means*. This functional malfunction is what I refer to as dissonance: imperfections that operate to destabilise a normative system without producing a stable alternate.

The blurring of the real and the virtual in digital ubiquity, Mejias's vision of the network, and Sedgwick's analysis of social performance all operate through the "both, and" of critical theory. It is exactly this multiplicity that Derek Conquergood refers to in his essay 'Performance Studies: Interventions and Radical Research'. In the quote that serves as an epigraph to the previous chapter, he writes about the 'promiscuous traffic' of performance studies between 'analysis and action' (Conquergood, 2002 p.145). It is in this movement that performance studies, Conquergood argues, is able to achieve

a radicality in its knowledge claims, insofar as it is able to account for the tensions, positions, actions, understandings and perspectives. It is because of this, Conquergood writes, that '[p]roximity, not objectivity, becomes an epistemological point of departure and return' (Conquergood, 2002 p.149). Proximity enables us to act in the contradictions, to use contradictions as the basis of thought and practice. The paranodal is a site to be occupied, a relation to dominant systems but also a relation within dominant systems to others who have chosen or been left 'outside' (Mejias, 2013 p.154). The resonance between Mejias's focus on the 'paranodal' and Sedgwick's periperformative illustrates the territory between digital philosophy and performance studies, the conceptual site from which I have constructed my definitions of dissonance and generosity. It is a conceptual site invested in the critical and feminist possibilities of operating outside normative models and behaviours, as both scholars theorise counter-positions as interventions.

Both Mejias and Sedgwick rely on spatial metaphors. In each, the image of neighbourhoods is used to demonstrate how their concepts operate through a metaphorically spatial relation. Proximity is a position from which non-normative actions can impact and resist dominant systems, thus staging a technologically critical position (Mejias, 2013 p.153) or enacting a disavowal of gender and heteronormative behaviours (Sedgwick, 2002 p.68). Expanding upon this parallel, dissonance draws on – and can be defined as – both periperformative and paranodal. It is paranodal because it operates through noise, with glitch: it 'interfere[s] with the flow of data in the network' (Mejias, 2013 p.155). Working in resonance with the focus on the network systems in Mejias is curator Legacy Russell, whose 'glitch feminism' moves that interference into embodied relations as she 'offers up a queering of constructions of the body within digital practice' (Russell, 2013). This is a reminder that the network is a system is processing and moving information: that it can include and exclude other spaces. Interruption has always been a tool of avant garde art practice: deconstruction's repetition with difference, or "différance" (Derrida, 1982). Mejias uses the paranodal to describe both technical interference or malfunction as well as human decisions to interfere or opt out; social and personal is already functioning here. It posits a position that challenges the pervasive nature of the internet while still making use of it.

Artistic practices extend Mejjias's paranodal through its practical exploration; they are located within the networks they respond to, and respond to the social practices that use those networks. As a result, they exist as friction and as response to friction: dissonance holds this double condition, it is the point where these systems (technologically, socially, emotionally) coalesce.

hurl outward at a certain pace

In *hurl outward at a certain pace* (see A.11), the feedback noise created by the connection of various devices to each other through the internet operates paranodally. *hurl outward at a certain pace* was a multi-channel sound and video installation that existed both as a gallery as well as an online installation (see A.11; see Figure 3.6 on the following page), the material of the work is full of the feedback and noise produced by magnifying the systems of connection that exist in an augmented reality. It generates noise to confirm presence, as I position the devices so that they interfere with each other and, in doing so, mark the event of their digital exchanges. The work is built from a videocall between my phone and my computer: a connection back to myself that uses a stable of contemporary communication.



Figure 3.6 – still from gallery installation of *hurl outward at a certain pace* (2017). Jane Frances Dunlop. Image: Mira Loew. See Appendix A.11

I move my phone and tinny noises resound as FaceTime tries to clear out the noise it hears from my computer. The low frequency sounds of drilling from the installation going on upstairs turn into a cacophony of static sounds looping between the two devices. My computer screen shows a mirror recording of my phone: one screen reproduced inside the other, showing the videocall that is ongoing between the two devices. I livestream my desktop, sending the room out and back into the room to create a network within the network. It is an ecology of one, the possibilities of connection condensed into an engagement with one site through multiple platforms. The installations are made from layers of solipsistic feedback loop that the space repeats in, capturing a mis-use of connection and confusing the site's position. The work defines site as a position occupying both virtual and physical locations, and each uses that hybrid position to leverage perspective on the systems and the social meaning that accrue to them. Through proximity, of individuals and locations in mediated relations, these sites have space to produce dissonant perspectives.

hurl outward at a certain pace (A.11) uses the noises produced in the (re)mediation of a site to emphasise presence; it stages an exchange staged with one's self (myself) in which information is cast out, returns, creates frictions. Mejias argues that the noise on the network, those moments when its functions are disruptive and imperfect, 'communicates presence' (Mejias, 2013 p.16). Understood beyond the closed system of the communication, Mejias argues that noise can become an aspect of how the paranodal (that which is not contained by the structures of the network) exerts influence on the nodal structures of the network (Ibid. p.156): it is an instance when we can become aware of alternative subjectivities and approaches operating on the network's systems. The sounds and images of the space are fed back around again and again, a total failure to connect with anything outside the already existing site that the work begins in. In *hurl outward at a certain pace*, the paranodal operates both in the technical noise and glitching, which interfere with the network, and in the mis-use of it. The non-productive connection that constructs a solipsistic ecology: this is a practice of relation, of connection, that goes nowhere. And yet, as people enter the space they feel implicated in

it: the gallery manager said that visitors often remarked on how it took them a moment to realise it was not a livefeed; that they were not in the video.

In the instance of *hurl outward at a certain pace*, both gallery and online installation are turned into the site for an action that is near the performances of connectivity that augmented reality presupposes. However, instead of connecting out and properly performing a position on the network, *hurl outward at a certain pace* turns back in. It does not enact the network as process of outward connection but instead uses it as the platform for a periperformative gesture of inward contemplation. It produces a landscape of dissonance; unpicking and relaying the through lines of relation and self-positioning within augmented reality. The performative, Sedgwick reminds us, 'reinscribe[s] a framework of presumptive relations' that the periperformative 'disinterpellates' itself from (2002 p.70). Sedgwick defines the 'periperformative' as utterances that 'refer to or describe explicit performatives [...] though not themselves performatives, they are *about* performatives and, more properly, that they cluster *around* performatives.' (Ibid. p.68) *hurl outward at a certain pace* deploys a periperformative relation to the network in order to intervene in how that network's performative forms relation. It operates to expose the functions – social and technological – at play. Internet-situated artworks exist periperformatively in relation to the performance of augmented reality: they are about that reality, clustering around but are not themselves it.

Both the paranodal and the periperformative are tactics, in Michel de Certeau's sense (1984 p.30): manipulations of existing spaces, interventions on a minor scale that, through persistence, can influence systems. As such, they reconstitute what is reiterated into the future: both require that taken for granted operations cease to be taken for granted to construct new positions and generate new ways of knowing the world. The insights of artistic practice, and of the artistic research of this thesis, operate tactically: like the paranodal, or periperformative, the "together" that this thesis investigates is one that operates as peripheral or parallel to a traditional together. Located within the internet, this together is familiar as an experience and yet destabilising as it pulls on ideas of simultaneity, liveness and shared space that are used to frame together. It operates within these systems, these ideas, while also

changing them: a tactical intervention into our understandings of *how we are together*.

As this chapter has made clear, new sites continue to exist within the network, within social codes, while still proposing new relations, to each other and to those codes. The actions of *hurl outward at a certain pace* (A.11) operate through this periperformative relation: the critical position in relation to the network established through the paranodal can be coupled with an intentional mis-use of the socially and culturally generative power of performance. In dissonant actions, the paranodal occurs in the same terrain as the periperformative utterance: these two positions are almost the same, in their different theoretical context. Together they enable us to understand how relationships move within, and in relation to, the network. Taking together, they can be used to point to how proximity becomes a tool within the interwoven politics of the relation and the internet: noise becomes a periperformative, which in turn becomes a paranodal practice. This is, I argue, feminist epistemology in practice; it is a way of working with the tumult of relation, to construct new modes of relation that are generously aware of the frictions in *how we are together*.

Dissonance and intimacy

Dissonance is not singularly digital or technological; it refers to the myriad ways unease is produced through digital technologies. Dissonance is both technological friction and theatricality: each are instances where the ease (and thus, invisibility) of system function (as connection or conventions) is interrupted. Instead, the operations are amplified which creates the sense that these functions are not absolute or invisible. In the opening example of *Les Yeux D'Argos* (2014), this occurs as the glitching highlights both the distance that underwrites the presence of these performers together, as well as the technology that facilitates their proximity. The uneasy feeling of watching digital strain makes the presence dissonant, aware of its own contingency even while it marks the connection as existing and the shared site is maintained.

Dissonance is produced intentionally and unintentionally, operating as tactic as well as result. In *Les Yeux D'Argos*, the performance's imperfections mirror the real life frustrations of conducting relationships via videofeed. The digital technologies that facilitate the multi-city performance are obviously and intentionally aligned with those that frame long distance relations in contemporary digital ubiquity. The screen of my computer shows Sofiane looking at the screen of his computer, which holds Selma's face. It is in the specific site of the networked screen that all of our perspectives can come together. The performance draws on the proximity that digital communication allows, as well as the nearness of this performance to mundane ways in which siblings in different cities enact their relationships. The screen is a shared site, but that site is affected by the technologies that enable it. The latency and friction of internet communication pull at the proximity in the same instances that it enables it. The dissonance produced in the proximity of internet-situated performance is, returning to Kwon, a result of how these works create a discursive site in their conceptual instability.

My own work more intentionally explores how technological and performerly imperfections (friction, glitch, theatricality) serve to construct site: not adding them, as with *Les Yeux D'Argos*, but producing them through strategies that strain the mediation of relation. Dissonance is an inevitable part of what happens within the sites constructed through digital connection. It names a doubling of effect: both how the practical use of a technology can derail a promised ease of connection, and how the absence of that ease affects what it feels like to be in relation. In internet-situated art, the audience is present to a presence that is actively operating, in which the effort of being in connection – and therefore constituted in relation to one another - is evident. In *Les Yeux D'Argos*, I am present at a performance where their presence together is performed as imperfect. There are delays, glitchy pixelation. Ease here, as is often the case with digital technology, means that we do not see it working.

The technologies that mediate our relations put us in proximity to each other in new and surprising ways, ways that interrupt their intended usages. The internet enables and mediates a certain kind of experience of each other's presence, what Josette Féral terms 'presence effect': the presence

created despite the knowledge that the feeling together is not built from temporal or spatial synchronicity (Féral, 2012 p.31). Féral, in her chapter 'How to Define Presence Effects: the work of Janet Cardiff' defines the term through reference to Cardiff's soundwalks: these are artworks where Cardiff creates a sense of presence by directly addressing the listener and by explicit reference to the space that the work is heard in. Internet-situated performance also creates this 'presence effect': using similar tactics of address and attention to context to create a sense of being together. The together generated is, I argue, contingent on the sense of proximity. The sense of nearness confirms the relations that are mediated through a particular artwork. As distance that also implies closeness, proximity enables the intimacy through which internet-situated artwork performs site. Proximity is what generates the affective intimacy that the artworks discussed create; an intimacy that highlights the processes that construct augmented realities, rather than rendering that work invisible.

Sara Ahmed writes that emotions are 'performative: they both generate their objects, and repeat past associations' (Ahmed, 2004 p.194). This performativity is apparent in the repetition of emotions; how feelings operate as a familiar and yet changeable score that is repeated with difference but repeated all the same. The stickiness of emotion is part of its performativity: it is the associations and, as a result, histories that are brought forward with the performative's future generating actions. Effort means we do see it; it is the effort, this friction and failure, that is the focus of my project. This performance is filled with these moments: where video feeds skip in and out of time, so that gestures and sentences go missing from the screen as a site of performance. Nonetheless, as it fails to be perfectly present, something sticks: a feeling about how we are practicing presence in these spaces. The performance presents a site constructed between the different geographies and URLs, which skip and start with the undeniable fact that they are not in the same place even as they are: the nearly-together proximity of their internet-situated performance.

Working in the paranodal, the spaces created between the points of the network, and with periperformative actions that counter social performatives, is a means for responding to stickiness without clearing it away. These are

theories that name the counter-conditions that are nonetheless bound up in dominant structures. Brought together, they provide a strong sense of how counter-positions are not simply resistance but also generative of new modes of being. Here, they enable me to map out how dissonance provides a new tactic for thinking about the ways the social and technological interweave with each other. It is a term that takes these actions and positions, and interweaves them in order to capture their specific frictions and amplify their collective effects. The ability to operate outside the primary functions of the systems is vital to how Mejias and Sedgwick use these concepts to challenge normative discourse, demonstrating counter-epistemologies. Together, they explain how dissonance can position itself within that counter-action as a practice that pays attention to the accumulating histories and enacts alternative futures.

The sites of internet-situated performances are instances of proximity, constituting and constituted by the practices of relation that they illustrate. Site-specificity operates in internet-situated performance as it not only locates itself in sites but also renders those sites as sites. Proximity, a relation that is defined through (often spatial) nearness, provides a frame for considering what occurs as internet-situated art deploys and manipulates the possibilities of site. It is through a consideration of how these works extend and revise the operations of spatial imaginaries that the internet-situated aspect of these practices can be clarified. On the internet, particularly in performance and performative artworks, the intimacy and proximity is produced differently to real life. However, internet-situated performance bears the same relation to internet social practice that performance generally bears to everyday life.

Miwon Kwon writes, in the quote from *One Place After Another* that opens this chapter, about a site that is 'an itinerary, a fragmentary sequence of events and actions *through* spaces' (2004, p. 29, emphasis in original). Still, within this movement these sites mark a singular – or momentary – instance of presence together. It is this ability to change, to resituate and to contain more than one position that makes proximity and the sites of the internet so interesting; that grants the possibility of using these sites to intervene in (or at least render more complexly) the landscapes of digital technologies. To be brought into proximity is to be brought together, to establish relation that

creates a shared space between multiple locations. It is the tension between that bringing together and its seeming impossibility, the frictions that render the relational dissonance that I have articulated through the specific sites of internet-situated performance. Generosity and dissonance are a means of understanding the tensions and triumphs of relation, and the experiences of presence together, that are created in internet-situated performances.

Generosity constructs shared sites; these are nonetheless dissonant, produced through the frictions of the dispersed positions that generosity brings together. As internet-situated performances locate themselves within these sites, they amplify the frictions of a being together that is interwoven with digital technologies. In this way, these artworks and the practices that create them bring about new understandings of *how we are together* within the tensions of dispersed positions. Proximity becomes a tactic for assessing how we feel together despite distance, within the noise of the networks that mediate relation. The sites of internet-situated performance interweave different positions; the online sites generated between people (be it audience and performer, or brother and sister) are a consequence of postdigital relation. They exist in the tension between generosity, as it pulls together, and dissonance, as the differences of together create resistance. The next chapter follows this tension into a consideration of time. As with the sites constructed through proximity, the shared moments of internet-situated performance mark a form of relation where together is created between asynchronous times. The non-simultaneity of times and spaces within internet-situated performance extend from technological and emotional infrastructures through which our contemporary social relationship occur. They are stuck in with our daily practices.

Interlude

it is hard to try to figure out where this is going, because usually these things are going towards a particular moment in time. which this isn't, isn't necessarily, isn't in the same way. this is going somewhere, yes. But that isn't the same. It is different. the conditions of this are different than the conditions have been before. where we are going isn't necessarily a moment in time. a moment that is the time that this happens at, that one time. but it is, is also a moment. a moment on different terms. we are sharing a somewhere that isn't like the where where we have shared before. & I can be there with you in a way that lets me be absent & I have so many feelings about what that might mean, what it does mean, already making its meaning. abstractly. concretely. conceptually. actually.

you know that you are where I am or was. here, making this be like this so it could be somewhere to start from. but, at the same time also you are not where I am at all. unless i am right now where you are now. beside you, maybe. tensing at the feeling of my voice not being in my mouth.

& so that is how this starts.

& now, we go somewhere else.

& so, you choose what it will look like, pick one. of these ways to go next.

& do I have to tell you that to pick it, to pick where we are going, means that you click here. or did you already know that & are we there.

& if we aren't, can we get there.

From *how not to perform* (A.3)

Chapter 4. Shared moments: asynchronous time and when we are together

This chapter includes discussions of *minor fabrics* (A.8) and *exercises on nervousness* (A.9).

Nervousness consists in needing to go faster or go slower so as to get together. It is that that makes anybody nervous. (Stein, 1988 p.95)

time is adapted to the event, and is therefore susceptible to numerous variations and creative distortions. (Schechner, 2003 p.8, emphasis in original).

This chapter will address how internet-situated artistic practices manipulate time to generate a “shared moment” that produces a sense of being “together”. The previous chapter focused on the spatial metaphors that frame *how we are together*: how site and proximity inform a sense of shared virtual space from multiple geographic locations. This chapter focuses on time, and on defining the shared moment created between different, asynchronous times in internet-mediated relations. The internet creates a sense of immediacy, both in the rapid movement of information and communications as well as in its potential to defer and repeat interactions that occur digitally. The internet makes it possible for something to feel as if it is happening at the same time when it is not. This is the syncopated, or asynchronous, time of internet-situated relation. Thinking through the functions of these shared moments provides a valuable clarification of how dissonance and generosity operates.

The following will define asynchronous or syncopated times as a specific mode of symbolic time affected by internet communications as well as performance. Through this symbolic time, a shared moment is constituted that is implicated in – and strained by – the different moments that constitute it. In bringing together different temporalities into a shared moment, internet-situated performances make use of the temporal and technological possibilities of both performance and the internet. Like the sites discussed in the previous chapter, this asynchronous time produces a dissonance of relation that I argue marks both internet-situated relation and performance. The artistic use of the dissonance produced through the temporality of

internet-situated performance demonstrates the practical effects of the frictions that are part of emotion as well as digital communication. These frictions, which manifest as dissonance, are made possible by the interweaving of positions and perspectives: the shared moments of internet-situated performance thus provide vital insights into *how we are together* as well as to the broader possibilities of frictions and motility in feminist epistemologies. They demonstrate how a symbolic time specific to internet-situated practices of relation can be deployed by performance to cultivate an experience of together constructed through generosity, yet accounting for difference.

It is the unease and friction that characterises dissonance that lends artistic and political potency to the shared moments internet-situated performances construct. It is a means to articulate how time influences a practice of relation characterised by generosity while producing tension and friction. Gertrude Stein, in her essay 'Plays' in *Lectures in America*, writes 'nervousness consists in needing to go faster or go slower so as to get together. It is that that makes anybody nervous' (1988 p.95). Nervousness, that is, is not an individualised experience but a social relation. This is, Stein argues in 'Plays', a result of the syncopated emotional times of the theatre. Resituated within the context of contemporary internet communications, Stein's syncopated emotional times as nervousness provides a means for considering the performative qualities of mediated social relation. The sense of emotional distance producing this temporal incongruity between spectator and performance within the real shared space of the theatre is analogous with the experience of asynchronous time of the internet. It also provides a reminder that the experience of syncopation is not limited to the digital world. It is a possible aspect of all mediating, even within a live theatrical event. The arguments of this chapter as well as the examples of my practice discussed within it expand upon, and respond to, Stein's essay.

Stein's writing on theatre demonstrates that the emotional frictions that are an aspect of dissonance have a historical presence; reading her work in the 21st century, I am able to bring the insights of performance to bear on digital technologies in new ways. In doing so, it becomes clear that dissonance as a quality of internet-situated together has a broader resonance

and potential for both performance and digital that is beyond the scope of my research. The tensions of relation are not confined to digital communication; rather, those tensions become more apparent when combined with the noise that strains communication systems. For my immediate purposes, nervousness is a way of approaching interweaving of the practices of relation with digital mediating frames. In what follows, it will provide a frame for addressing the specificities of the temporality created through this entanglement.

Stein's nervousness marks how empathy, how feeling together, inevitably includes a distance – in time, if not in space – that we wish we could overcome. To be nervous is to be trying, and failing, to get to a point of emotional cohesion, or at least understanding, with another in the midst of a performance. Stein's nervousness is the sensation of empathy alongside its impossibility, its incompleteness. Syncopated time weaves together different moments, holding the affect of differences in a friction, and uses that friction to confirm relation. Artistic practices are able to create moments that hold these differences, a together that contains and showcases the tensions of its formation. Exchanges and conversations are fraught with the slight syncopation that leaves an abrasive feeling. It is a feeling that echoes the disrupted functions of digital communications and one that demonstrates how the affective and technological overlap in dissonance.

Dissonance is a term that marks the instances where the functional (mis)performance of internet mediation becomes an aspect of the emotional significance of the relation mediated. The last chapter explored dissonance as the affective feedback that proximity produces in augmented reality. Dissonance unites the emotion of relation with the functional operations of digital systems. The openness constituted by generosity is a form of relation and, as such, is vulnerable to friction. It opens a space of exchange, a communication that is characterised by the generosity but cannot necessarily escape imperfection. In *The Interface Effect* (2012), Alexander Galloway presents the interface as an allegory for aligning digital exchange processes with a broader philosophical consideration of mediation. Galloway translates Michel Serres's notion of "alongsideness" to illustrate how friction (the imperfect communication) confirms relation while the perfect communication

erases it (2012 p.26). Here, the interruption from Claude Shannon's classic 'Communication in the Presence of Noise' (1998) gains a greater meaning and resonance. Building upon this, and resituating it through the feminist weaving that motivates my inquiry, dissonance addresses the emotional implications of Serres' and Shannon's ideas about technological noise. Through the artistic research at the centre of this project, as well as the critical and comparative analysis of the resulting artworks alongside other contemporary examples, dissonance enables a fuller understanding of the imperfect experience of interrelation and its mediation. Through the artistic research, and my attention throughout to practices of relation, these ideas are clearly sited within contemporary social practices. As long as we are still trying to connect, trying to communicate the message, the relation exists. When we successfully communicate it, there is no need for the connection and it can erase itself.

Galloway's treatment of Serres's alongsidedness – and its importance for how I understand dissonance – can also be understood as analogous with what Stein describes as the nervousness of performance. Both are describing an imperfect connection that, all the same, affirms relation. Stein's desire to go 'faster or slower so as to get together' details the affective experience of Serres's malfunctioning communication (Galloway, 2012 p.26; Stein, 1988 p.95), each demonstrating the friction of relation generating an effort that I term dissonance. Stein's 'nervousness' speaks to the social and affective quality – or consequence – of the temporal incongruities of mediation. What Stein finds in theatre performance can repeat in the performance of digital processes as they mediate; a lag or latency marks the need to go faster, or slower. Asynchronous time makes use of this dissonance: the sense of being at different times reminds us of our proximity to one another, in the same way that noise confirms relation for Serres and Galloway (as well as for Ulises A. Mejias in *Off the Network*). The fact that we are out of sync affirms that we envision unison, even if we are ever nervous in our efforts to achieve it. The openness of relation maintains itself through the unavoidable confirmation of difference. Dissonance attends to generosity, the emotional feedback that is inseparable from the systems that mediate it.

Dissonance and generosity work with syncopated times; they are present in time's operations in internet-situated art practices. These practices, I argue, create shared moments from fractured internet-mediated time. The value of this asynchronous time, and the shared moments it facilitates, can be understood by contextualising these works in relation to a constellation of queer feminist approaches to time and performance (Muñoz, 2009; Muñoz, 1999; Schneider, 2011; Sedgwick, 2002; Taylor, 2010). Artistic practices create a sense of temporal simultaneity out of asynchronous time through their manipulation of internet communications and the social conventions that surround them. This enables them to bring together disparate times and, in doing so, unite disparate positions while maintaining their difference. The shared moments that are created across asynchronous time are explicitly generous: they are constituted through an openness to the frictions imposed by that asynchrony of position and perspective, operating in service of the possibilities of its friction.

The noise and strain of multiplicity does not dismantle but rather confirms the experience of being together through internet-situated performance. Shared moments are an internet specific reformulation of the together defined by Margaret Gilbert in her essay 'Walking Together' as the effort of a plural subject. Gilbert writes: 'If "we" refers to a plural subject of a goal, it refers to a pool of wills dedicated as *one* to that goal' (1990 p.8, emphasis in original). Here, the effort of that plural subject is interwoven with the effort of establishing and maintaining relation and marked by the unease and resulting dissonance of a non-confirming time. In the next chapter, I will return to Gilbert's formulation of together: however, it is useful to keep in mind that together is – in part – the result of 'a pool of wills' toward a goal. This 'pool of wills' is integral to the sites and shared moments which lay a foundation for understanding how we are together: it is how the openness of generosity becomes active as it holds together together. It is a collective endeavour, to return to Mieke Bal: an exercise in shared confusion that gropes towards meaning situated across a diversity of positions. In performing or watching *minor fabrics* and *exercises in nervousness*, the experience of dissonance that occurs through this groping becomes increasingly evident. The repeating performances fracture with their accumulation; they destabilise

the performance and invite the viewer into a new temporality that is complicated through its enactment as well as mediation.

Through an analysis of how a shared moment is constructed from the syncopated times that operate in internet-situated artistic practices, this chapter will address three key areas within the impact of overlapping emotional and technological systems. Firstly, it foregrounds relation through a consideration of how the specific audience spectator relations instigated within these shared moments reflect a broader social practice. Secondly, I consider the effects of these shared moments through a focus on how nervousness, noise and other forms of emotional or technological disruption also operate to confirm the potentialities of exchange (thus, confirming relation of people and technologies). Finally, this chapter demonstrates how dissonance – that is, noise implicated in nervousness, the technological relation interwoven with the emotional one – informs how these shared moments function within the imbricated politics of technologies and emotions. In this way, shared moments extend the possibilities of *how we are together* and provide a moment of insight into the understandings constructed through our practices of relation.



Figure 4.1 – still from *In Mere Spaces All Things Are Side by Side I* (2014) by Morehshin Allahyari. Permission to reproduce this image has been granted by Morehshin Allahyari.

I concentrate on a series of artists and artworks where presence is enacted within an asynchronous time that creates or undermines a shared moment. My artistic research investigated the ways in which the mediation of relations complicates the temporal experience of together and creates both emotional and technological frictions. In what follows, I will discuss my own works *minor fabrics* (A.8) and *exercises on nervousness* (A.9). In these performances, repetition and re-performance combine with digital delay and network overburdening to disrupt the possibilities of the instantaneous implied by a livestream. Alongside my own work, I discuss the livestreamed play *rhiannaboi95* (2013), by Toronto-based theatre company SuburbanBeast, and Morehshin Allahyari's *In Mere Spaces All Things Are Side by Side I* (2014). *rhiannaboi95* demonstrates how direct address can be used to produce an urgent shared moment by positing the audience as future witness, referencing both contemporary practices on social media as well as the longer history of "camgirl" performances. In contrast, *In Mere Spaces All Things Are Side by Side I* is a video work that documents the effects of an inability to arrive in a shared moment (see Figure 4.1). It is a record of a personal interaction framed by the specific social and technological frictions of recent history and geography. Allahyari's video brings that past into a present; here, the asynchronous time includes not only the interaction narrated but also, importantly, the contemporary viewer's experience. *In Mere Spaces All Things Are Side by Side I* and *rhiannaboi95* use time, lag and distance to explore how mediation is constraining as well as enabling.

Taken alongside contemporary considerations of digital culture, Gertrude Stein's particular definition of 'nervousness' as a quality of performance entangled with relation and emotional tempo expresses an effect of the intersections of emotion and digital technology. What Stein defines as the nervousness caused by a syncopation in emotional time parallels Ulises A. Mejias's description of '*noise as communicating presence*' within networked communication (2013 p.17, emphasis in original). It is important here to note that, for Mejias, 'noise' is part of the 'paranodal'; in setting Stein against Mejias, it is my intention to foreground the potential of 'nervousness' for continuing the critical work of dissonance and generosity outlined through proximity in the previous chapter. 'Nervousness' describes an affect of

performance's disruption of normative time; in internet-situated performance, this becomes part of the emotional and technological frictions that together create dissonance as the product of asynchronous time. This time relies explicitly on generosity, as it produces the effort that joins separate times in a shared temporality, as well as the dissonance of an emotional syncopation. A network's latency creates a lag in communication that belies the instantaneous functions of digital communication. Someone sends a message anticipating the "now" when it will be read, a future that is brought into the present when the message realises its goal. Both the technological and social conventions of internet communication are implicated in constructing time, and simultaneity, confusing a straightforward treatment of time. Time becomes a theatrical exercise: a performance that shows the processes that generate it. Being theatrical does not, however, make it less actual: the asynchronous time that functions across these different instances still produces a presence together. They create a shared moment constructed in a symbolic time produced in internet-situated performance.

(Un)real times

In *Performing Remains*, Rebecca Schneider, with reference to the work of feminist film critic Mary Ann Doane, deconstructs the notion of "real time" (2011 p.93). It is an idea whose definition, as Doane shows in 'Real Time: Instantaneity and the Photographic Imaginary', is tied to the processing of computers, the simultaneous or virtually immediate processing of data as it is imputed (Doane, 2006 p.24). Schneider argues that "real time", in life and performance, is in fact a promise that mediation could create a non-syncopated time: 'As such, real time mimics that which it constructs as nonmimetic: the notion of nonrepresentational time, and, simultaneously, the idea of an irreversible time without return' (Schneider, 2011 p.93). Real time, for Schneider, ignores the possibilities of both difference and repetition, in that it implies that the mediating computer can produce such a time. In mimicking the nonmimetic, real time implies processes that could operate, be made meaningful outside the stickiness of culture.

As becomes clear again and again through my artistic research, the mediation of internet communication pulls at time. It is at the centre of *the point is that it is together/apart (A.5)*, a work I discuss at length in the following chapter and which uses repeating performances across different technical and relational set ups to investigate the effects of mediation on experiences of relation. Likewise, the repeating performances in *minor fabrics* and *exercises in nervousness* are experiments in straining the ‘real time’ of digital processes through overburdening, and of performerly or audience time through the prolonged recitations of materials that appear to the viewer. Through these works, it becomes clear that the personal experiences of time – the act of speaking between time zones – and the lag of a video as a signal traverses both represent real experiences of time that are implicated in the practices of relation.

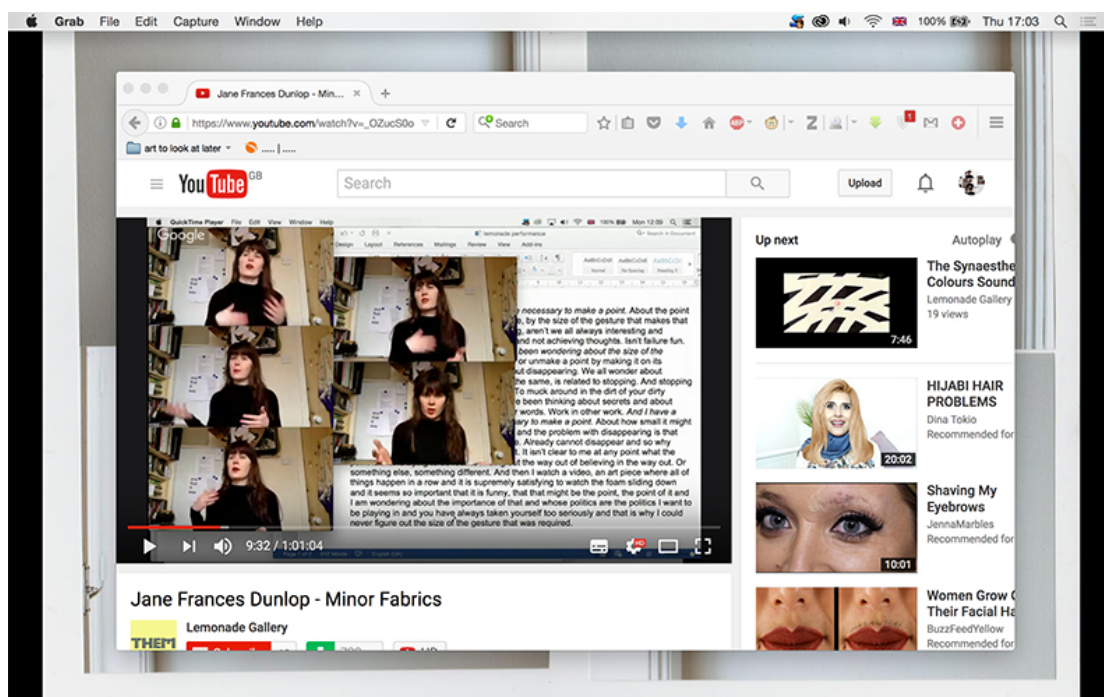


Figure 4.2 – still from *minor fabrics* (2016). Jane Frances Dunlop. See Appendix A.8

This promised “real time” is, of course, impossible. It is interrupted by the lag and latency of digital processes: the effects of internet connections as well as software processes render an instantaneous ‘real time’ unachievable. Importantly, Schneider’s project in *Performing Remains* is to interrogate the political possibilities of performance time: namely, the radical feminist, queer

and anti-racist potential of performance as a medium that disrupts chronological time and is able to move in non-linear ways across history. Here, I extend her reading of 'real time' – as well as her broader critical project – into internet-situated performance. Real time, I argue, is exemplary of how digital technologies promise – and fail to achieve – frictionless processes. 'Real time' is thus an imaginary time: it is the fallacy of processes untroubled by material functionality. Real time is a promise that erases the dissonance present in the actual ways that processes of exchange (social or digital) occur.

The language of syncopation arrives in Schneider via Gertrude Stein, as it does in here. Schneider goes on to state: 'Here, in distinction to "real time," live theatre *and* recorded media are both unreal time, syncopated against the grain of a manufactured instantaneity and immediacy' (2011 p.93, emphasis in original). Here, syncopation ties the "unreal time" of theatre and media back to Stein's emotional time, to an experience of relation predicated on the difference between the performer and audience who are nonetheless sharing time. Both *minor fabrics* (see Appendix A.8; Figure 4.2) and *exercises on nervousness* (see A.9) aimed to investigate the unreal time that is the actual function of technological and relation time. *minor fabrics* was an hour-long livestreamed performance that was part of Lemonade Gallery's *THEM* Festival in April 2016. The performance had three acts, three different texts that were the basis of its choral performance. *exercises on nervousness* was performed in May 2016 as part of Inter-val's *Mining the desktop*, an evening of film screenings and performances in Melbourne, Australia. This time, the audience was live in the room with me as well as watching the livestream online: my desktop showed a large monitor in front of me, making the same material that was being streamed visible to the crowd that milled around me (see Figure 4.3 and 4.4 on the following page).

In these works, similar scores were adapted to different contexts. In both, a livestream of my desktop shows an open recording of me sat in front of my computer. I record myself performing a piece of text, I replay it and perform it again with myself to make another record. This repeats until the screen has filled with a chorus made from slightly different versions of the same performance in concert with itself. The sounds layer, the new recordings



Figure 4.3 – performing *exercises on nervousness* (2016). Jane Frances Dunlop. Image by Sabine Maselli. See Appendix A.9

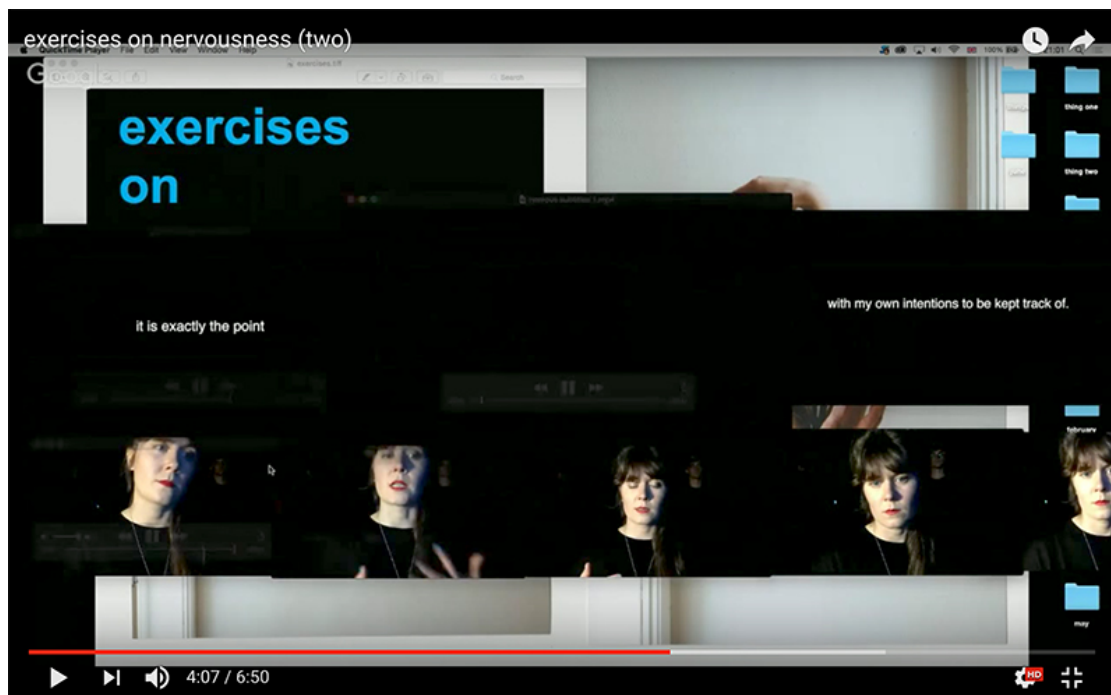


Figure 4.4 – still from *exercises on nervousness* (2016). Jane Frances Dunlop. See Appendix A.9

capture accidentally unities and increasing discordant noises. It is similar in form to Alvin Lucier's sound work *I Am Sitting in a Room* (1969), in which Lucier layers his voice until it is indecipherable. Whereas Lucier seeks to investigate his own voice, my aim is to use my repeating voice to investigate how information travels out and back through the internet.

The two key differences between *minor fabrics* and *exercises on nervousness* were the script and the context. The script for *minor fabrics* was set, sitting on the desktop in front of me. The script from *exercises on nervousness* turned into a series of videos: the text spooled past me in fragments and, as I performed, I choose which sections to speak. These texts are visible in the images of me performing as well as in the performances themselves: not only in the parallel video poems but also as my eyes move between them, reading fragments as I perform. *minor fabrics* woven repeating performances one through the other, *exercises on nervousness* destabilised the through line of the text: instead the text performed alongside me.

These performances represent sustained artistic research investigations into the syncopated time produced by situating them on the internet. In *minor fabrics*, I experimented with the experience of performing alongside myself in a livestream that would necessarily fall out of sync. The distance between my time as I performed and the time of viewing is present in the noises that break through as the performances pile on. In *exercises in nervousness*, I extended this investigation by situating the performance within 'live' and 'livestream' contexts'. In both, the immediacy of the performance fractures into the past iterations that in turn haunt it, tethering its time in the technologies that mediate it. *exercises in nervousness* made it clear that the effect of dissonance, the syncopation of time via technology, could and did occur in both contexts: in both works, it is the network's pull of the performance that creates dissonance. This is as present for the 'live' audience who shared a space with me in Melbourne as it is for those that watched the livestream of *minor fabrics*, in both contexts the internet pulls *how we are together* out of and into sync. The lag produced as a performance travels through the network became a focus of my explorations: *hurl outward at a certain pace* – discussed in the previous chapter – continued this inquiry, focusing on its impacts on site. The multiplicity of slightly out of sync presents

constructed from one person's presence in physical and digital spaces captures precisely the generative possibilities of the internet rendered as artistic practice. The unreal time of performance and technology, and the relation that time contains, is the instance of dissonance and generosity. It influences the social relations practiced within internet communications and the performative art practices these relations shaped and forged. The shared unreal time is a product of generosity, founding a together that is realised because of the friction of syncopated moments. In internet-situated art practices, this unreal time interweaves the processes of the computers and emotions as it makes manifest the dissonance and generosity that frames the practices of relation in these works.

Symbolic, event, set

Performance has always had a special relationship to time, it has an ability to stretch or contract or rearrange it. Richard Schechner, in his influential *Performance Theory* (2003), emphasises how performance time contrasts mono-directional clock time. Schechner writes that, for performance, '*time is adapted to the event*, and is therefore susceptible to numerous variations and creative distortions' (1988 p.8, emphasis in original). I am wary of the "special world" of performance, as I argue it is through its traction within the real world that the aesthetic functions of performance resonate. Still, this chapter is explicitly invested in how this ability to rearrange time can and does serve as a marker of the impact of the special world of performance on real world relation. The purpose is not to theorise time broadly but instead to consider how the specific qualities of time in performance contribute to internet-situated performance. Schechner's analysis of performance times provides a basis for addressing how artistic practice can and does "rearrange" time as it responds to the structures of internet networks and interfaces.

The operation of this unreal time, and of shared moments, is most clearly understood in its translation to artistic practice through Richard Schechner's treatment of performance time in *Performance Theory* (2003). His statement that, in performance 'time is adapted to the event' (2003 p.8) is no less true of internet-situated artworks, and serves as a reminder of how the

variations and distortions possible within performance can extend to new and existing modes of internet relation. In internet-situated performance practices, the exchange created by an artwork brings about a shared moment that repeats in different times. An internet-situated performance exists as a website, a streaming video, digital material hosted online that both indexes what Sarah Bay-Cheng has referred to as the generative moment of digital performance material (2015), while also being available to return that performance to the present. Subsequent engagements reinstate and re-enact a performance, constituting a shared moment as an asynchronous together between the now of its making and its viewing.

In *Performance Theory*, Schechner outlines three modes of time – set, event and symbolic – in relation to performance. These three interconnecting modes of time provide a framework for understanding how asynchronous time is produced in internet-situated performances. He differentiates event, set and symbolic time: in “event time”, a series of activities are completed, regardless of time taken (Schechner, 2003 p.8). Here, the event defines the duration. In “set time”, time is ‘imposed on events’, which will end at a specific time regardless of anything else (Ibid.). Here, time controls the events. These modes of time are easily seen in internet-situated art practices. Livestream performances, like SuburbanBeast’s *rhiannaboi95* (2013) or my own *minor fabrics* (A.8) demonstrate how event time becomes a set time. *rhiannaboi95* has a script and so, all of the events of the play must occur before it is finished. Likewise, *minor fabrics* has a score: there are a series of actions that need to occur in order for it to be completed. However, upon being completed, these works continue to exist for re-performance.

rhiannaboi95 is a play written by Jordan Tannahill and directed by Zack Russell. It was originally performed in 2013 at VideoFag, a storefront theatre space in Toronto, Canada that was home to Tannahill’s company SuburbanBeast. The play is a first-person narration by Sonny, a young South Asian man, who delivers a monologue to his YouTube audience about a series of events that has led to him hiding out in a friend’s bedroom (See Figure 4.5 on the following page). During the original performance, the play was livestreamed from a bedroom set to an audience located in another room of the performance space as well as to online spectators. One performance

exists archived in its entirety on SuburbanBeast’s YouTube page (Tannahill, 2013). As with the example of *Les Yeux D’Argos* discussed in Chapter 3, I argue that each engagement with documentation of these works constitutes its own performance. The record of the livestream is the exact digital information that was present during the initial performance. These performances are still sited on YouTube, the platform they streamed on; the website’s interface serves as a proscenium arch, framing the play’s action. When they are re-performed, new digital processes occur that are a result of the specific technologies used to watch and the state of the network in that particular moment. However, the event time of the initial performance has become the set time of the digital information.

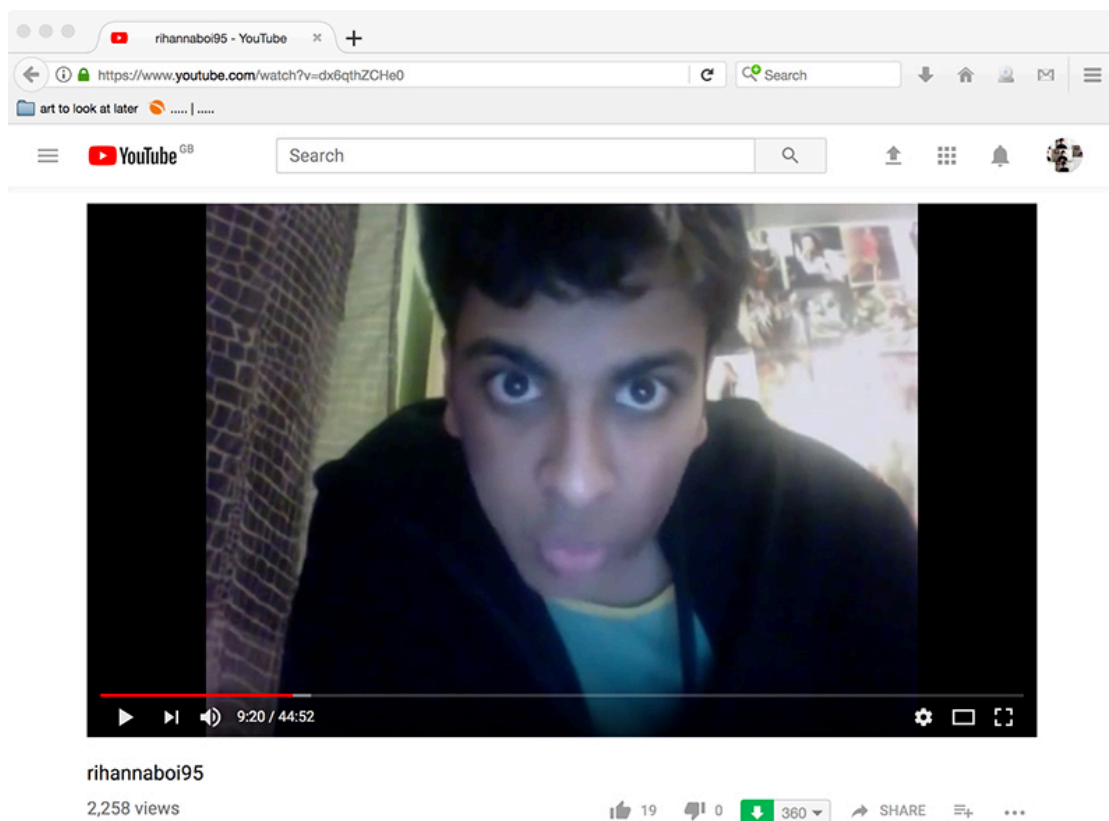


Figure 4.5 – Owais Lightwala performing in SuburbanBeast’s *rihannaboi95* (2013). Screengrab by author. Permission to reproduce this image has been granted by Jordan Tannahill on behalf of SuburbanBeast.

Set time and event time structure the event, whereas “symbolic time”, Schechner’s final category, refers to the functions of time internal to a performance (Schechner, 2003 p.8). It can be the instances where the performance occurs outside clock time: either a different time (as in, it is set in the morning and but performed at night) or ‘where time is considered

differently' (Schechner, 2003 p.8). These types of performance time are interwoven in internet-situated performance and in the asynchronous time discussed here. However, symbolic time is most relevant: asynchronous time is a symbolic time that joins together diverse times to create a shared moment. These moments are time made malleable as relations constituted through the internet enable these multiple times to align. Practices of relation that are situated on the internet consider time differently: internet mediation enables art practices to operate with a temporal frame in which the immediate does not require something to happen immediately (an email immediately arrives, but is not necessarily immediately read) or where live is not in fact live (the lag in livestream or videochat, the latency of a connection, the YouTube reaction video where a real time response is re-enacted with each play). Asynchronous time is a result of the tropes that govern time in augmented reality, an outcome of the various positions from which intersecting experiences are situated. It uses the inbuilt frictions of digital technologies and the practices of relations constructed on them to construct a symbolic time that is understood to be a shared moment between different moments. A process of effort, emotional and material, is required to produce this shared moment. It is the outcome of generosity, insofar as the reciprocal relations of interactions constitute it through their openness to others.

Repetition & time

Exemplary of the shared moment in asynchronous time, produced through the relation of audience to performer, are works that deploy camgirl style direct address. In SuburbanBeast's 2013 performance *rhiannaboi95*, originally performed via a livestream and archived on YouTube, the protagonist speaks expressly to the computer's inbuilt camera. Here, the direct address to camera frames the play through the intimacy of our one to one interactions via videochat as well as the histories of YouTube confessionals, camgirl performances and the large amounts of contemporary performance art practices that are in direct dialogue with these cultural practices. (See, for example, the work of contemporary artists such as Annie Abrahams, Faith Holland, Shawne Michlain Holloway or Molly Soda as well as

early net art performances such as *JenniCam* and *Anacam*). Sonny, who has a bruise on his face, speaks directly to the computer camera, moving it around the room. The delivery is fast, intense and deeply engaging. We are addressed as Sonny's fans, as the YouTube viewers who are there for him.

The address in these works constructs, invites, and inverts relation; it exceeds the normal (normative) operations of time by establishing a symbolically shared moment between multiple times. Asynchronous time provides a symbolic moment felt as "at once", despite its lack of simultaneity. However, that at once always already includes the friction and fracture of different moments: it is a shared moment that is the product of different moments. The performerly address is a counter-convention practice, a queering as with Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's periperformative and, more aptly, Jose Muñoz's disidentification. Evoking Louis Althusser's "hail" and its role in subject formation as well as the propagation of ideology (Althusser, 1984). In doing so, disidentification creates new world orders that interrupt (albeit often only temporally) the dangers that haunt non-normative bodies (Muñoz, 1999). Muñoz demonstrates how practices of subtle resistance, misunderstanding and redirection queer the performative's generative power.

Muñoz expands from Althusser's 'hail': he maintains that the response to the hail does not need to be the involuntary turn, there is the possibility of volition. For Muñoz, address is negotiated and thus contains the possibility to work on and against the ideologies it presupposes (1999 p.11). Specifically, Muñoz's work presents disidentification as a tactic for artmaking as well as a tactic for survival that queers of colour and women can use to navigate the homophobia, misogyny and racism of dominant cultural practices (1999 p.5). The negotiation made possible with disidentification supports the possibility of the asynchronous time as it weaves new futures through internet-situated art. Muñoz's project, here and in *Cruising Utopia* (2009), is deeply invested in the potential of queer temporality in performance for producing new futures. The misconstrual of a hail, the reorganising of ideologies, that occurs in disidentification is a means of enacting the queer futurity imagined *Cruising Utopia*: it is how the 'here and now' enacts the possibilities and actualities of a 'then and there' (Muñoz, 2009 p.1). A linear time of influence and result is disrupted as the future comes to bear on the present.

In asynchronous time, performance exploits the frictions of feelings and technologies. The disavowal that maintains participation resonates with proximal actions of Eve Kofosky Sedgwick and Ulises A. Mejias that form the basis of the previous chapter's arguments. Taken with the future-making potential of Muñoz's work, these theorists point towards the functions and potential of dissonance as it marks tension and potential. This is a quality that is present throughout the work of artists using direct address to camera, and in the complex negotiation of gaze – as discussed in Chapter 1 – that these artists pose. In internet-situated performance, I find that I am able to look back while also looking at myself. The act of being seen becomes solipsistic as it grants both ownership and authorship of the image that is reproduced. It is in seeing that the experience of being out of sync becomes evident: that this gaze dislocates from itself as agency and action stretch with their remediation.

Sonny addresses an audience that watches him on the internet, not his present but rather in the present that will occur after he has concluded and uploaded the video. He invokes them as witnesses, to the events that occur around the time of the video. Sonny is young, queer and brown: YouTube is, for the character, a site where he can perform his queerness beyond the confines of his home and his school, contexts where his identity feels disallowed. This is possible because he can ask others to witness him performing new identities, practicing his difference through re-performing the choreography of pop celebrities Beyoncé and Rhianna. However, the actual audience who watch this theatre performance are not the implied peers of the character, a small-time YouTube dancer. This knowledge is part of the impact of *rhiannaboi95*, the jarring feeling of seeing something that you cannot intervene in even as it asks you to. As a performance, the dissonance produced by this disjuncture is how *rhiannaboi95* is able to create a shared moment. Together occurs despite the knowledge that the time we – me as the audience, Sonny as the performer – are sharing is not simultaneous.

minor fabrics (A.8) and *exercises on nervousness* (A.9) both present an overburdened performance time. Like *rhiannaboi95*, these works depend on a direct address to camera: a framing that evokes a camgirl with my bedroom clearly behind me in *minor fabrics* and the dark space of the warehouse venue creating an ambiguity in *exercises on nervousness*. This

address signals intimacy, it is an invitation. It implies that the performer (me, Sonny, you) will grant (has already granted) access to their private space. However, there is no narrative to lend a specific urgency to these performances. Instead, they form a chorus that invites new arrangements and understandings of the text delivered again and again. Unlike *rhiannaboi95*, a work that anticipates the future the audience watches from, these performances drag their pasts into the present. All of these works confuse time, or rather, imagine and interweave the different times that they mediate in order to produce a shared yet syncopated performance. In doing so, they amplify the non-chronological functions of time in daily practices of relation and enable an understanding of how experiences of relation both exceed as well as complicate linear time.

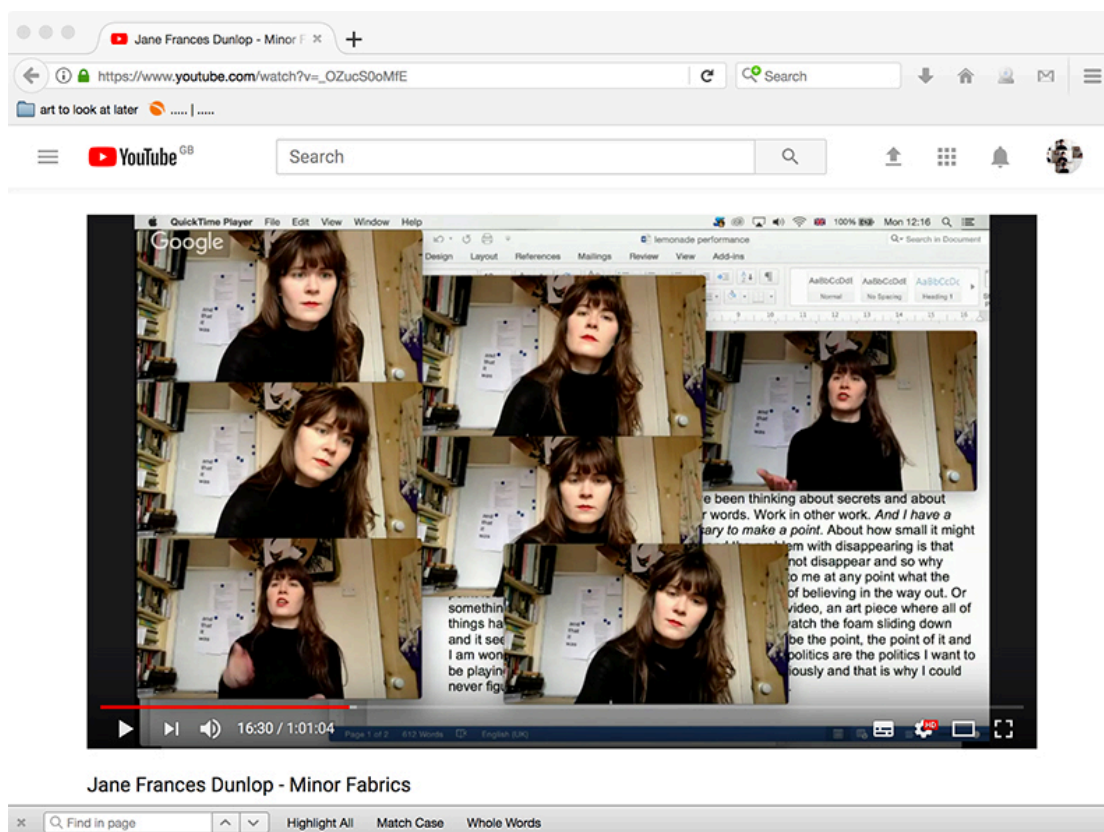


Figure 4.6 – still from *minor fabrics* (2016) Jane Frances Dunlop. See Appendix A.8

The disruption of linear time by the symbolic shared moment, the asynchronous, is apparent within the temporality suggested by works like *rhiannaboi95*, *Les Yeux D'Argos* as well as *minor fabrics* and *exercises on*

nervousness. Whether they are confined by set time, or unfolding event time, the logic of time internal to the work still intentionally reaches beyond the confines of the linear time they occur in. In *rhiannaboi95*, the protagonist Sonny addresses the future present from his present past. He anticipates and participates in the present time of the viewer; however, unlike the original audience but similarly to subsequent spectators, this viewer's present cannot exist until after he has posted the video. The performance stages a present that is enacted between these two positions in time. It knows that we are not at the same time, but it assumes a shared moment anyway. In *minor fabrics*, the live performance videofeed is crammed with the same performance's accumulating pasts. It enacts the asynchrony of an internet-situated performance time by delivering the same performance again and again in the effort to trouble the network's ability to deliver the message in the present. It is an overburdening that captures one moment's technological leakages and brings them into the next. The accumulated performances share time in the screen, falling in and out of unison as they mark the syncopated performer's relation to herself and the audience. Throughout this performance, dissonance is the visual, emotional and sonic consequence of the being internet-situated: it pushes through the possibilities of digital technologies and, in doing so, makes clear how those technologies impact what it means to be together.

Sticky things

The impact of dissonance, the technological and emotional frictions embedded within internet-situated communication, play out clearly and painfully in Morehshin Allahyari's *In Mere Spaces All Things Are Side by Side I* (2014; see Figure 4.7). In it, Allahyari draws critical attention to how shared moment operates in internet-situated communication through the narration of an internet exchange that was complicated both by technology as well as a specific geopolitical context in Iran in the early 2000s, where Allahyari lived at the time. *In Mere Spaces All Things Are Side by Side I* is an online video piece that is currently presented on Allahyari's website. It is the first in a series that will explore 'the complex adoption and accessibility of the internet in a

Developing country' (Allahyari, 2014). Here, the shared moment is strained: it holds temporarily before the spectator hears it snap.

A chatroom interaction that took place between Iran and an undisclosed location, between morehshina and jonson619 in the early 2000s, appears as subtitles under a grey scale video rendering of an apartment. There is a computer with a chair at it, the walls seem to move or shift with shadows. They give way to other walls and spaces. The subtitles establish a philosophical and playful tone before the screen goes black and a piercing sound plays to signal the network cutting out, a noise familiar from days of dial-up internet. The conversation is continually interrupted, punctuated by the noise of connection disrupted. *In Mere Spaces All Things Are Side by Side I* uses archival chat text to create a narrative where the failure of the internet infrastructure interrupts an ability to maintain an interpersonal connection. No connection becomes no relationship. For the characters chatting, the asynchronous time does not come together to create a shared moment.



Figure 4.7 – still from *In Mere Spaces All Things Are Side by Side I* (2014) by Morehshin Allahyari. Permission to reproduce this image has been granted by Morehshin Allahyari.

Allahyari's video, hosted on Vimeo and embedded on her website, holds the continued failure of connection. It documents a specific relationship and the ways in which the internet heightened the affect of the syncopation. The effort to construct a shared moment is continually frustrated, but here the effort is held as evidence of a larger politic of technologies and emotions. morehshina's apologies about the network within *In Mere Spaces All Things Are Side by Side* I draw attention to the (dis)functionality of the internet in a particular place, pointing to the influence of context – bad network connection, as well as a political context of censorship and oppression. The noise of the disconnecting dial-up and old chatroom relationship are likely familiar to anyone who came of age with the early internet, however Allahyari's work requires the viewer to pay attention to the difference context makes to the function of technologies.

Her work highlights how modes of connection, and the ability to stay connected, operate at emotional and technical levels that are implicated in historical and political context. The general technological progress that allows nostalgia for noise is implicated in specific geographical and technological privilege. Nostalgia for the noise of dial-up often ignores, or is oblivious to, the difficulties of access it implies elsewhere. The rendered interior of a home, empty of bodies, indexes the inability of these two speakers to extend a time that includes both of them. *In Mere Spaces All Things Are Side by Side* I uses the disconnecting times it narrates to bring a historically and geographically specific time into contact with the present. The syncopated emotional times of morehshina and jonson619 push back against the invisible, immediate functionality of a frictionless mediation. To watch is to be affected by an awareness of how the emotional and the technological are interwoven, and how the negative outcomes of that overlap are asymmetrically experienced. Here, dissonance is sticky, in Ahmed's sense: a result of the accumulation of histories and practices that accrue to cultural objects and exchanges (2004, p.84-90). The historical and political specifics of context become interwoven with the emotional impact of their relation, which is in turn entangled in the technologies that mediate them.

In fact, all of the works discussed in this chapter are 'sticky', and are making use of that stickiness. Dissonance operates in, and with, stickiness

insofar as it is an emotionally charged friction; it marks the point of contact between the socially and technologically constituted qualities of digital communication. This stickiness, the navigation of context, is key to how these artworks use internet-situated performance to foreground the complexity of digital relation as it exceeds singular temporalities. Stickiness is a quality that Ahmed relates to historicity: 'it depends on histories of contact that have already impressed upon the surface of the object' (Ahmed, 2008 p.90). In Allahyari's work, the object is the noise of a dial-up and the frame of the screen. It is actions undertaken on the internet that become implicated in the effects of its usage; a technical sound becomes deeply embedded in the practices of relation that occur between the two characters. Meaning sticks to the sound, as it becomes more than noise, more than interruption; it stands in for the distance and difficulty imposed by the specific context that morehshina tries to communicate from.

When Ahmed defines the term, she focuses on stickiness in relation to disgust. It is a way to explicate the performative power of disgust, how a specific emotion can hold a generative power (2004, p.84-90). Here, stickiness is used to address all of the ways that emotions become entangled with the mediating frictions of the internet. The negative affect associated with stickiness is not erased: it is important for emphasising the unease that sticks technology to emotion. Shared moments, the unreal and asynchronous times are not easy. They are the result of friction, and their friction is a result of the effort to build a shared moment out of difference. This is what is powerful and important about *In Mere Spaces All Things Are Side by Side I and rhiannaboi95*: difference is not erased. It is painfully and vitally present.

Rebecca Schneider, in her discussion of Ahmed's 'stickiness', emphasises the materiality and mobility of emotion. She writes:

A viscosity that does not sediment in a body as singular nor exist as completely contained, stickiness is leaky, even fleshy descriptor suggestive of touch (and being "touch" or "moved" become monikers of affect that signify a between bodiness and between objectness or between materialities of emotion that can jump, or travel, in time as well as space). (2011 p.36)

It is in this moving that emotion can and does become entangled in the bodies and objects, pulling them into a relation with one another and creating friction

where Schneider reads space between. However, I am interested in how stickiness signifies travelling: the weaving of threads of feeling and concept that move between materialities. At stake here, as in the writing of both these scholars, is the ways in which certain bodies (female, queer, of colour) exceed or interrupt cultural impositions.

Emotion, for both authors, carries the experience of being too much, or not enough, across history through its refusal to be contained. Where Ahmed's stickiness emphasises the tendency towards attachment, Schneider turns attention to the lack of containment implied by stickiness as it travels. Schneider draws attention to the multiplicity named by stickiness: how the movements of emotions move between bodies and objects bring them together while also exceeding them. Schneider emphasises the excessive in this coming together; the leaky viscosity that exceeds. It is precisely this that is instigated in asynchronous times, as audiences and performers spill into a shared time that is beyond their specific temporalities. That, as Schneider writes, the 'materialities of emotion that can jump, or travel, in time as well as space' points to the instances when emotion mediates: it connects as it travels, complicating relations with its imperfect mediations. In internet-situated art practices, this movement occurs within digital technologies and sticks in with their functions. Generosity is sticky as it holds together the relation, Margaret Gilbert's 'pool of wills' (1990 p.8), whose accumulated histories necessarily come into contact and friction. The shared moment exists here, held together by conventions, their interruptions and the will towards a together. Dissonance names the excessiveness of this moment, its contradictions as it pulls disparate times together and holds that discomfort.

SuburbanBeast's *rhiannaboi95* (2013) manipulates symbolic time by relying on a frame (YouTube as the proscenium) that assumes a specific temporal relation between the character on screen and those that watch. It positions the viewer, and Sonny, within the accumulating histories: its stickiness is performed through tension between various presents from which Sonny's future is being imagined and constructed. The future that is the viewer's present is explicitly referenced, pulling the separate experiences into shared alignment. There is an actual sense of nervousness that comes with this particular performance. Sonny is afraid: the story of high school

homophobia he relates is framed by the fears that at any moment someone will come knocking down the door behind him. The narrative cultivates nervousness through Sonny's sense of an imminent threat. The audience is addressed as witness to this imminent threat, without the possibility of intervention: the performance is addressed to an audience that will see it after the fact. Even as Sonny gains my attention and my care, he is performing for me from a present that has passed. *rhiannaboi95* uses the asynchronous present that characterises the work of YouTube celebrities to create a condition of apprehension and intimacy. I am addressed as one of Sonny's fans: as his peer, as a person capable of intervening, supporting, witnessing. It underlines how this exchange between audience and Sonny is sticky with the accumulated histories of queerness and race, with Sonny's negotiations of the possibilities and problems of his performance of one, the other, both. Sonny directly addresses me, but I am not who he is speaking to. And this is what is unsettling and also important in this work. The work gets sticky with the impact of contact between the bodies and histories that (in)form this narrative.

Similarly, in *how to not perform* (A.3), a work from my own practice discussed in the previous chapter, the monologue that guides the piece is used to highlight how the performer's and spectators' different engagements overlap. It is through the performer's narration that the browser is constituted as the shared site of the performance, where the performer and the audience overlap albeit at different moments. In both *how not to perform* and *rhiannaboi95*, a recorded voice is performing and re-performing for an audience who will realise the work in the future. These works are created onto the internet and therefore are able to also address the structural possibilities afforded by how the internet mediates relation. The distance, in time and in space, between the performer and the audience draws attention to how digital technologies mediate the relation, making it possible while also making it susceptible to fault and failure. They play with the possibilities afforded by shared moments, with what Rebecca Schneider named the 'unreal time, syncopated against the grain of a manufactured instantaneity and immediacy' (Schneider, 2011 p.93). They confirm the potential of an exchange occurring within the distortions of dissonance. It is in this way that the simultaneously

emotional and technological strain is able to confirm the exchange and affirm the relation that creates it.

Asynchronous times

Returning to Gertrude Stein's nervousness, it becomes clear how the emotional is entangled with the mediation of a relationship, particularly in the context of a performance's temporality. The affect associated with performance becomes, in her example, a kind of noise produced through the friction of relation that causes those present to feel out of time with one another. Importantly, Stein's nervousness is a negative affect: it points to the unease that comes from the experience of difference (what she refers to as syncopated times). Like Ahmed's stickiness, it refers to the feelings that pull on, and bring attention to, difference in position, perspective. It is the affect of the multiple subject positions, defined through their differing emotional times, which converge in the event of a performance and render practically the interweaving that is central to my project. In contrast to a homogenising unity, Stein provides something closer to Rancière's dissensus. It is the convergence of different experiences of time on a single event that resonates here, and that I have extrapolated from Stein's theatrical experience into the construction of a shared but non-simultaneous time in internet-situated performances.

The asynchronous time, a sharing of time that is not simultaneous, is discussed here as the product of digital mediation and a producer of the emotional noise of distance. When we regard nervousness as emotional glitching, it confirms that a clear signal is never a possibility: we cannot understand each other perfectly. We cannot feel together. We are living in muddles and tangles of our emotions as we strive to feel together. Here, glitching is both error as well as something more: as Legacy Russell's 'Glitch Feminism' argues, the pause of a glitch is not simply a mistake. It is a moment where a specific body feels its relation as well as lack of relation: a suspension Russell claims as a 'digital orgasm' (Russell, 2012). The unease that comes from being out of time with one another is necessary and not going away. The unease that attends asynchronous times, an unease I have

aligned with nervousness, can be understood as an emotional glitching. The symbolic time contained within an internet-situated performance as event is often aimed at manipulating this. It holds onto the presence of others in ways that disrupt a straightforward flow of time, and that force is overwhelming, unsettling. This disturbs the smooth sociality promised by digital communication and preserves the inescapable friction of difference that is sociality. Extending Russell's work, this glitching posits a feminist possibility of how technologies reorganise the social in unintended ways and enable artists to appropriate friction and recast it as a tool for remaking bodies – for Russell – and here, relations.

Time, and attention to the difference and similarities between the experience of something and the thing itself, is an aspect of how mediating technologies establish relation. Time is something that becomes malleable in performance; it stretches, speeds up and skips around. Internet-situated art practices are able to tactically engage with how time is shared in order to highlight the frictions and possibilities it affords. Arriving at a shared moment is an arduous task. Still, it is through the temporal possibilities afforded by performance's particular times that the shared moments of internet-situated artworks and performances are possible. The nervousness generated by the syncopation serves to stress, rather than disrupt, the practices of relation that these works generate and recreate. In the next and final chapter, I will focus on how the asynchronous times of shared moments – alongside the sites created through mediated proximity – create a sense of “together” as a quality situated on the internet.

Interlude

And how to make a sense for you,
Of the fragments made from the ways that we are working
Slowly and at once,
Attending to that labour
The work of being here
The work of making work
Of working feelings
Of feeling things work their way across emotions.
Stick them in together
The points of contact between one thing and another.
Frictions,
systems that don't agree.
That mediated contact,
Routing and re-routing, grasping and grappling
That make a meaning at the same moment its means, making anything come to
nothing.
That which doesn't make it through, but is held in your head and haunts
haunts the conversations that cannot find their end.
A destination defined as the person or the thing for whom the message is intended.
From *arrangements for a temporary space* (A.12)

Chapter 5. Together: practices of relation for internet-situated performance

This chapter discusses *the point is that it is together/apart* (A.5) and *arrangements for a temporary space* (A.12). It also returns to *exercises in long distance charisma* (A.6).

[N]either I nor the other is ever innocent or free of the social imaginaries that already position us, to our benefit or detriment, in relation to other others and these other others in relation to me. (Diprose, 2002 p.186)

And yet, no-thing always turns out to be something.
So let us pretend, for a moment,
that we can touch, that we can meet,
even knowing that the pronoun we will also disappear,
that we will disappear in the future.
(Play)ground-less (2017)

In this final chapter, I focus on how “shared moments” and “sites” structure the feelings that accompany, and create, a being “together” on the internet. The shared moments and sites of internet-situated performance make clear that “where” or “when” we are together is uncertain, or rather, is woven out of numerous positions. This thesis is about *how we are together*, and so it is necessary to end by addressing what together is, how it is formed within internet-situated performance art and why the particular kind of together that these art practices construct is worth considering. The site of these works and the shared moments they construct provide a context for understanding the operations of internet-situated artistic practices as they expand upon the practices of relation that occur in a postdigital context of internet ubiquity. It is in this way that internet-situated performances create an experience of being together that is specific to digital communications. This dispersed together is specifically a consequence of digital ubiquity, able to traverse multiple times and locations. For this reason, while generosity and dissonance provide insights that exceed digital contexts, they are terms that respond to the specific consequences and complexities of that frame the means of distribution for internet-situated performances. Working through the weaving of artistic research, it is possible to follow the technical and emotional threads

that construct *how we are together* within the widespread use of the internet and the “real time” functions of contemporary global communication.

In the previous chapters, I have used generosity and dissonance to position the sites and shared moments as tactics for addressing the often contradictory relations (sites from different places; a shared moment within different times) that a digital augmented present creates. Through the sticky interweaving of the emotional and the technological, these artistic practices provide insights into the reciprocal influences of emotions and digital technologies on social relation. It is at the point of intersection between these reciprocal influences that it becomes apparent how we are together, even temporarily and contentiously, when we are together on the internet. In what follows, I will address how the entangled relations – between audience and performer(s); performers with one another; between audiences, performers and mediating technologies – within an internet-situated performance create the sense of a presence together. Using Margaret Gilbert’s social paradigm from ‘Walking Together’ (1990) and Raymond Williams’s structure of feelings (1977), I argue that together can be understood, within internet-situated performance as well as mediated relation, as the temporary work that facilitates shared moments and sites. Performance – confined by time and site, marked with the friction of technological mediations – enables us to practice relation, to rehearse together.

Together

In the essay ‘Walking Together: A Paradigmatic Social Phenomenon’, Margaret Gilbert uses ‘walking together’ as a paradigm for understanding the formation of together in social groups (1990). Gilbert begins by establishing the situations that are insufficient for defining a relation as together: proximity is not enough (Ibid. p.2), nor – in her example of walking – is an unacknowledged desire to walk together (Ibid. p.3). There needs to be a ‘shared personal goal’ that is common knowledge to those that are together: in the case of the walk, an acknowledged intention to walk (Ibid. p.3). It is at this point that together, a ‘pool of wills’, is established (Ibid. p.10). A social group describes, Gilbert claims, a plural subject that enables the group (be it

walkers, or members of a club) to claim themselves as we. This plural subject is the result of a 'pool of wills' towards a shared commitment, belief, or some other socially organised characteristic shared by the plural subject (Ibid. p.10). Together, as a social relation, requires an acknowledged participation. This is a slippery definition, as what constitutes an acknowledged intention to be together is context specific and can be multiple things.

In Gilbert's account, being together also creates the potential for those that are together to correct one another, to call each other into account for behaviours that disrupt the walking together that they are part of (1990 p.8). This is key, both in Gilbert's account as well as in understanding together as implicated in the dissonance and generosity I have defined throughout. In being together, there is a sense of being accountable; a collective participation in something and a willingness to pay attention to one's position in relation to that of others. This is an essential part of acknowledging and operating with an openness to others; this is a sensitivity to difference that enables generosity. This is the point at which the theories of feminist epistemologies that inform my methodology and its weaving manifest as practically applicable modes of being in the world. It is the shared intention of being present, in a site or a shared moment, that makes together possible in internet-situated works: the effort to pool wills, the decision to watch, an exercise of acknowledging one's intention to be together. This intentionality is necessary to internet-situated performances; it is what binds them together emotionally while also maintaining their connection technologically.

The works I discuss here – Leah Lovett's *Contra Band* (2014, see Figure 5.1 on the following page); the curatorial project *Itinerant Assembly* (2017), which included (Play)ground-less's *Hollow Tongues* (2017a) and the performance installation *arrangements for a temporary space* (A.12) created by myself and Mira Loew; my own performative video series *the point is that it is together/apart* (A.5) – all cultivate a complex together that depends on the sites and shared moments of internet-situated performance. Together has, of course, been central to the practices of relation discussed throughout: Gilbert's pool of wills is what is constituted through the nervously syncopated times discussed in Chapter 4. It is why the sites of proximity in Chapter 3

register something more than an accidental nearness. At the same time, throughout this thesis I have used dissonance to emphasise how both the formulation – through technological as well as social frames – and the experience of this together is filled with frictions. The works I will focus on here demonstrate how the tools of internet connection operate as imperfect processes, failing to live up to any promise to mediate a frictionless together. Yet these tools still create a together; weaving a pool of wills that is both generous and dissonant.



Figure 5.1 – still from Leah Lovett's *Contra Band* (2014). Image Nina Pope. Permission to reproduce this image has been granted by Leah Lovett.

This friction filled together is clear and apparent in the example of Leah Lovett's *Contra Band*, a performance commissioned as part of Extra International in June 2014. In *Contra Band*, two groups of people engage in a sing-along over Skype between London and Rio de Janeiro; this can be seen in Figure 5.1 on the previous page, an image taken in London that shows the Rio de Janeiro participants present on the screen. The latency of the connection means that there is always a lag, even if it is a fraction of a second: this makes it impossible for the two groups to sing in harmony (Lovett, 2015). Still, they are singing together: willingly participating in a shared moment that includes this friction, making a site to be together despite

it. Like Lovett's *Contra Band*, all of the performances I discuss in this chapter and this thesis make the imperfection of technological mediation into a relation that interweaves functioning possibilities and malfunctioning particularities. *the point is that it is together/apart* (see A.5) catalogues possible sites for friction, both technological and emotional; in the performances of *Hollow Tongues* and *arrangement for a temporary space*, poor internet connections influence how the work is constructed and thus how the together each proposes is experienced. This underlines the material difficulties that frame being together, while also demonstrating the tactical responses to this friction.

Generous relation, dissonant together

The effort of together is the point at which generosity and dissonance converge. Here, I want to underline the difficulties of dissonance and argue for the value and vitality of a notion of together that is constituted through that dissonance and its difficulty. The imperfect imaginaries of relation constructed through shared moments and sites within internet-situated performance practices demonstrate the operations of a together constituted with, and for, digital ubiquity. However, although this together is most clearly articulated through a relation mediated – and interrupted – by contemporary internet communications, it is not *only* available through those mediations. Conversation, exchanges and performances are not confined to digital contexts. Indeed, technological frictions highlight how other frictions occur within our practices of relation, which are subject to dissonance regardless of how they are mediated.

As I have used Sara Ahmed's stickiness (2004) to highlight throughout the previous chapters, these frictions also bring forward histories of asymmetrical relation and systematic oppression that a positive reclamation of 'difference' must be attuned to. This chapter aims to begin bringing closure to the questions that frame this thesis through a series of artworks that – momentarily and with reference to specific practices – stabilise an internet-situated together. Returning to Rosalyn Diprose's *Corporeal Generosity* (2002), it is apparent that the negotiation of difference is key to how a feminist

generosity operates as openness, and how the relation it enacts is positively complicated by difference. In the final chapter of her book, Diprose emphasises alterity as inherent to generosity, and outlines its role in enabling an openness to difference. She writes:

[N]either I nor the other is ever innocent or free of the social imaginaries that already position us, to our benefit or detriment, in relation to other others and these other others in relation to me. [...] the ineradicable difference that calls me to the other is inseparable from the other's cultural baggage as I feel it being felt. I will feel the indeterminable difference, the disorientation, accordingly. (2002 p.186)

Feeling 'the indeterminable difference' is, then, sticky with the accumulations of social imaginaries. Here, dissonance is part of the knowing that relation enables; together is friction-filled because it is constituted through cultural imaginaries.

Yet, this is what enables one to know another, to create a sense of together: it is this situated and contingent nature that, here and in Diprose, is the source of the feminist epistemological possibilities of together. In my artistic research, it became evident that internet-situated performance provides a new perspective on both the openness and disorientation that Diprose describes. Through dissonance, the ways in which technological and cultural contingencies are imbricated in *how we are together* become the aesthetic and performative terms functioning within an artwork. This makes it possible to reflect on how together is constructed, and to think critically and creatively about how that matters for our social practices. It is here that the histories of practices of relation – how (for who) they work or don't – come into tension with the openness of generosity. Internet-situated performance takes this disorientation, as possibility and inevitability, and uses it to draw attention to how together is enacted through technologies as well as social practice.

The sites and shared moments are created as a result of what Diprose terms 'the ineradicable difference that calls me to the other' and, as such, pull through social imaginaries. However, existing in the tension between separation and unity, this together sites generosity with dissonance. Understood in relation to Gilbert's plurality of subjects, it is apparent that together is a product of dissonance; it is the consequence of tensions and frictions that nonetheless constitute a sense of relation. Watching the

performances I've discussed throughout this thesis, there is no trick to the together that they construct: it is not a false time, fake site, unreal presence. And yet, the disorientation of difference – difference in position, time, place, different people carrying forward different things – offers a reorientation, towards a sense of relation undisturbed by this disruption. The concepts of generosity and dissonance I propose here are a response to the way this difference manifests in internet-situated performances. The processes of artistic research, and the dissonance uncovered in them, make apparent that friction is a characteristic of relation: the noise of digital processes exacerbate this in internet-situated performance, highlighting the complex contingencies of how we feel (and are) together. These complexities extend beyond digital mediation, yet these artistic practices bring them to the fore by emphasizing their entanglement with communication systems.

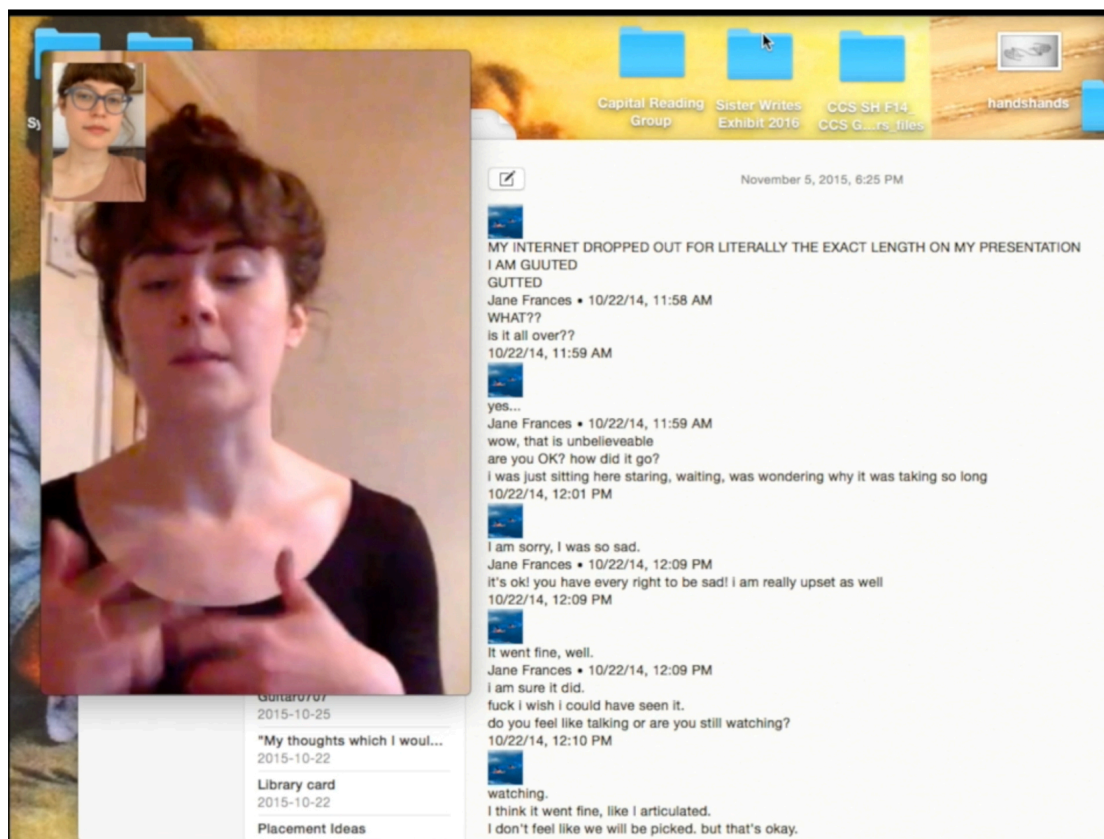


Figure 5.2 – still from 'part iii (variation three)' of *the point is that it is together/apart part* (2015). Jane Frances Dunlop. See Appendix A.5

In *the point is that we are together/apart* (see A.5), I actively sought to construct and index the possibilities for mediating relation and mediating self afforded by internet communications. This side by side exploration of digital

process was a catalyst for my subsequent artistic research; it both provoked questions and inspired artistic strategies for the continued investigations into *how we are together* that motivate my thesis. The three variations, taken together, catalogue different ways of being together and apart in an internet-situated performance. In later works, I was able to refine the focus with reference to the outcomes of *the point is that it is together/apart*. Both *minor fabrics* (A.8) and *exercises in nervousness* (A.9) expand upon the direct address of the first variation. *(tfw) spin measure cut* (A.10) and *hurl outward at a certain pace* (A.11) expand upon the mirroring effect of the second variation. The technique of positioning audience as performer in the third variation repeats in *exercises in long distance charisma* (A.6). I created three variations of the same performance. In each performance, I deliver a text that has five parts: the resulting work is formed from three sets of five videos. All three were addressed to the camera on my computer, however each variation is performed differently. The differences perform the three strategies of my approach, and their entanglement with each other. In the first, I speak directly to the camera: a performance. The address of the text is used to hail the viewer, to anticipate the moment of being watched and bringing about a shared time between the two instances (my performing, your watching). At one point, I say:

I am thinking about the discrepancies between what is anticipated and what will occur.

About imagining how something

(this)

might work when it is in its own future,

(when I am in the now I anticipated when I wrote this. When it is right now. A right now that is for me is different than it is for you, although we will both be in a right now as I say it)

This is about being here now.

The performance's script operates with an awareness of the multiple times it will repeat. *the point is that it is apart/together* works, through its language as

well as the score's different variations, to bring the disparate moments it occurs in together. In the second variation, I created a loop of myself to perform in: this is an exchange, albeit with myself. It aims to formalise, capture and strain movement of information. With a tactic that I also used in *(tfw) spin measure cut* (A.10) as well as *hurl outward at a certain pace* (A.11) – two works created after *the point is that it is together/apart* – I created a videocall loop with FaceTime between my computer and my phone. I recorded both and the finished series of videos show both versions superimposed together.

Accompanying the layered images is the layering of my voice as it multiplies through the loops I have made, interspersed with feedback noises as the devices interfere with one another. In the third variation, I performed a part of the text for five friends who were located across Canada and the USA (in order of appearance across the five parts, they are: Brendan Ouellette in Toronto, ON; Emily Coyle in New Brunswick, NJ; Anna Gallagher-Ross in Rhineback, NY; Aaron Goldsman in Atlanta, GA and Amiththan Sebarajah in Vancouver, BC). Figure 5.2 is taken from the third part of the third variation: in it, I perform for Anna Gallagher-Ross. Behind me on her screen, an archived conversation narrating how a dropped internet connection thwarted an attempt to be together for an earlier event is visible. Before the performance, I had conversations with each for about an hour about how relationships – ours specifically, intimacies generally – are conducted on the internet. The attentive watching apparent in each emphasises the possibility of ease and intimacy in a shared moment created between the different geographies and time zones. Watched one after another, the videos collect the different qualities of our connections as well as documenting the varying times of day that mark the geographic distance between our separate domestic spaces.

This series of video fragments is presented together: first, it was collected on a Tumblr where it was possible to navigate through the different parts and variations. For another iteration, I attempted to construct a navigable version of the fragments in which one linked to the other in a chain that wove through the different variations. Ultimately, I decided to present the fragments in a single webpage (see A.5). The webpage is part of the online exhibition that accompanies this thesis; on that page are links to the earlier

iterations. Here, the videos form a mosaic of frozen images. Videos from the first two variations frame the video of all five segments of the third variation, which is larger than the rest and positioned in the centre of the page: one iteration in the midst of the other possibilities. Together, the videos form a wall of repeated performances that index the tactics of together, a step-by-step exploration of the practices of relation that begins with a computer and finds form through connection, both digital and social networks.

The performance that plays in one video exists in relation to the frozen images around it; as the performer, I am together with myself. As in *minor fabrics* (A.8) and *exercises on nervousness* (A.9), the image of my face multiples. However, the centrepiece here is – as is also the case in *exercises in long distance charisma (for jbm & ml)* (A.6) – the spectator turned performer. Being together is carefully re-constructed in this work, as the two versions of the performance are brought together. The serious and seemingly bored faces of my friends as they watch the performance echo the attention performed in any videocall, it makes evident how this performance, of watching and listening, is a practice of relation that binds us. The distances between the spectator-performer and me, the artist, are marked in the delay of sound and the time kept in the corner. Stuck within the technologies that mediate it, the work captures the generosity of spectatorship and performs it again. The text explicitly references the folding of time and site that the work creates, drawing the listener back into the moment they hear from while also pulling that moment into time with the performance. The openness to hearing, to watching, is interwoven with the frictions of the internet.

Structures of together

Raymond Williams, in the essay ‘Structures of Feelings’, sets out to distinguish social practices outside the ‘habitual past tense’ that frames academic understandings of the social and the cultural (Williams, 1977 p.128). Taken with the discussions of feminist and queer approaches to site and time in the previous chapters, these ‘structures of feelings’ can be understood both as a point where cultural histories come to bear on present actions – as with Ahmed’s ‘stickiness’ (2004) – and as an instance of the

performative counter-constructions theorised by performance scholars such as Sedgwick (2002) and Muñoz (1999). Williams takes aim at the tension between interpretation and experience, writing that '[t]here is frequent tension between the received interpretation and practical experience [...] the tension is often an unease, a stress, a displacement, a latency: the moment of conscious comparison not yet to come, often not even coming' (1977 p.130). This tension, and his articulation of it, sets up structures of feelings; this tension is vital to the value of structures of feelings here. Williams draws attention to tension between definition and experience. The tension – 'an unease, a stress, a displacement, a latency' – that marks the syncopation between understanding and event echoes the relationship between the different forms at the basis of this project: the artistic practices that inform, and are informed by, the research and thinking of my writing. It is this tension that weaving intervenes in, as a way of working through and with the unease and stress of the latency between practice and interpretation.

Importantly, Williams argues that practical experience is not outside the realm of interpretation, but rather that a mode of interpretation that can account for its fluidity is necessary (1977 p.128). Williams's description of the operations of this tension can be understood as an articulation of the frictions produced as different positions interweave with one another. I use Williams to set up this final return to practices of relation as they define together, and will expand from 'structures of feelings' to clarify how social relationships are formed and enacted through the technological and emotional infrastructures that support them. Generosity and dissonance exist as, and within, 'structures of feelings': they are consequences of the ongoing negotiation of social relation mediated by the cultural and technological present. Together is an experience within the structure of feelings that contain the tensions between interpretation and experience. It is through the friction of this tension that the exercise of being together socially – the action of participating in a pool of wills – supports the functions of generosity and dissonance as together-making qualities.

Williams marks out key practical characteristics of social experience and, in doing so, defines structures of feeling as a 'variable' system of social 'meanings and values' as it occurs in the present (1977 p.132). These

structures provide a useful frame for understanding the amorphous and present-oriented constitution of being together that I want to put forward here. My usage expands upon the notion that ‘the tension is often an unease, a stress, a displacement, a latency: the moment of conscious comparison not yet come, often not even coming’ (Williams, 1977 p.130) that is present in social relation as its practice rubs against its interpretation. The emphasis on the practices, the mutability of a present performance of sociality in opposition to a stabilised analysis, supports the dissonance I argue lends potential to being together.

Understood as structures of feelings, generosity and dissonance are tensions that are present in practice of relation as they occur. In the example of Leah Lovett’s *Contra Band* (2014), the performance’s power rests in the relation between London and Rio de Janeiro that the singalong brings into existence. In *the point is it is together/apart* (See A.5), the relationship between myself and my computer is extrapolated out into a series of videos that capture the various nested connections that are entangled and performed in internet-situated artistic practices. The work culminates as the faces of friends watching my performance dominates the screen and echo the position of the viewer, while the text brings this uncanny moment into focus, underlining the being together that the work has staged. It is as relation is in practice, as people form a together, that generosity and dissonance begin to do the work of pushing these artistic practices beyond social reproduction. As the previous chapters have shown, relation through the internet often involves syncopated temporal rhythms and can occur between a variety of places. However, in performances situated on the internet these syncopations and distances also occur as shared moments and sites: the mediation brings about a together that exceeds the possibilities of a singular moment or space. This is generosity: the openness to the possibility of relations that exceed one person, extending to a space and time that is not the domain of one individual. This multiplicity and its mediation are also the source of friction, the rubbing of lines of thought, positions, possibilities that together produce dissonance.

The tension (‘unease, stress, a displacement, a latency’) that Williams uses to characterise sociality as it stretches beyond the structures that frame it, into its functional life, echoes the various frictions I have used throughout

this thesis to demonstrate how emotional and technological infrastructures align and interweave. Aspects of this tension can be found in Jose Muñoz's disidentification (1999), Ulises A. Mejias's paranodal (2013), Sara Ahmed's stickiness (2004), Gertrude Stein's nervousness (1988), Jacques Rancière's dissensus (2009), Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing's frictions (2011); these theorists and their concepts have appeared in this thesis to clarify how I am deploying dissonance. Defined through these theorists, dissonance brings together critical, queer and feminist theories to further understand how we are together in contemporary internet contexts. I have brought these theorists to underline practices of sociality that are uneasy as opposed to frictionless: dissonant while still generous. Their work has been instrumental in clarifying its operations in the sites and shared moments of internet-situated performance. The potential of this is not, as I have said, confined to the digital even though that is my focus in conceptualising dissonance and generosity. It is within this understanding of the social, focused on being together as a structure of feeling that includes tension, that I situate the works addressed in this chapter. The insights of this thesis, and the critical interventions it proposes, are at the intersections of the social with other structures of meaning and mediation – digital and internet processes; the politics of emotion; the possibilities of performance. Each artwork within the exhibition *how we are together* can be understood as proposing – and succeeding as well as failing at – a being together that is in tension. By understanding the sites and shared moments created through internet-situated performances, it is possible to comprehend how these artworks propose a together that is shaped and forged within internet-situated contexts.

Itinerant Assembly

Itinerant Assembly was a five-month long project, from January to May 2017, initiated by a group of curators on the MA Curating Contemporary Art (Alice White, Chloe Hodge, Hannah Zafiropoulos, Xiaoyi Nie, Rosie Hermon and Tiffany Leung) at the Royal College of Art. The project involved a series of events, performances and installations all of which sought to address questions surrounding precarity and digital nomadism in the contemporary art

world. *Itinerant Assembly* culminated in three events at venues across London during which artists ‘engaged with, interpreted and interrupted’ an online conversation hosted on the document sharing platform HackPad (Itinerant Assembly, 2017a). In collaboration with Mira Loew, I created one of the three commissions: our performance installation was presented at Green Rooms; Luli Perez performed at Second Home and (Play)ground-less at Gasworks. As part of each of these events, the HackPad conversation was projected into the space. The conversation, which was approximately three hours long, structured the evening. In HackPad conversation, curators, artists and intellectuals attempted to answer some of the questions that framed *Itinerant Assembly*’s project:

What does it mean to inhabit the temporary? Where do we find the local, when we are constantly on-the-move? Who forms our community, when we exist inside a global network? And what does it mean to be an artist in today’s digitalised and nomadic world? (2017b)

These questions obviously resonate with many of the ideas that I have been grappling with throughout this thesis, taking a different approach to the question of what constitutes digital relation. They also speak to a broader preoccupation within the art world of defining the precarious subjectivity of the artist, a preoccupation that often focuses on a critique of neoliberalism that belies the art world’s complicity within it (see Berardi, 2009; Kunst, 2015). The critical conversation the project instigated continued this line of thought, while also attempting to shift focus from a fetishised precarity to the imposed “itinerancy” required by artist residencies and international festivals. The broader curatorial concept of *Itinerant Assembly* reflects the prevalence of critical engagement with the intersecting influences of the social and digitally technological across the arts and culture more broadly. Here, I will specifically address two works that were commissioned as part of *Itinerant Assembly*: the virtual reality installation and performance *Hollow Tongues* (2017), which was created by (Play)ground-less and presented at Gasworks, and *arrangements for a temporary space* (A.12), a performative video and sound installation created by myself and Mira Loew.

Similar to the process I share with Mira Loew, (Play)ground-less have a shared practice that operates between multiple geographic locations. Their

reliance on internet communication tools to conduct their collaboration has often resulted in those tools becoming an aspect of their work. This is the second event where our work has appeared side by side. In *what parts of your idea are mine* (A.7, an event in January 2016 at Guest Projects in London that I discuss in Chapter 2), Mira and I responded to a collaborative performance (Play)ground-less created. In that work, our ongoing exchange occurred in conversation with theirs. During Itinerant Assembly, our works occur as part of the same programme but with less explicit dialogue between them; still, the parallels are apparent in the effort to make collaborative performances that use the internet to overlay our different geographic positions. In both cases, it is the performance of a text that weaves poetic variations of the concept into work. There is a will to be together, a plurality of subjects, that each of the works strings together through the wires of the internet. However, where in this instance Mira and I end up nearly together, (Play)ground-less and their audiences achieve a being together that is fraught with dissonance and generosity.

arrangements for a temporary space (2017)

arrangements for a temporary space (A.12), as with much of the work Mira and I make together, is site specific and responsive. We developed the visual material for the installation over the course of a day spent in the Gallery Room of the Green Rooms Artist Hotel, a converted factory building near Wood Green Station on the Piccadilly Line in northeast London. Mira, who travels regularly between London and Vienna, was away during the week prior to and including the performance. After we had collected visual material from the space, the majority of *arrangements for a temporary space* was created via emails and iMessages and recordings made during FaceTime conversations. This is normal: as discussed in Chapter 2, processes of digital exchanging have been part of our shared practice for years. Creating and performing a work between the two cities seemed to align with the themes of the curatorial project as well as the history of our own practice. Mira and I envisioned a performance where we would exchange in real time alongside the HackPad conversation and discussed the possibility of Mira performing

with me from Vienna. However, Green Rooms is an artists' hotel with a busy restaurant. Concerns about the burden of our work as well as the HackPad conversation's online collaborative document on the building's wifi increased until we abandoned the idea of using the internet to create a 'live' relation in the performance.



Figure 5.3 – still from *arrangements for a temporary space* (2017) Jane Frances Dunlop and Mira Loew. Image: Tom Scott. See Appendix A.12

In the final work, I performed alongside the HackPad conversation as well as video installation we created (see Figure 5.3 as well as Figure 5.4 on the following page); the installation pulled our accumulating pasts into the present and drew on material made together in the space as well as fragments from our shared archive. The videos and the material in them are the result of much time spent together on the internet. However, during the event we are not together on the internet. I wrote the text, with edits and input from Mira, that I perform in front of the HackPad conversation and Mira emailed me a series of recordings that she made of herself performing the text. For the performance, Mira made an audio recording of the script that I performed with: the different timings and typos of our voices falling in and out of unison. The repetitions of her voice, of our bodies in the videos that loop across the space, set a performance of how we are together when we are not

against the backdrop of HackPad's internet situated conversation. The internet offers a connectivity that can be imagined as easy and frictionless but in reality is partial and imperfect. This performance seems to be adjacent to the internet, rather than situated on it like work that I've made alone such as *hurl outward at a certain pace* (A.11) or *minor fabrics* (A.8) and with Mira Loew during public performances of our exchanges (see *i'm not done 2* (A.4)).



Figure 5.4 – still from *arrangements for a temporary space* (2017) Jane Frances Dunlop and Mira Loew. Image: Tom Scott. See Appendix A.12

The performance fails to bring Mira and me into a real-time relation (a term that was troubled in Chapter 4): the shared moment across our syncopated times it mediates is precariously situated on the internet. It is still the product of our processes of internet-situated exchange, but the work doesn't occur in that exchange. It is simply, or not so simply, made of the exchange; of the connection with another. It is framed by, and situated within, a network of events that 'respond to, engage with, interrupt' (Itinerant Assembly, 2017b) a conversation on the internet about how the internet shapes our relation. That the requirements of one conversation superseded our needs to create a together is testament to the intersecting frictions that strain internet-situated relation. It required that we reshape our process to fit into the system's processes; and, in doing so, made it apparent how our work,

and a friendship, is part of emotional structures entangled with technical processes. The distinction between on and off line is inconsequential and almost redundant until the moment when the technological possibilities re-impose it with force.

It is in relation to the internet, if not explicitly on it. It is a performance that, as one of the artists who made it, that captures the difficulty of “technical difficulties”. It documents the ways that these difficulties extend beyond noise that signals interruptions; how they can include the frictions produced in the overlaying of access, viability and distribution. The discussion of precarious, networked relations that are projected into the space and interrupted by our voices, and by the occasionally dropping wifi signal, captures these problems in parallel. Various arts professionals discuss the possibilities and problems of the internet in the collaborative document projected on screen. Their conversation weaves in and out as it is brought into friction with the technological possibilities of the space, the realities of my presence, all susceptible to the audience’s shifting attentions. It marks a particular relation, between Mira and myself, and situates that relation within the temporary site of the HackPad conversation. Its importance here is how it marks an incomplete attempt at together, despite the effort towards a shared moment, a site that is inhabited by the artists and the audience that is situated on the internet. However, in this failure it underlines the fact that what I am pointing to is not simply a will to be together. It is an actual experience within the syncopations and proximities of the internet that uses the dissonance produced to generate a being “together”.

The practices of relation that occur in *arrangements for a temporary space* envisioned, but did not achieve, the being together that I outline here. Through the process of its creation, the insights of my inquiry were confirmed. It serves as a marker of how together does not function when dissonance exceeds generosity’s ability to hold it together. It marks out the edges of the specific kind of together I have been investigating: one that is the outcome of practices of relation on the internet. Still, *arrangements for a temporary space* provides an understanding of what the terms of dissonance and generosity are: how these concepts are more than the feelings that accompany a fight with the internet or the desire to be kind and with one another. *arrangements*

for a temporary space, like the other works that resulted from my artistic research, demonstrates this.

Dissonance is part of how together is generated in internet-situated context: returning to Ulises A. Mejias and Michel Serres (discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, respectively), it is the interruption that confirms the connection. The plural subject that is being constituted in these works is generated as a tension between the wills that are constituting it – what is the syncopated plurality, friction of the pool of wills, at the centre of all this work. Sara Ahmed writes, ‘The “doing” of emotions [...] is bound up with the sticky relations between signs and bodies: emotions work by working through signs and on bodies to materialise the surfaces that are lived as worlds.’ (Ahmed, 2004 p.191). Understanding dissonance and generosity as structures of feeling, as consequences and producers of together within the responses of internet situated artworks to digital ubiquity, is about understanding how the imbricated sites and times of internet ubiquity are ‘lived as worlds’ through the signs and bodies that move in them. This is evident as much in the failure to be together as it is in the success: *how we are together* includes the tension of when we are not.

Hollow Tongues (2017)

(Play)ground-less is the collective moniker of the artists Sarah Bayliss, María Angélica Madero, Ninna Bohn Pedersen and Belén Zahera. In *Hollow Tongues*, the four artists who make up (Play)ground-less come together from four different cities (London, Bogotá, Copenhagen, Madrid) to perform within the virtual space they have created for that purpose. It is hot at Gasworks, a small gallery in southwest London, and it is busy when I visit for the opening of *Hollow Tongues*. The space on the street is filled with people drinking; it is a muggy May evening. The opening is a week before the event on HackPad, at which point I will be performing in Green Rooms while (Play)ground-less perform within the virtual reality world I’ve come to see. There are two Oculus Rifts at Gasworks, they are inside a room that is all deep pink and dark red. The room has thick curtains around the walls and a plush carpet: white shoe covers upon entry. There is a jar of candies near the door and pillows on the

ground, people sit listening as they watch others take their turns with the Oculus. Waiting for an Oculus, there is a chorus of languages and sounds: at one point, snapping wet sounds take a minute to register as the result of tongues on phone speakers. *Hollow Tongues* is a space within a space where the artists get to be together, sharing a site that they construct and re-construct together.

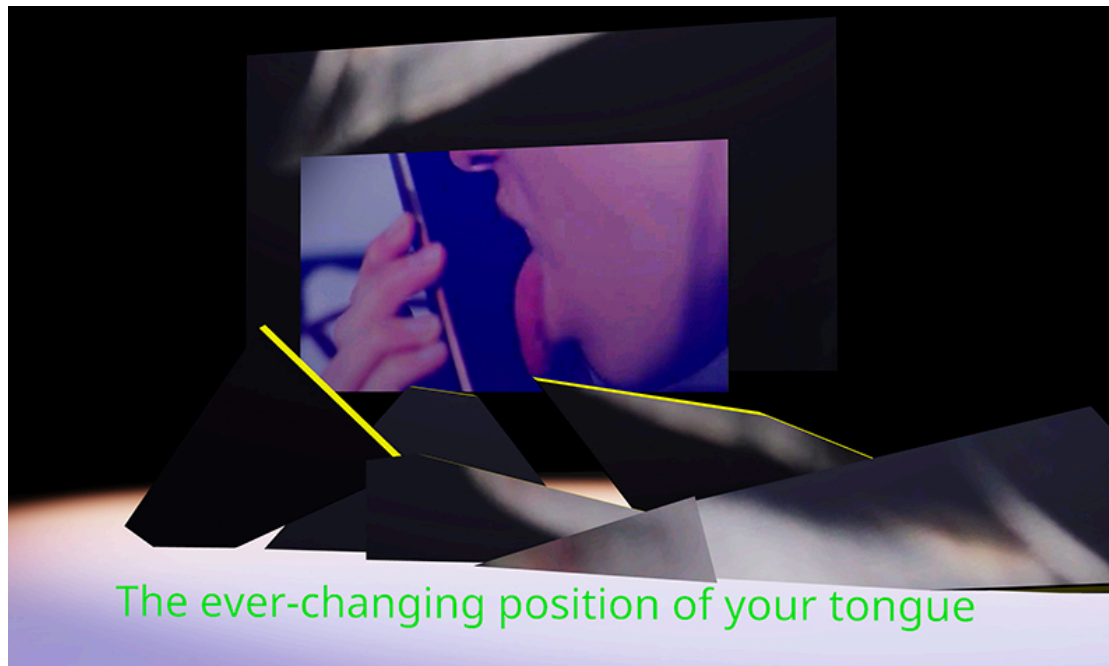


Figure 5.5 – still from virtual reality landscape for *Hollow Tongues* (2017). (Play)ground-less. Image: (Play)ground-less. Permission to reproduce this image has been granted by Belén Zahera.

In *Gasworks*, the VR environment is live streamed so that the artists involved can contribute to the ongoing construction of a site that exists between their various locations. When I arrive at the private view, one of the curators tells me about ongoing problems with the internet. Everyone in the building is asked to get off the wifi. The internet speed tests well below what the provider claims it will be, the provider claiming to have fixed any problems days before. The actual infrastructure of the space is insufficient, failing to function as it claims and therefore interrupting the work that is situating itself through this internet. Here, as with our performance the next week, the ambition of a project about digital community runs into conflict as the actual system fails to function as it is imagined it could or should. In a project that is

about the possibility of the internet for supporting connections, it is the difficulty of that process as opposed to its ease, that ends up being emphasised.

Each artist in (Play)ground-less is able to add and subtract elements from the VR site, which shifts and changes. Figure 5.5 (see previous page) shows a still of the landscape created, in which a video floats among abstract shapes. It is not clear what has been lost or abandoned to make this site. When I am given an Oculus and enter the landscape rendered in it, it is a rounded pink space that I slowly identify as the slightly abstract insides of a mouth. The space blinks black and suddenly is large and open, grey with shapes. The voices of the artists are nearly continuous: lines in Spanish that I had not understood when sat in the carpeted room come with floating subtitles in the VR site. The artists manipulate the objects that appear in the virtual reality, and produce the subtitles that translate some of many fragments of text I hear. An excerpt from the text that is performed (provided to me by the artists) offers one of the epigraphs for this chapter:

And yet, no-thing always turns out to be something.
So let us pretend, for a moment,
that we can touch, that we can meet,
even knowing that the pronoun we will also disappear,
that we will disappear in the future. ((Play)ground-less, 2017b)

In this fragment, the will to be sharing space is a shared space that the artists and their audience occupy even as it disappears. The text references the trading of pronouns – I, you, we – that indicates intersubjective relation (see, for example, Émile Benveniste's 'The Nature of Pronouns' (1971)). The relation staged enacts what Rosalyn Diprose refers to as 'the indeterminable difference, the disorientation' of situating ourselves in relation to others (2002 p.186): we are all in a moment together, a virtual site within the gallery site that is framed by the aurality of four bodies performing with technologies together. The licking static sounds make the bodies of the performers apparent, emphasising their body presence in the heat of a gallery full of people.

In *Hollow Tongues*, the four artists build a site to be together in and the audience is invited to step into that shared moment. This happens in various

ways, in the sound installation of the room and in the virtual environment of the Oculus. However, in none of them is there a sense that this relation is false because it is performed between multiple places. Their distance from us, from each other, does not undermine the fact of their being “together”. It is the ability of the work to create this together, a together that feels nervous—in Stein’s sense of syncopated relation—as the performers pull together from different time zones and a person waits anxiously for their turn, which makes the work interesting. The feedback sounds of tongues licking microphones in *Hollow Tongues* remind us both of the live bodies creating the work but also the devices that mediate them as much as an apology for a dropped internet connection in an online conversation does. The audience finds themselves together waiting to enter the space that (Play)Ground-less create; a space that is partial and fragmented, with lines of text and floating objects, while also being real and filled with the sounds and experiences of bodies encountering the digital objects.

The unreality of the rendered space, the tactility of the noise of voices and licking, the heat from the bodies that accumulate at the mid-May gallery opening, weave and work an intense being together into *Hollow Tongues*, one that is complex as it strains across geographical distance and technological difficulty. Together can be temporary and intense, a generous affect caught in with the accumulated frictions that characterize dissonance. As is clear from the breadth of materials I draw on in thinking through dissonance, the frictions and abrasions of relation can take many forms. A feeling of together is the result of their accumulations, the tensions between points of relations and the feelings that collect in them. It is produced through the performance friction that renders both conventions and audience-performer relations visible in their (mal)functionality. The together that occurs in the sites and the shared moments that are formed and reformed through these artistic practices demonstrate the functions of relation. Dissonance marks the strain between relationships and network connections that brings unease and instability into these processes of relation. It allows the unease of imperfect understanding to be paralleled by (and tangled in with) the epistemological possibilities and perspectives that these artistic practices index.

These instances serve as a reminder that technological and emotional difficulties are produced with inconsistent impacts; who feels friction and why is not evenly distributed. Focusing on the dissonance of together in internet-situated contexts becomes a means of understanding both the impact of contemporary mediating technologies as well as broader social abrasions of relation: the dissonance of together online highlights other frictions of relation. When artists make use of this dissonance, they reposition this tension as a means of understanding the present and generating complex futures. The social and technological strains or stresses of friction mark the instances when actual exceeds the imagined: as a system (be it a network or cultural narratives of meaning) comes into contact with the practical specificities of the world, it rubs.

Interlude

Surely if we are navigating the same place, positioning ourselves in the same spaces.

We are together.

And so I am obsessed with this, now.

This multiple parallel geographies of internet places.

There is this idea about emotional geography.

About the ways that the place we are affects our feelings.

The weather, the time of day, the season.

And how then, when I am here and you are somewhere else.

Our emotional geographies are syncopated.

And what that means to our having of a relationship.

If I am loving, or thinking, or talking from a sunny London afternoon.

& there are more of these than anyone would like you to think.

& you are stuck in endless Toronto winter evening.

Because I think that if we spend enough time in the space between, it is a both neither thing that must be going on.

& if we are in the internet, we are on a space where we can see the same things.
Where we can make a both space into our places.

This is the thing, I am interested in.

How being on the internet together can mean we are implicated in each others physical spaces.

Can mean.

Doesn't always.

From *when we are together on the internet* (A.1)

Conclusion: why we are together

[P]lacing hope in feminism is not simply about the future; it is also about recognising the persistence of the past in the present. (Ahmed, 2004 p.187)

‘For any creative media project to be truly inventive, it needs to work through the ontological and epistemological consequences of technologies and media becoming increasingly closer to us.’ (Kember & Zylinska, 2009 p.19)

The starting point of my research was fuelled by a curiosity about how generosity was implicated in the spaces that exist between the real life temporalities and locations that an artwork made on the internet brings together. My own artistic processes, and many of the artists discussed throughout this thesis, are at the forefront of contemporary artistic disruptions of the false division between feelings and systems. The daily disruptions that characterise our use of technologies are, in internet-situated artworks, the source of artistic expansion and a critical consideration that enables a more nuanced understanding of the imbrication of our technological and emotional worlds. Thinking, and making, with this problem it became clear to me that an engagement with what it feels like to be together was often about the difficulties of together. Those difficulties, in the context of internet-situated practices, pointed towards the ways that feelings become entangled with technologies. The pervasiveness of digital technologies means that, as these technologies mediate relations, emotions increasingly stick to them. Understanding and engaging with the complex ways that the emotional as well as the social become entangled with the digital is essential for critical intervention into technologies and their cultural imaginaries.

This project has focused on *how we are together*; it is an investigation into the ways that we perform our relationships with one another in the evolving ubiquity of the internet and its communication tools. To do this, I have focused on platforms and softwares that are – at the moment of writing – central to daily communication practices. These tools provide the contemporary frame for relationships; as such, they mark the point of intersection between digital technology and emotion as the two become intertwined through social performance and interactions. By using these tools, the internet-situated artistic practices defined throughout push our

understandings of performance forward: they contribute new complexity to artistic perspectives on the medium, as it responds to the evolving understandings of presence that changing social practices create. Performance as an artistic medium is in active conversation with daily life, and daily life shifts with technological developments. For performance studies, it is vital to continue working through these mutable definitions. Further, these practices – and all artistic work – are both reflection of and response to their context. As such, these artworks provide insight into how our relationships are conducted: they capture tools of a specific era for future considerations while also de-familiarising their use in the present, encouraging viewers to think further on the softwares and social practices that frame their interactions. They further an understanding of how emotion, relation and technology operate as intertwined systems for producing the social practices that build the future in the present. It is in this way that the feminist politics and practices of this thesis become apparent: in the practical application of theoretical concepts and epistemological methods that focus on the contingencies of social relation that inform meaning making. It is the structural possibilities of feminist theories, specifically insofar as they have been the basis of my use of weaving, that inform how the line of inquiry tracked here has progressed.

I began this project with generosity, a quality present in processes of exchange and conversation, a facet of artistic practices that could orient an artist's work towards another through openness and flexibility. Generosity was intended to highlight how these processes of exchange, as both social and artistic practices, operated in service of a positive collectivity or community. It is central to how I conceived the artistic research methodology that informs the inquiry of this project: through weaving, I am able to practice generosity as an artistic and epistemological mode that situates ideas in relation to not only the artworks and theories that inform them, but also the social contexts and relationships. Generosity operates towards openness; it is a way of taking responsibility, or an ethical approach to contingency. Over the course of my research, the centrality of friction and noise to experiences of mediated togetherness became increasingly apparent. Dissonance emerged from my inquiry as a concept that addresses how disruption in digital mediation is entangled with what it means to be together in internet-situated contexts.

Dissonance is a central insight of my research: it captures how connections and relationships contain friction and disruptions, how the mediation draws our attention back again and again to the ways in which together is constructed and contained by the social and technological systems that mediate it. Dissonance provides means for accessing a politics of relation that is both mutable as well as more durable than my original intention.

At the start of this thesis, I write about *when we are together*, a text-based performance that I made at the start of this PhD. In that performance, (see Appendix A.2), I articulate the many thoughts about where and how an internet mediated together is constituted that I began this project with. I discuss this piece at length in the introduction; it provides a clear means to introduce both the methods and the content of my project, and to situate the progression of my thinking in relation to its beginning. In that performance, there are a few lines that are particularly striking as I conclude this project.

Every revolution is a technical revolution.

So what kind of revolution are we getting.

I've been thinking about how the internet is a space.

& I've been wondering about the architecture of the internet.

Where the walls are.

What it feels like to run into them. (when we are together, 2016)

The final two lines in the excerpt above – 'Where the walls are./What it feels like to run into them' – anticipate the central preoccupations of this thesis: dissonance and emotion. The friction of dissonance I have described throughout is this feeling of running into a wall: it is the limitations of the system and the affect an encounter creates. This feeling, of reaching the limits of relation, is one that also confirms its presence. Rather than allowing frictions to truncate what is possible, internet-situated artworks make clear how we are indeed together while simultaneously alerting us to the systems that instantiate that feeling of being together. It is the complexity of collectivity:

the positivity of a sense of unity, the complicating politics imposed by structures that both facilitate relation while also imposing terms. It is vital to know where we are, why there are walls and who put them there: how they shape our relations even as they affirm them.

In the section of *when we are together on the internet* above, the bold is an annotation. It is from inside my art practice and outside the academy, to remind me that I have borrowed these words from someone else. These lines are from a YouTube video of an interview with Vilém Flusser in 1988 that Mira Loew sent to me in 2013 (Flusser, 2011). The quote begs the questions: how and why do technologies instigate revolutions? One way, this thesis argues, is through how technologies become part of systems of feeling that mediate our relations and how we understand those relations. My answer brings us to the Ahmed quote that begins the conclusion – taken from *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, a book which has had a profound influence on this thesis. In it, Ahmed posits a feminist hope as a historically bound thing: revolutions, like technologies and hope, are about the ‘persistence of the past in the present’ as much as the future (2004 p.187). It is the persistence of the past, and this hope for the future, that the feminist epistemologies that ground my work bring to bear on making, and thinking, through *how we are together*. This persistence both complicates and necessitates a conclusion, and I will dwell more on that notion shortly.

The body of work I created over the course of this thesis was a sustained inquiry into understanding *how we are together*, how relation was brought about, generated by, internet mediation. Works like *the point is that it is together/apart* (A.5) and *how to not perform* (A.3), even *exercises in long distance charisma (for jbm & ml)* (A.6) all investigate the shared moments and sites that constituted internet-situated presence. However, in making these works, I kept bumping into the walls. I kept encountering the technological and emotional frictions that I have woven together here as dissonance. As a technological quality, this becomes most apparent in *the point is that it is together/apart* (A.5). In the second variation, I perform the fragments of text for my phone and computer, which are connected via videocall to each other to create a feedback loop. The effect is noisy, my voice does not catch up with itself, and feedback keeps interrupting. It explicitly explores the frictions of

re-mediations, testing the influence on my ability to be present. Taken in sequence, this straining of the mediating technology frames the relationships performed in the final variation through the technical possibilities and problems of the internet. It stresses situated-ness as a technological quality, one that is unavoidably linked with the real relationships between me and my single audience members. It is here that dissonance and generosity began to intertwine: the openness of attempts to create a site, a shared moment, a together continually complicated by distance, difference, syncopations. This is what it feels like to run into walls.

The works created later in my PhD – *minor fabrics* (A.8) and *exercises on nervousness* (A.9); *(tfw) spin measure cut* (A.10); *hurl outward at a certain pace* (A.11) – were created to explore and clarify the dissonance I had discovered in earlier works. Each proposes a different tactic for investigating the frictions that are present in internet-situated practices of relations and each performs its explorations differently. Through these works, it became clear that understanding the relationship between generosity and dissonance in this context required understanding generosity as something that includes dissonance. They do not require participation to instigate the openness of generosity. Rather, these works explore the tensions in the systems that are made through connections across the internet. The difference, distance, syncopation of the “shared moments” and “sites” within these works is apparent from the beginning. There is a familiarity to this friction: daily usage is often impacted by the noise of malfunction. The friction is what situates these works within the internet: it is why the insights of my work are focused on that context. The disruptions of the digital, the malfunctions of technological systems, reflect the complexity and singularity of the internet as a social force. The terms and possibilities of the internet extend beyond those of previous technologies, in terms of complexity of social and cultural application as well as influence.

My practice spins, rendering threads out of ideas, following their patterns and finding points that fray as these threads interweave. I started with questions about how the internet was a space that we could be generous in together and ended with a project that focuses on how friction moves between the emotion and technological infrastructures that mediate us.

Dissonance came from weaving these things together, the feeling that generates a sense of being together as well as the internet that mediates this feeling: the abrasive consequence of efforts to construct a generous together. The feelings that mediate it and the internet that generates it: why we are together in the situations that artworks created in the internet. I intended to explore how generosity, or generous relation, constituted spaces on the internet between different spaces and temporalities. However, in taking the time with generosity and with internet communication to think about what the relation or together I was trying to get at was, “dissonance” arrived.

Returning to the Research Questions

In what ways are performative art practices shaped and forged within internet-situated contexts?

How are social relationships formed and enacted through the technological and emotional infrastructures that support them?

How do artistic practices respond to, and make use of, the new digital forms of relation?

Art, particularly performance, is always responding to the context it is made in: performance as an art form is imbricated with the ways in which social relations are enacted publicly. The mediation of relation, through emotion and various cultural frames, here becomes interwoven with technologies, enabling artworks that are implicated not only in the technical or social specificities of a contemporary moment but also in the mutually constituting relation of these different specificities. Tracking the response of artists to digital forms tracks the ways in which technologies become entangled (are already entangled). It is an acknowledgement of the always already political nature of technologies; always already implicated in the systems through which society functions. Technologies shape the world, as much as they are shaped by it, and our containment is often an exercise in catching up. As I conclude my project, this is being borne out by the EU General Data Protection Regulation 2018 coming into effect (Burgess, 2018), as well as the presence of Mark Zuckerberg at hearings in the USA and

Europe that interrogate corporate responsibility in this new context (Madrigal, 2018; Stone, 2018). Artworks situated on the internet provide a double service of capturing mediated relation within a specific moment, as well as interrogating or making strange its processes in ways that enable critical perspective. This is the focus of my research, its value and its contribution.

Central to this thesis has been an emphasis on how new modes of presence instantiated through the internet create experiences of time and space that extend beyond the single experience of people in a room together. These shared moments (Chapter 3) and sites (Chapter 4) are defined and elaborated through the specificities of internet-situated performances and their entanglement with social practice. By defining internet-situated performances in relation to the social practices that inform their structure as well as the technological aesthetics that they make use of, I have been able to clearly delineate a set of art practices that are both shaped by and forged within the context of internet relations. As such, these works are a generative engagement with the emotional structures of social relation as well as the technological infrastructures that they occur within and respond to. However, this project's insights into how sites, time (framed as shared moments) and relationships – or a sense of together – operate in performance have resonance and application beyond the internet-situated performance practices I define. Time, place and collective experience are vital dimensions of performance: understanding their evolving functions in contemporary contexts extends the possibilities of performance studies, and opens new avenues for critical analysis and engagement.

Throughout, I have treated the relationship between my artistic research and my written thesis as a conversation and an exchange: an interweaving. This has been my approach both in the process of researching as well as writing. One does not lead the other: the lines of inquiry presented here have evolved together over the course of my PhD. The body of artwork created through my artistic research, and the written analysis of my thesis, demonstrate how artistic practices respond to the increasing ubiquity of the internet. Through analysis of my own work alongside that of others, it was possible to respond to and participate in the immediate contexts of digital technology and cultural practices on the internet. In doing so, I have

investigated how these practices make use of internet communications as those technologies augment and extend the frame of reference for the interaction and communication between individuals, groups and communities.

The practice as research methodology has been essential for both investigating and enacting the intersectional feminist theories that are foundational to this work, and for addressing how these ideas can and do intervene in internet communication. Setting my practice as research alongside the work of other contemporary artists provided a means for both engaging in as well as analysing the cultural politics of emotion functioning in digital technologies. By doing so, my research led me to both an expanded definition of generosity as well as dissonance as a new and related concept that accounted for the particular emotional-technological frictions of contemporary practices of relation. Generosity, as an openness that is both a quality of how art is made as well as experienced, provides a means of maintaining openness towards a feminist social justice agenda. Dissonance supports that same project though acknowledging the frictions of relation that cannot, nor should not, be erased. Their conceptualisation is based in and strengthened by the feminist epistemological theories that grounded this process and which are aspects of the definitions my inquiries lead to. These terms, and their evolution over the course of my research, are a product of the practice as research process that is at the centre of this project. The relation of theory and practice, process and analysis, is vital to this project and its intervention into the dynamic social presents and futures we are constructing through internet-enabled technologies.

Contributions

This project has investigated *how we are together* on the internet through an artistic research methodology that practically and conceptually centres on weaving. As the second chapter outlines, this process enables a line of inquiry that interweaves methods, concepts, influences and reflection across artistic and written explorations. As a practice as research project, its contribution traverses artistic, historical and theoretical territories to produce a new body of work that is a unique reflection of the conditions of contemporary

internet art and life. Through methods of experimentation based in practice, this project defines internet-situated performance as a distinct type of contemporary artistic practice. The definition of internet-situated performance contributes a new concept for contemporary performance as an artistic practice in an era of digital ubiquity and builds upon performance studies' increasing intersections with media theory (Auslander, 2008; Bay-Cheng, 2015; Fewster, 2010; Chatzichristodoulou, 2013; Taylor, 2010; Dixon, 2007; Giannachi *et al.*, 2012; Giannachi & Kaye, 2011; Giannachi, 2004). It engages with timely questions of how to engage performance in an era of increasing digital ubiquity. By situating these questions in the dynamics of social relation, it provides a perspective that is not confined to a specific technology. Instead, its approach and findings focus on how performance is a culturally and socially reflective art form that is present in any context where social relation occurs.

The definition and application of the concepts generosity and dissonance bring together contemporary feminist theories (Ahmed, 2010; Ahmed, 2004; Bal, 2002; Diprose, 2002; Haraway, 2014) with performance studies (Fewster, 2010; Giannachi *et al.*, 2012; Jones, 2006; Sedgwick, 2002) and new media as well as postdigital philosophies (Berry & Dieter, 2015; Galloway, 2012; Hayles, 2012; Hu, 2015; Mejias, 2013). As is demonstrated throughout the thesis, these terms were formed through the practice as research process. Through the artworks collected in the online exhibition *how we are together*, and the processes that generated those artworks, these terms emerged as a means for addressing the specificities of together within internet mediated relation. Together, in a postdigital contemporary context, is a consequence of mediation and as a pooling of wills: it is essential to have the language to reflect on and address this entanglement of emotion and technologies. The definitions and applications of these terms, and the insights they provide to a contemporary and digitally entangled relation, are demonstrated and clarified in critical analysis of works of internet-situated performance from my own practice as well as exemplary case studies. The project's theoretical focus on generosity extends existing engagements with "generosity" (Schrift, 1997; Barnett & Land, 2007; Diprose, 2002) into the

context of mediated relation and performance. It does so by arguing that generosity, as a mode of relation, also causes dissonance.

Here, “dissonance” is an original term that provides an extension of generosity as a mode of relation that accounts for the frictions of the interpersonal interactions it frames. My use of these two terms brings together feminist theories of affect and emotion (Ahmed, 2004; Berlant, 2011; Diprose, 2002) with performance studies approaches to the performativity of (inter)subjectivity (Fischer-Lichte, 2008; Lehmann, 2006; Schneider, 2011; Sedgwick, 2002) and media theories on technological noise or friction (Cascone, 2000; Galloway, 2012; Krapp, 2011; Rose, 2015) for the first time. By developing these terms through the practice as research process, this thesis contributes a new and artistically rigorous system of research to performance studies.

This thesis provides a new theory of practice as research that brings together multiple feminist epistemological approaches with performance. Through critical analysis and artistic research, it generates insights into the intersection of performance art and contemporary internet-enabled communication. It theorises and defines generosity and dissonance as concepts for artistic analysis and intervention into the overlapping politics of emotion and technology. It grounds these contributions through a history of contemporary and art historical approaches to performance, internet art and feminist art practices and their influences on the development of current artistic practices. The artworks, and the written analysis, provide insight into how our relationships are conducted. They document the tools of a specific era for future considerations while also de-familiarising their use in the present, encouraging viewers to think further on the softwares and social practices that frame their interactions.

This project contributes to the intersections of performance studies and media theory by providing new innovations in practice as research methods as well as new insights into the intersections of emotion and technologies. It defines a new and distinct set of artistic practices as internet-situated performance, a definition that addresses the aesthetic and performative specificities of artworks made through and onto contemporary tools of digital communication. The investigations into internet-situated performance have

been presented in two key ways: through the practice as research methodology that forms a central part of this project's inquiry, and through the critical analysis of the written thesis. The practice as research model based on weaving, and laid out in Chapter 2, provides a rigorous and innovative engagement with ongoing debates surrounding artistic research methods in performance and fine art. It extends those debates in its articulation of a new methodological approach based upon feminist epistemological theories, offering a means to apply these theories practically. This model serves as the methodological structure for this project's inquiry into *how we are together*. The artistic inquiry is evident in the body of work that accompanies this thesis and which provides its own insights into *how we are together*.

Based on the outcomes of this practice as research, this project theorises generosity and dissonance as two terms that address the overlapping politics of emotion and technology and the entanglement of those politics with the performative of social practice. The critical analyses of the final three chapters of this thesis elaborates on generosity and dissonance as outcomes of the artistic research inquiry. These chapters provide context and clarity to the findings through engagement with key aspects of performance – site, time and shared experience. The focus on internet-situated performance situates these contributions within contemporary digital culture, extending performance studies' historical focus on the intersections between artistic and social practice. However, the model of artistic research, and the concepts of generosity and dissonance resonate beyond technological contexts. The daily disruptions that characterise our use of technologies are, in internet-situated artworks, the source of artistic expansion and a critical consideration that enables a more nuanced understanding of imbrication of our technological and emotional worlds.

Possibilities

Relation weaves knowledge together, and forms from the friction that encounters produce. Throughout this project, I have engaged with various theoretical and artistic practices that make this manifest. I have used weaving to work practically with different threads of a practice as research process: to

bind the different modes of inquiry together and to draw attention to the frictions that process produces. This approach has enabled me to directly engage with the communication technologies that situate performance on the internet and, by working in internet-situated ways, gain new insights into how we are together. By capturing the internet communication tools that our practices of relation occur through, my artistic research was able to document as well as intervene in contemporary postdigital contexts. Documenting these technologies makes their functions available for future critical engagement, contributing to historical understandings of technologies. The reproduction of internet-situated practices of relation, reframed as performance, also serves to intervene in contemporary understandings of mediation. These artworks complicate how we understand our relationships, provoking viewers to reconsider technologies and practices that had become invisible with the increasing ubiquity of internet-situated tools.

These facets of my inquiry enable me to bind together the insights that thread through my research, bringing together the final fabric of this thesis. It is the ability to weave between these positions that artistic practice situated on the internet captures and re-creates. Instead of seeking unity, these works make use of the friction of relation as it is paralleled by the tensions of digital mediations. Practices of exchange and conversation are, as I continue to believe and have argued throughout, an important component of producing generous work. These practices do not anticipate outcomes, but focus on process and cultivate situated knowledge that weave in and out of one another. This produces the frictions of difference that contribute to a complex and diverse landscape of new knowledge. Indeed, as has become apparent over the course of this thesis, the mediating effects of contemporary digital technologies are just one way that our interactions with one another are subject to cultural and social frames. It is the multiplicity of these frames, and the ability to understand digital technology as both a single, perhaps newer and presently evolving frame, but as also nonetheless implicated in a broader fabric of mediation by material and conceptual processes, that is essential.

The Sara Ahmed quote that opens this conclusion is about futurity, about how our relations can constitute new worlds, but it is also about acknowledging how history persists into the present. This thesis is a very

contemporary exercise: it is about the practices of relation that occur in the technologies of a specific moment. As such, the objects of my analyses will move into the past very quickly. However, my project has focused on the apparatuses of relations as much as – more so, even – than the particularities of technologies. For this reason, this project is able to both give an account of a particular moment in the evolving response of artistic practices to the internet while also providing a framework for engaging more broadly with the imbrications of artworks, technologies and social practice. This historical awareness is at the centre of dissonance as well as generosity: generosity contains the hope for a future informed by social justice and dissonance maintains the frictions of inequity that persist in difference. I have focused on what occurs at the intersection of the “in process” qualities of performance and technologies. It is through the interwoven frictions of performance and digital technology, of practices of relation with the frames that mediate them, that I have aimed to define internet-situated art. Vitally, the aim here has never been to resolve that friction: rather, dissonance suggests it is a quality to be acknowledged and considered as, and in, the future. Friction is present in all our current practices of relation, in all the ways that our current practices of relation are always already performing the social into its future iterations.

Glossary

Dissonance is a performative tactic, present in the noise and friction of technologically mediated communication as well as the theatricality and (near) failure of performance, and is a consequence of the experience of difference that necessarily follows from **generosity**. It is through an exploration of the interweaving of **generosity** and **dissonance** that this project addresses the specific ways in which the practice of art shaped and forged by the new contingencies of relations that emerge within internet-situated contexts.

Generosity is a **practice of relation** that refers to the ways in which we acknowledge others by being conscious of their presence as different to our own. It is an awareness of relations that understands we need different things and understand things differently.

Interfaces are the processes, or sites, of connection between two things.

The **internet** is a network of networks; it is made up of both hardware and software. The world wide web, as well as other software interfaces, operates through the software that uses the networking of the internet.

Internet-situated artwork makes use of the materials and processes of the internet. These works almost always have a performative component: to be “internet-situated”, some aspect of their making and presentation must be “situated” within the movement of information through the internet. This emphasis on the processes of the internet alongside its materials is what distinguishes internet-situated art as a specific subset of internet art.

Networks are systems of functional connections comprised of points (nodes) at which pathways connect, meshing together in a system across which information moves.

Performance is both a social and an artistic practice; it is the intersection or points of transition between these two “modes” of performance that are the

focus of my project. As a social practice, “performance” refers to (re)iterative behaviours that constitute subjects as well as social relations and actions. As an artistic medium, performance is a diffuse category of practices united by their use of (re)enactment as well as the specificities of site, presence and audience-spectator relations each performance negotiates.

Practices of relation are the various ways our relationships can be and are enacted through repeated actions (practices) that provide a structure for them.

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Appendix A: *how we are together* artworks

The artworks that form the practice component of *how we are together* are exhibited online at <http://cargocollective.com/howwearetogether>

Documentation is included on a DVD with the printed thesis (files indicated below), however the work should be viewed online if possible.

1. ***when we are together on the internet* (2014)**

performance
transmute at Brighton Digital Festival 2014
Discussed in Introduction; Conclusion.

ONLINE EXHIBITION:

<http://cargocollective.com/howwearetogether/when-we-are-together-on-the-internet>

DVD:

excerpt from text of *when we are together* (2014)

recorded 25 Sept 2017

sound, 5.12

FILE: A1-when-we-are-together.mp3

2. ***exchanges* (2014 – 2017)**

in collaboration with Mira Loew
multimedia
online
Discussed in Chapter 2.

ONLINE EXHIBITION:

<http://cargocollective.com/howwearetogether/exchanges-with-Mira-Loew>

DVD:

#autumn, an exchange with Mira Loew (2015)

colour video, 3.10

FILE: A2-exchange-autumn.mov

#emotionallabours, an exchange with Mira Loew (2016)

colour video, 5.10

FILE: A2-exchange-emotionallabours.mov

3. ***how not to perform* (2015)**

web performance
online
Discussed in Chapter 3.

ONLINE EXHIBITION:

<http://cargocollective.com/howwearetogether/how-not-to-perform>

DVD:
recording of *how not to perform* (2015)
colour video, sound, 8.18
FILE: A3-how-not-to-perform.mp4

4. *i'm not done/2* (2015)

in collaboration with Mira Loew
residency
Guest Projects, London UK
Discussed in Chapter 2.

ONLINE EXHIBITION:

<http://cargocollective.com/howwearetogether/i-m-not-done-2-Residency-with-Mira-Loew>

DVD:
closing for *i'm not done/2*, with Mira Loew (2015)
performative video documenting performance & residency
colour video, sound, 8.22
FILE: A4-closing.mp4

conversation on 'generosity + collaboration + ethics/intimacy'
13 Sept 2015
Image: Mira Loew
FILE: A4-conversation-generosity-images.pdf

documentation of *exchanges* for *i'm not done/2*, with Mira Loew (2015)
colour video, sound, 6.10
FILE: A4-exchange.mov

5. *the point is that it is together/apart* (2015)

video performance
online
Discussed in Chapter 5.

ONLINE EXHIBITION:

<http://cargocollective.com/howwearetogether/the-point-is-that-it-is-together-apart>

DVD:
'part i (variation one)' of *the point is that it is together/apart* (2015)
colour video, sound, 2.10
FILE: A5-the-point-i-one.mp4

'part i (variation two)' of *the point is that it is together/apart* (2015)
colour video, sound, 1.20
FILE: A5-the-point-i-two.mp4

'part i (variation three)' of *the point is that it is together/apart* (2015)
colour video, sound, 1.42
FILE: A5-the-point-i-three.mp4

'collected (variation three)' of *the point is that it is together/apart* (2015)
colour video, sound, 8.03
FILE: A5-the-point-collected-three.mp4

6. *exercises in long distance charisma* (2016)

video performance
online
Discussed in Chapter 1 and Chapter 5.

ONLINE EXHIBITION:

<http://cargocollective.com/howwearetogether/exercises-in-long-distance-charisma>

DVD:

charisma (for jbm & ml) (2016)
performative video
colour video, sound, 7.17
FILE: A6-charisma-for-jbm-ml.mp4

charisma (for others) (2016)
performative video
colour video, sound, 10.47
FILE: A6-charisma-for-others.mp4

charisma (with ml, amd & jbm) (2016)
performative video
colour video, sound, 6.43
FILE: A6-charisma-w-ml-amd-jbm.mp4

7. *what parts of your idea were mine* (2016)

in collaboration with Mira Loew
performance
Guest Projects, London UK
Discussed in Chapter 2.

ONLINE EXHIBITION:

<http://cargocollective.com/howwearetogether/what-parts-of-your-idea-were-mine>

DVD:

Mira Loew & Jane Frances Dunlop
performing *what parts of your idea were mine* (2016).
Image: Rafa Prada.
FILE: A7-what-parts-images.pdf

excerpt from *what parts of your idea are mine* (2016)
recorded 9 Nov 2017
sound, 5.03
FILE: A7-what-parts.mp3

8. ***minor fabrics* (2016)**
livestream performance
online
Discussed in Chapter 4.

ONLINE EXHIBITION:
<http://cargocollective.com/howwearetogether/minor-fabrics>

DVD:
minor fabrics (2016)
colour video, sound, 1.01.04
FILE: A8-minor-fabrics.mp4

a recording from the live performance of *minor fabrics* (2016)
colour video, sound, 2.23
Recording provided by Wes Goatley.
FILE: A8-minor-fabrics-documentation.mov

9. ***exercises on nervousness* (2016)**
performance (live and livestream)
Mining the desktop, Melbourne AUS
Discussed in Chapter 4.

ONLINE EXHIBITION:
<http://cargocollective.com/howwearetogether/exercises-in-nervousness>

DVD:
exercises on nervousness (one) (2016)
colour video, sound, 9.40
FILE: A9-exercises-on-nervousness1.mp4

exercises on nervousness (two) (2016)
colour video, sound, 6.51
FILE: A9-exercises-on-nervousness2.mp4

10. ***(tfw) spin measure cut* (2016)**
multichannel sound and video installation
Seventh Gallery & online, Melbourne AUS
Discussed in Chapter 2.

ONLINE EXHIBITION:
<http://cargocollective.com/howwearetogether/tfw-spin-measure-cut>

DVD:
'present oriented gestures' from (*tfw*) *spin measure cut* (2016)
colour video, sound, 10.32
FILE: A10-tfw-smc-present-oriented-gestures.mp4

'cut' from (*tfw*) *spin measure cut* (2016)
colour video, 7.00
FILE: A10-tfw-smc-cut.mov

(*tfw*) *spin measure cut* (2016)
installation images
FILE: A10-tfw-smc-images.pdf

11. ***hurl outward at a certain pace* (2016)**
multi-channel sound and video installation
ONCA Gallery and online, Brighton UK
Discussed in Chapter 3.

ONLINE EXHIBITION:
<http://cargocollective.com/howwearetogether/hurl-outward-at-a-certain-pace>

DVD:
hurl outward at a certain pace
documentation of online installation
colour video, sound, 10.22
FILE: A11-hurl-outward-online.mov

hurl outward at a certain pace
documentation of online installation
Images: Mira Loew
FILE: A11-hurl-outward-images.pdf

hurl outward at a certain pace
publication
FILE: A11-hurl-outward-PUBLICATION.pdf

12. ***arrangements for a temporary space* (2017)**
in collaboration with Mira Loew
performance and multi-channel installation
Green Rooms Artist Hotel, London UK
Discussed in Chapter 5.

ONLINE EXHIBITION:
<http://cargocollective.com/howwearetogether/arrangements-for-a-temporary-space-with-Mira-Loew>

DVD:
arrangements for a temporary space (2017)
documentation of installation and performance
Images by Tom Scott.
FILE: A12-arrangements-images.pdf

IA HackPad: Green Rooms (2017)
documentation of *arrangements for a temporary space*
colour video, sound, 2.30
Video by Tom Scott.
FILE: A12-arrangements-videoclip.mp4

temporary arrangement
documentation of *arrangements for a temporary space*
in collaboration with Mira Loew
colour video, sound, 4.27
FILE: A12-temporary-arrangement.mp4

13. ***how we are together* (2017)**
online exhibition created to accompany written thesis

ONLINE EXHIBITION:
<http://cargocollective.com/howwearetogether/>

DVD:
how we are together
documentation of website for online exhibition
FILE: A13-online-exhibition-images.pdf

Appendix B: Publications

Early writing on Rhiannon Armstrong's *The International Archive of Things Unsaid* appeared as 'Care in Crowded Spaces' in *Exeunt*, 13 Oct 2015.

<http://exeuntmagazine.com/features/care-in-crowded-spaces/>

Initial thoughts on Gertrude Stein's 'nervousness' appear in the essay 'Nervous? We Should Be' in *Real Life*, 19 July 2016.

<http://reallifemag.com/nervous-we-should-be/>

An article that informs the work of Chapter 3 appeared as 'Proximity and Dissonance in Internet-situated Performance' in *Performance Research: On Proximity* 22:3 (2017).

<https://doi.org/10.1080/13528165.2017.1346993>

Further publications, unrelated to my research:

'Through the wires'

in *Real Life*, 26 July 2017

<http://reallifemag.com/through-the-wires/>

'on the habit of being one's self: an essay on and for Joe Moran'

in the programme for Joe Moran's *On the Habit of Being One's Self*

27 – 28 September 2017 Sadler's Wells, London UK

Appendix C: Artists and events

2017

arrangements for a temporary space
Jane Frances Dunlop and Mira Low
performance

Hollow Tongues (2017)
(Play)ground-less
VR performance and installation

2016

A Score, A Groove, A Phantom (2016)
Evan Ifekoya
exhibition

Electronic Superhighway (2016)
Omar Kholeif, curator
Whitechapel Gallery
exhibition

Hotline #1 (2016)
Jamila Johnson-Small and Sara Sassanelli
conversation event

hurl outward at a certain pace (2016)
Jane Frances Dunlop
multichannel installation, online installation

minor fabrics (2016)
Jane Frances Dunlop
livestream performance

(tfw) spin measure cut (2016)
Jane Frances Dunlop
multichannel sound and video installation

2015

body anxiety (2015)
Jennifer Chan and Leah Schrager, curators
an online exhibition

Contra-Internet Inversion Practice #1: Constituting an Outside (Utopian Plagiarism) (2015)
Zach Blas
video

Distant Feeling(s) (2015 – Ongoing)
Annie Abrahams with Lisa Parra and Daniel Pinheiro
an online performance series

Internet Bedroom (2015)
IDPW
livestream performance, online installation

Real Live Online (2015)
Lucas G. Pinheiro and Devin Kenny, curators
an online exhibition

The International Archive of Things Left Unsaid (2015)
Rhiannon Armstrong
online performance installation

The Long Table on Gender (2015)
Lois Weaver, artist
performance

2014

A Personal Project (2014)
Shawne Michlain Holloway
online performances and artifacts

Contraband (2014)
Leah Lovett
livestreamed transatlantic performance

In Mere Spaces All Things Are Side By Side I (2014)
Morehshin Allahyari
digital video

Les Yeux d'Argos (2014)
Sofiane and Selma Ouisse
livestream performance

So Like You (2014)
Erica Scourti
photographs with metadata

when we are together on the internet (2014)
Jane Frances Dunlop
performance

2013

Inbox Full (2013)
Molly Soda
webcam video performance

rhiannaboi95 (2013)
SuburbanBeast
performance

The Whitney Museum *The World's First Collaborative Sentence* (1994)
by Douglas Davis is restored and presented at.

Coffee Tables at Chisenhale Dance Space are initiated by Gillie
Klieman.

2010

make-shift (2010 – 12)
Helen Varley Jamieson and Paula Crutchlow
networked performance series

Reenactments (2007 – 10)
Eva and Franco Mattes
online performance

2009

Ana Voog's *Anacam* ends

2006

Rhiannon Armstrong begins performance project *The International
Archive of Things Left Unsaid*.

2000

1998

The_Living (1998)
Debra Solomon
video performance

1997

Ever is Over All (1997)
Pipilotti Rist
multichannel video

Ana Voog's *Anacam* begins.

Internet mailing list *faces* started by Kathy Rae Huffman, Diana
McCarty and Valie Djordjevic.

1996

My Boyfriend Came Back From The War (1996)
Olia Lialana
html artwork

Jennifer Ringley's *JenniCam* begins.

Rhizome founded as an internet mailing list.

- 1995
Internet mailing list *nettime* started by Geert Lovink and Pit Schultz.
- 1994
Douglas Davis *The World's First Collaborative Sentence* is started.

HTML (Hypertext Markup Language) format arranged at the first World Wide Web Conference.
- 1992
Telematic Dreaming (1992)
Paul Sermon
telematic installation
- 1991
Cyberfeminist Manifesto for the 21st C.
VNSMATRIX
- 1990**
Karen Finley's *Shock Treatment* (1990), a collection of poems and performance monologues, is published.
- 1989
Tim Berners-Lee's paper 'Information management: a proposal' lays out system of interconnected and browse-able documents.
- 1984
Good Morning, Mr Orwell (1984)
Nam June Paik, in collaboration with John Cage
satellite video
- 1983
La Plissure du Texte (1983)
Roy Ascott
collaborative html document
- 1981
Some Disordered Interior Geometries (1981)
Francesca Woodman
artist's book
- 1980**
Hole-in-Space (1980)
Kit Galloway and Sherrie Rabinowitz
satellite livestream

Untitled Film Stills (1977-80)
Cindy Sherman
photographs

- 1975
Ana Mendieta (1975)
Butterfly
video
- 1975
Interior Scroll (1975)
Carolee Schneeman
performance
- 1975
Berlin Exercises in Nine Pieces (1974-5)
Rebecca Horn
video
- 1974
Boomerang (1974)
Richard Serra and Nancy Holt
video
- 1970**
Kathie Sarachild's 'Programme for Feminist Consciousness-Raising'
published in *Notes from the Second Year: Women's Liberations Major Writings of the Radical Feminists*.
- 1971
Swamp (1971)
Nancy Holt and Robert Smithson
film
- Facing a Family* (1971)
VALIE EXPORT
video
- 1968
Trio Film (1968)
Yvonne Rainer
film
- 1967
Volleyball (Foot Film) and Hand (1967)
Yvonne Rainer
film
- 1964
Cut Piece (1964)
Yoko Ono
performance
- 1960**

1952

Untitled (also known as *Theatre Piece no. 1*)

John Cage and David Tudor and Robert Rauschenberg

Black Mountain College

performances

Appendix D: Software programs, social medias

This appendix provides context to the specific software programs, websites and applications that are referred to within the thesis. Digital technologies change swiftly: these definitions serve to further situate a future reader in the applications that were seemingly ubiquitous during the period (2014 – 2017) of writing.

Applications provide the interface for software programs that often require the Internet and enable users to access these programs on computers as well as other small and large screen devices. By small and large screen devices, I mean to refer to all portable smart devices such as portable laptops, smart phones, tablets and smart watches.

Digital communication applications are programs installed on personal computers as well as small and large screen devices that enable users to make video and audio-only calls via the Internet. As such, these applications require access to the Internet (either Wi-Fi or via a cellular data plan).

Facebook is an online social networking and social media site. At the time of writing, it was the largest and most ubiquitous general social media in the Western contexts this thesis focuses on.

FaceTime is a digital communication application that enables video calling as well as audio-only calling via the internet. It comes pre-installed on technology company **Apple's** devices (such as iPads, iPhones, MacBooks).

Gmail is a free email service, hosted by **Google**. User accounts associated with **Gmail** can be used to access other applications such as **GoogleDocs**, a shared document service, and **Google Hangouts**, a messaging service that enables users to send instant messages as well as make video and audio calls via the internet.

Google Hangouts on Air was a livestreaming application embedded within Google Hangouts. Google Hangouts on Air enabled users to broadcast via the Hangouts interface, and automatically archived the material on a user's connected **YouTube** account. It was phased out in Autumn 2016. YouTube Live replaced Google Hangouts on Air as a free and direct to YouTube streaming software. **YouTube** and **Google** are both owned by **Alphabet Inc.**

iMessage is an instant messaging application that transmits text, audio, video and images via the internet. It is an application developed by **Apple** and, like **FaceTime**, comes pre-installed on **Apple** devices.

Instagram is a social media application that focuses on the sharing and circulation of images as well as videos. It is owned by **Facebook**.

Skype is a digital communication application that enables audio and video calling as well as text messaging. It is owned by the software company **Microsoft**.

Social media and **social networking** sites are websites, often with connected application for small and large screen devices, that enable users to establish connections with peers for the purposes of sharing of information (media, messages) with them.

Tumblr is a social networking website that allows users to create blogs. Blogs are webpages hosted by a website, such as **Tumblr**, where user generated content is posted.

Vimeo is web-based platform for publishing videos. There are various levels of membership, which limit the amount of video users can upload.

Web browsers are used to navigate the World Wide Web, which is a system of interlinked servers on the internet. A browser enables users to display the different webpages that make up a website. **Chrome** is a web browser that was developed by Google. **Firefox** is a web browser that was developed by

Mozilla. Both of these browsers are for accessing the parts of World Wide Web indexed by search engines.

WhatsApp is a digital communication application that enables instant messaging as well as audio and video calls via the internet. It is owned by **Facebook**.

YouTube is a web-based platform for publishing videos. Users can upload videos for free to the website. It is owned by Alphabet Inc., the multinational conglomerate that was formerly Google and of which Google is now a part.