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### With-In-Through

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## **Abstract**

I invite you to join me on a wandering into/besides/returning with ecological-attunement through gatherings, exercises, reflections, and poetry; conversing with the prior as they are as present as the current. Everything has a way of oozing together, losing perceived independence and joining in inter-dependent choreographies.

**With/In/Through  
By  
Rumpelstiltskin Morgan**

**B.F.A., Rutgers University, Mason Gross School of the Arts, 2017**

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Fine Arts in Studio Arts  
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“My frail soul survives by vibrating at the sound of my warmth, my conscious voice, my own version of my mother tongue, my own subtle melody.” (Serres 59)

**Hello and thank you for taking the time to engage!**

My practice centers on the process of re-socialization as shaping behaviors between the human and more than human world in an effort to embrace the fluidity and entanglement of co-existence. These ways of being in shared space gently confront the perception of the distinct self as practices create time and space for new and rekindled ways of being in generous and caring relationships within the ecological every-day.

Being a neurodivergent human artist, my capacity for human interaction has influenced the ways in which my practice engages with other people. To build any sense of “community” I needed to expand my definition of communication, and cope with the overwhelming infinite networks that we are a part—not apart—of. Like blood creating a new path to reach an extremity, to nourish, to survive, my practice arranges itself in a way to offer moments to stretch our sensibilities of relation. To begin, to sustain, to maintain, with the “other than ourselves,” while reflecting on closer-ing as an opportunity to ask ourselves if/how/why we exist as separates.

The socialization period in companion animals is the time when they are most open to learning about their environment, their littermates, mother and other animals of their species, humans and other species. It is a time in the life of a puppy or kitten where providing diverse, positive experiences can prevent the development of fearful responses and subsequent behavioral problems. A sensitive period is a period of time

when animals are most able to benefit from exposure to a range of stimuli. During this period most puppies and kittens show a high willingness to explore and play and often show little fear when encountering new animals, people, objects, or experiences. If deprived of exposure to people, animals and situations they may have an increased risk of developing into adults who have problems with fear, aggression and arousal. (American Veterinary Medical Association Animal Welfare Divisions)

Socialization is an ongoing process, but this requires time, space, and patience. Having spent a lot of time considering this in terms of canine relationships, I realized that humans experience socialization in a very similar way. Dogs go through phases of their lives in a timeframe more condensed compared to humans, and we can see changes more quickly. Of course that is also the benefit of an external perspective. I wonder what our changes are like to them? Please note that language here is supporting a non-ownership approach to these relationships. Having been fortunate enough to share my life with multiple canine companions, with different social comforts, and investing what I can into supporting them, I see opportunities for the optimistic approach to building internal and practical systems of re-socialization.

It is important to recognize that I am never the sole creator, or even primary being responsible for things. In many cases there are other people involved, and in all cases, there are the non-human collaborators, all of whom make things possible.

I have looked to gardening, dog training, gatherings, and writing for spending time with these questions. My work is focused on social settings, opening ourselves to what constitutes the social in multi-species “reworlding” (Haraway, 2016, p. 52). Social actions that are solely human focused are missing the point of ecology and entanglement. Historically from a western experience, *social practice* has been human centered, as can be seen in *Art and Social Action*,

but those are imaginary limits. Through essays, texts, and case studies, contributions to the book address and engage in subjects including global warming and social justice, always from a human perspective and sense of agency (Sholette, Bass and Social Practice Queens, 2018).

These practices are more inclined to prioritize human gatherings, and goals are generally measured in human terms. Humans have a significant role in what the future is and I am learning to consider what is art not for humans. The first step in this process is the reconsideration of how I position humans in circumstances, and secondly, how is it shared.

It's the practice of being what is considered a human.

## Patience

### Simultaneous Air

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6

*Part A*

a u u u g h

*Part B*

h u h s s s h u h s s s

w o o o p h

h u h s s s h u h s s s

u u u g h w-

h u h s s s h u h s s s

o o o p h a-

h u h s s s h u h s s s

h a w o o o-

h u h s s s h u h s s h-

h a u u h f-

u h s s s h u s s h u h



f f f f o h-  
 s s s h u h s s s h u s-  
 a a u h p h-  
 s s h u h s s h u h s s  
 o o o h a h-  
 h u h s s h u h s s s s  
 a u u u g h  
 h u h s s s s h u h s s-  
 a a a a a h  
 s h u u h s s s h u u h  
 a a u u u h  
 s s s h u h s s s h u h

### Care (from dictionary)

mind

disquieted uncertainty and

responsibility by sickness

some-thing causes

particular worry- relax and leave

all your *cares* behind

grief or *care*

a cause for watchful attention

take grief or *care*

for the common good

or attention to health

well-being and safety

grief and *care*



*Figure 1. Hello Earth Day! The midnight opening for the Visual Arts Experimental Garden (2022)*

Far from utopian, collaborations can be difficult and time consuming, and for those of use born into the structure of capitalism, we aren't taught how to do it well, if at all. But collaboration does have the potential to model more horizontal ways of being in the world... Importantly, conflict cannot be as easily avoided in collectives as they are in state-based or corporate hierarchies, where the threat of force, suppressed liberation, and internalized discipline, in addition to actual violence, attempt to erase difference and create a picture of harmony. Messy differences and inevitable conflicts that arise can be understood as opportunities for growth and self-reflection, even if resolution is not desired (Haugwout 185).

---

How do we cope with the need to consume?

Having a garden at school is going to be a good thing. I think I know this, but am not sure what is beyond that. My immediate impulse is to respond in a personal-historically consumptive way about the lack of food options in Comstock Art Facility, an art building in between the main areas of campus with two vending machines—one for soda and one for snacks. Is the impulse to transaction inherently a bad thing, or is there a way to navigate our relationship that expands sensibilities and appreciates communication that is not human-centric? What set of interactions are introduced with this type of space?

My first thoughts of transactions are monetary and single-use, like buying a bundle of mint from the farmer's market. But as I write this, I realize there are many layers to that exchange—including the "financial transaction," but also the steps before and the ones after, such as making a cup of tea in the evening. Anthropocentric attitudes are not durational, and in many ways isolated from context and intimacy, a space Haraway identifies as necessary in ecologically sustainable futures. A setting between capitalism and social anxiety, this landscape is informed by the structure of my daily practices, with the need to stay home or at least not be around people in order to maintain some degree of self-care. The opportunity to be involved in longer term conversations is something with which I struggle. Long conversations are at the core of ecological consciousness, one that supports multi-species futurities because of the recognition and effect to the non-self. While every being we come into contact with may be open to long

term conversations, I find gardens to be more resonant with me. There is a degree of living-ness that is relatable, but not only human-serving. This dialogue is a gentle confrontation and invitation to learn to invest and develop conductive threads.

In *Braiding Sweetgrass*, Robin Wall Kimmerer discusses the idea of gifting compared to receiving something for free. She writes of the role of expectations and continued investment in gifts, whereas something for free is detached from relationships and asks for no further considerations of consequence (Kimmerer 26). In this way I believe the expanded garden is facilitating gifting, in that it is a gift of slow space, multi-level relationships, and expanded nourishment. The garden is host for interspecies communication. The deer visit often during the warmer months. The blueberries and strawberries were all eaten, but they left the tomatoes and beans.

In exchange for the gifts from the garden, our role as human caregivers aids in the support of their lives too. Care is not unidirectional. It is nonlinear in a complex system. Moving toward the second spring season, the soil will be more ideal for inhabitation because of our flora and fauna companions. For the small rodents that reside in the straw lining, there is space for you.

---

Washing my face at night makes me *feel* ready to accept dreams

---

Mabyn is such a fascinating puppy— there is an intensity I have not experienced before. She is always eager to learn and do things. She is driven. During some relaxing times when she accepts

a degree of stillness, we are trying to get into a routine of reading. We sit on a reclining chair, soft blanket covering my legs and toes, and a smaller blanket for her to snuggle in. We are currently reading *Dog Songs*, by Mary Oliver, but today she wants to rest on my chest. Her peanut body spread out and just settled into my warmth, which she much appreciates with her being only 2.5 lbs, and it being below freezing outside.

I feel our breath nearing in choreography. I believe she is sleeping, but I wonder how my deep and sometimes giggling breaths feel for her. Beyond the funny and special moment in and of itself, this is also a learning experience. She breathes with such subtly and gentleness that it helps me see the breath of others, literally and expanded-ly. Attuning to one another through instinctive and evolutionary companionship through non-conscious networks.

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*Figure 2. Image from Companion Species Artist Gathering Series: Canine-Human Entanglement Session Artist Residency (2022)*

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There is a small selection of residencies that “allow” dogs, and in many cases, they are not encouraged—an act that while appreciating the “focused time” without “interruption,” simultaneously denies the role of companion species in the creative process, and the tangents that inform them.

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*rim*

ruled petals waiving in their place trapeze grainy shores luring neighbors

a membrane

---



*Figure 3. (Where) Is Nature? (2020)*

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Homemade ice cream and a funky ice cream cone shaped performance/being score!

A few of us made some ice cream—vegan inclusive—and shared the score with the School of Art graduate community outside near the VAEG Garden. Since it was August, it was also an introduction to some of the new members of our community. We got to try different flavors, like strawberry and saffron-rose. It was an exercise in “becoming ice cream.”

There was an immediate sense of what socializing is. Primarily because it took place in a recognizable social space. But in the exercise, through visual and poetic directions, we are given permission to sink into the set of actions and entangle with the materials we are consuming. In *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses*, Juhani Pallasmaa embraces the role of non-visual senses in tethering more solidly to our surroundings, and in this moment, we are involved in that in a very conscious way. We are experiencing the interactions through the lens of a human, but also expanding what that is through memory, touch, taste, smell, and sharing in that experience in a networking manner.

---

**A garden is just a garden, a way of being.**

A garden gifts to me space to care for and learn to care about systems of which only certain parts are accessible to me. It is also space to ask/be asked and respond/be responded to non-humanly-judgmentally about why I am there. In this way, one attunes to a non-anthropocentric platform of exchange. It is ok to reply with a want for something, or a need for something to eat, use as a dye, or cut some flowers for a vase. Transactions are part of what living and being alive requires, but through intentional reciprocity, the garden isn't just a resource.

Gardens operate on a timeline of neighborly breath.



Being adjacent to the Comstock Art Facility, VAEG is a different way of learning, at a pace in conversation with the climate. Snow days are nice for students, but the blueberries still need to conserve energy to make it to the spring. The periods of above ground/upward activity and below ground/non-visible activity are an alternative to the semester structure. There is a sustainable rhythm that doesn't experience burnout. This is a practice in a different and biologically connected system.

---

Bumble bee line drawing

Where does collaboration end? It doesn't and it can't. Because to create those distinctions closes consequentiality and creates barriers to responsibility and accountability.

Further denying the inter-connectedness of everything.

Collaboration/audience/participation is really a conversation about the bounded-ness of work. Creating a flimsy disguise for artists to separate themselves from their actions of the ecology of exchange. In delineating and supporting discreteness we allow ourselves to practice isolation, which is necessary in some cases, but as a general way of living loses context and futurity.

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*Figure 4. Image from Companion Species Artist Gathering Series: Canine-Human Entanglement Session Artist Residency (2022)*

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“Trust the process” (Grass, 2022) is what Sarah Grass said, during our time at the Canine-Human Entanglement Session Artist Residency with regards to her companion, Chon Chon, being off leash for the first time in a space like this. There was something embedded or perhaps, inherent in the space, activated through the convergence of beings past and present.

With those words, my aunt and I would go out in the early morning with Tiny and Mabyn and their proportionately long leashes. Both of them have reactive tendencies and can get overwhelmed easily with other dogs too much in their space, so we made sure to engage in this practice during a time there would be minimal traffic. They can run faster than us, and I was nervous, but tried to embody and project confidence in this approach.

We started off with calling them back to us for treats—fresh chicken, of course. As we strolled around the expansive field with some trees and meadow-like areas, our companions adapted to the distance. Our thread of communication metamorphosed into one of expanded trust and awareness.

My aunt and I would separate—one of us at the top of the hill, and one at the bottom—and we would call the dogs back and forth. Tiny was confident in her reply, gently trotting to me, but Mabyn was surprising. She sprinted with such expression, I choose not to confine it to the boundaries of language, and pause with it as embodied memory. Our time together, whether at home watching a movie, or in a training class, was building our own unique structure of communication that was activated in this space.

---

*becoming ice cream*  
*(a meditative sonic text score)*

...

when you meet  
 your eyes meet  
 your hand meets  
 your tongue meets  
 i c e c r e a m

allow all your senses to converge  
 listen, see, smell, feel, taste

what sounds does the ice cream make throughout your meeting?  
 allow the ice cream to resonate with(in) your body  
 sound out a tone that represents your meeting  
 repeat with each scoop of ice cream in your mouth  
 if you sense a different tone throughout your meeting, sound out each one

...

.

*Figure 5. becoming ice cream (a meditative sonic text score ) by Zelikha Shoja as part of the VAEG Being Extracted: Anti-Social Ice Cream Social (2022)*



*Figure 6. Image from one of the Speculative Reading Series sessions (2021)*

I feel really able to...

Do you really want to know how I am— as we are walking in opposite directions?  
Or more so, do you have the time or capacity for a response?

Take all the time you need.

---

How do *you* cope with the inter-connectivity of everything?

---

**12/22/21 (this could be any day)**

Tiny and I went to our favorite park today, Davidson's Mill Pond Park in South Brunswick.

Because my aunt's car was delayed at the shop, we found ourselves visiting at dusk instead of our afternoon routine. We embraced this change, awaiting the different sights, sounds, and smells (mostly for Tiny).

Our fear EVERY TIME we visit the park is an interaction with off leash dogs, because there has been a history of socially aggressive dogs encroaching our personal space under the guise of "friendliness." I am referring to dogs that do not or are unable to respond appropriately to dogs

that are not interested in, or fearful of social engagement. This is a human issue, but I have a difficult time not consciously blaming the dogs for the trauma Tiny experiences.

Within the first 300 feet, we see two dogs that are off leash, and decide to veer right taking one of her favorite trails—the Mill Pond Trail—a wooded path taking us down to the lake. As expected, this path is covered in leaves, some starting to break apart from continual friction with shoes. Tiny's leash sharply hums past me after pausing to investigate a fallen branch. As lovely as the leaves are, they present a bit of an issue (for my human, unbalanced self that is) as we approach stone steps blanketed by the patinaed plant matter. I check every step for direct contact with a stone. Tiny looks back, impatiently from 35 feet ahead.

Our eyes adjust (mine more slowly) as the sun ritually prepares to set; everything muddles with a violet glow. Muscle memory aids in traversing the web of tree roots, stones, and branches. Making our way around the corner and out of the Mill Pond Trail, my chest muscles tense, my heart starts jumping, and I pray my reaction isn't conducted through the 50 feet of neon orange nylon webbing that is Tiny's leash. A voice too close for comfort calls out, "Holly, come here Holly." I continually scan our surroundings for any sight of the source of the failed recall or the recipient. The voice appears to be following us.

The inevitable comes when two off leash dogs run into my line of sight, about 100 feet to our left in the field. We stop with the hopes that they have not noticed us and are too preoccupied with each other to come our way. Tiny is already on my right side pulling at the leash to move in the opposite direction. To our unluck, they see us and make their approach through the field.

I was unsure what to do. Only one of the two dogs made their way through the woods and came close enough to be acknowledged. In the most calm and confident voice I could muster, I requested them to “get back” and that seemed to help enough to divert their attention to me and away from Tiny, but they were within arms-reach. I took the rolled up leash and started flicking my wrist to create an unwelcoming gesture. This worked and with their human companions approaching they left us. This may have been an effective solution to prevent the dog from invading Tiny’s personal space, but I wonder if it was the “right” decision. Was I reinforcing her fear by keeping the dog away in my attempt to show her I will keep her safe and the burden of worry need not fall on her shoulders? My only goal is to support her and get to a point where she is at least not fearful at the sight of an off-leash dog. She doesn’t deserve to be traumatized at the park, non-social beings included.

The leash is an emotional and physical connector between human and dog in a most beautiful way. It asks the human to be aware of the being on the other end and any interactions the webbing has with the occupied space, like catching on twigs, or sometimes just about to get peed on. On the other hand, the absence of a leash asks much less of the shared experience between human and dog. You do not have to worry about any snags or pee, or if you are going to trip and fall. It is as much an emotional as it is a physical break from your companion. Why is this break necessary, and how does this impact our willingness to sustain a responsibility for others?

---

The eraser is almost gone, but the pencil might not be used up by the same time.



Figure 7. Visual Arts Experimental Garden event poster (2022).

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I'm learning there is a willingness and an openness to becoming more fluid in our boundaries of self/other than self— our capacities of sorts. Donna Haraway writes of the liveliness of relationships in that they are processes, always in motion and recalibrating themselves in their entanglements. She uses the term “fiction” to be part of the present, and not cured like a fact, immobile (Haraway, 2003, p. 19). In learning about and being present with our surroundings— of all beings—we allow ourselves to permeate and be permeated by a less distinct sense of reality. One that is connected and satisfyingly historical.

---



What does it mean to not treat the land as a human-serving resource? It's really hard to get out of that. Even with my garden (saying "my garden"), I find myself reverting to a "this will give me X" voice. How can that co-exist with living—which is the goal, maybe?

---

Leaving the house isn't easy

I return unusable

Unmoving to the human eye

and unfit

weaving into the chair

a site

trying to mend

---

Toap, toap, taap, taap, taap

T-tt-t-t-t

D-d-d-d-d

Td-td-td-td

B-a-w

Ba-w

L-aw

Law

L-a-w

M-a-w

Trp-trp

Drp

Drp

Lrp

Lirp

Lrrp

Pew-pew-pew

Tpew-tpew-tpew  
Tcew-tcew-tcew  
R-r-r-r-l  
Twl-twrl-twrl-twrl-twrl  
Twrrl-twrrl-twrrl-twrrl  
Hrrrl-hrrrl-hrrrl-

8:03pm

---

Firefly in the day  
(nearly noon)  
sitting on the screen  
waking eyes shut  
If I don't see them dig  
my skin vibrating  
becoming not solid  
like something crawling  
that tickles spiderweb window lines  
and plants growing out of vases.  
about a drawer  
they didn't dig the hole(s)?

---

**We do not all agree if there should be a delivery option for the ice cream event.**

There is something not sitting well with me about only having an in-person option. The other collaborators agree with the concerns, whether because of Covid, work, or you don't want to drive over, etc. But it really comes down to the labor, and resources that it takes to offer that. That's totally fair. We have run out of the original funding for the garden, and there is only a certain amount of time and money we all have, plus ice cream melts.

Luckily, we have come to an agreement, and we will offer the delivery option. And one person signed up for it! It feels like we are just scratching the surface of ways to be inclusive and

consider community beyond the immediate. An ecologically conscious future is one that has the capacity to support many methods of being social, and one that doesn't place hierarchical values to those differing approaches. It is about accepting of our differences and finding individual ways to support the needs of others. That starts with individual awareness and slowly builds outwards and towards other individual stretching.

---

Before conversations can start, you need to be capable of having them. The same goes for talking and taking action about climate change and ecological consciousness. Humans need to work on/towards having that capacity.

When walking, there is pressure to keep moving. But when on a boat, my body can stop moving, the water is supporting me.

Half of the blackberries are for the dogs.  
Nothing is just mine— but I think that is also the point.  
Ownership is a false perception of relation.

What are appreciations through “artificial” experiences?  
Leaf Impression

Palms flat atop the water as gently as possible- vibrations of the finger and palm print lines, a non-invasive handshake, a learning opportunity to handle with care.

Your recipe inspired me

---

I just found my first four leaf clover! In the past I have looked for them, but never was able to spot one. This experience was different in that it seemed to present or make itself visible in a way that felt I was given permission to pick. What does it mean to be given permission? If for a brief moment to be out of the human serving mindset and into a conversation with a clover plant.

It wasn't linguistic. It wasn't "body" language perse. It was a post-language post-human form of communication, an attuning into a different set of relations.

---

In the process of surfacing and interacting with what we consider ours, I look to the concept of the strange stranger by Timothy Morton, as a method to question boundaries of identity. The Strange Stranger proposes that by investigating the interconnectivity between things, we start to question what makes something distinct from another. "The ecological thought permits no distance. Thinking interdependence involves dissolving the barrier between "over here" and "over there", and more fundamentally, the metaphysical illusion of rigid, narrow boundaries (Morton, 2010, p. 39). If the way I consider myself as a human is flawed, or a complete fallacy, then the idea of something being "mine" ceases the familiar.

Private property is an extension/representation of our selfness in terms such as separation, aesthetics, culture, and social standing, but that belief also then challenges the boundaries of self, and highlights the permeability and laxity of distinction as an artificial construct. Is something that is mine, part of me, and then what am I? As great as it is to let go of solidity and enmesh with the blurred surroundings, it is human structured surroundings which also congeals the self again. Architecture surroundings push us back into the boxes of the discrete by reinforcing and engraining capitalist practices within our lives.

This small garden in my yard is sort of a gentle anti-coagulant of demarcation. Come and cut again zinnias and crackerjack marigolds planted too densely. They crowd each other and apply

pressure outwardly, toward the street. To you. Away from my home. Walking around the neighborhood for whatever reason, and presented with flowers as an invitation to attune to pollinator qualities, that are part of being human, relinquishing self to the lure.

---

I'm not sure I can do this anymore. As the day of the gathering draws nearer, I feel myself falling ill—nauseous, unsettled, and not calm. I don't think this is going to work for me, but it is a commitment, and it is an offering to this community. My digestive system is preventing me from working on the installation because I have to be in the bathroom. I should have brought some Tums.

Words don't make sense and seem to flop out of my mouth without connection, as though I don't care or wasn't involved with the process. Outside of a few specific people forced to engage with me, no one has spoken with me tonight, perhaps out of seeing that I was uncomfortable and respecting my boundaries, or perhaps because I seem to be just off ignoring the gathering. What is this? This is a neurotypical social space. It was designed that way, and was successful in the goals of creating a warm and gentle space. But I'm realizing I just don't have the ability to act in those spaces anymore, or at least for the time being.

Mabyn and I just sat on the bench, trying not to run away or stay in our car until it was over.

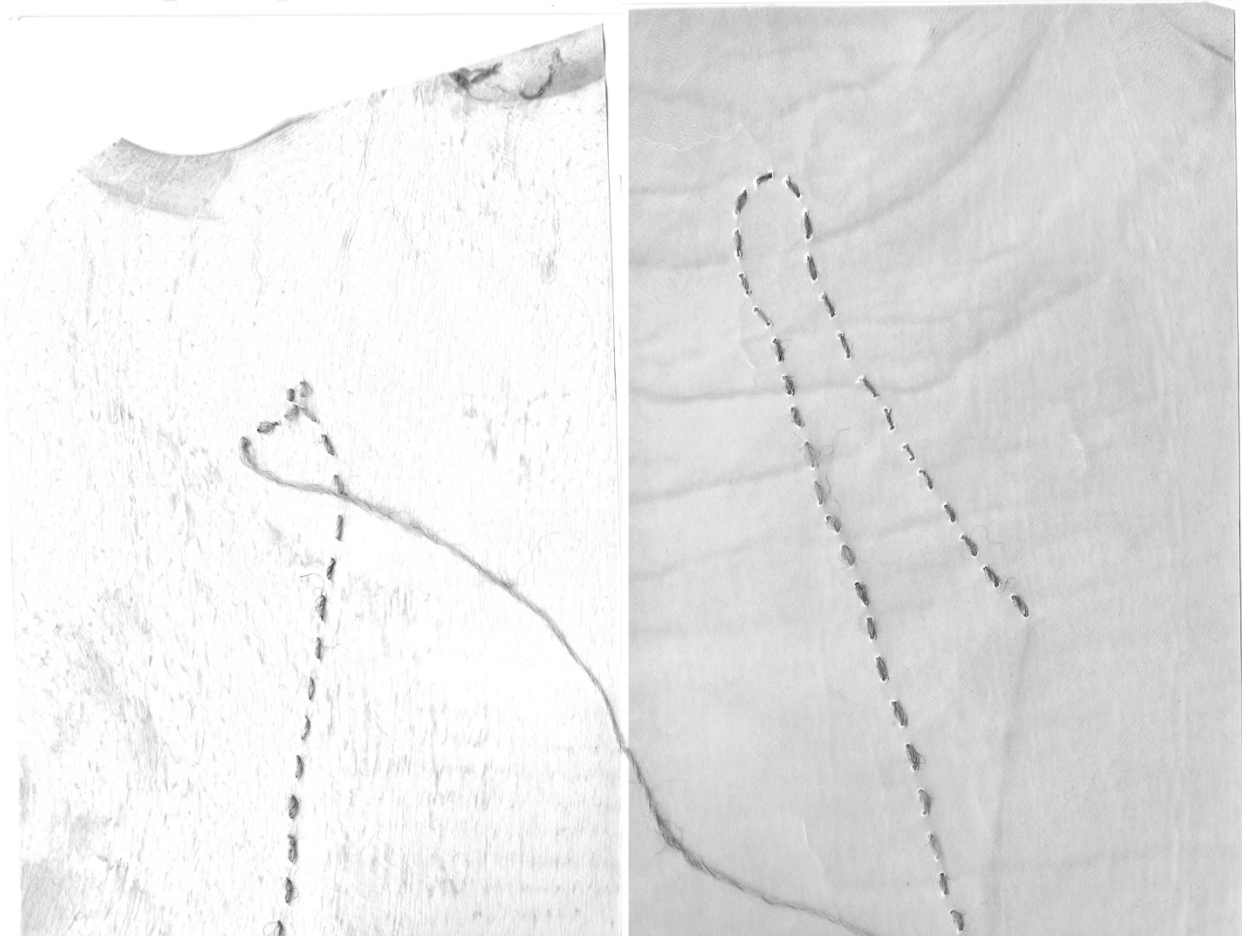
Those spaces are very important and offer support in a lot of ways, but they also deny other means of what it can be to exist socially. It must be acknowledged that everyone has different

needs and this type of space was very significant to my collaborator. This is in no way a devaluing of the experience, simply a reflection in things I will consider moving forward. I wonder how people can share space, or if in the training of how to socialize we are forced to endure throughout our childhood and young adult years will always push out and over any less anthropocentric forms.

---

**Objectivity does not exist.**

---



*Figure 8. Leash Lines I (2023)*

---

There is something about the things we engage with on a regular basis—the micro-local, if you will, that holds our sense of being. We build relationships through these entanglements that for better or worse are opportunities to shape and influence ourselves. J. Morgan Puett, founder and caretaker of Mildred’s Lane, practices with the domestic space as a site for experimentation with intersecting ecologies and experimentation within the micro-local, “workstyles” (Puett, 2021).

In our daily lives, we are presented with actions that turn into routines, that turn into rituals, that move into the space of tradition. But it is also where we can give ourselves time and space to be and attune to the immediate. If we focus our attention on our close neighbors, our capacity to stretch consciousness grows.

---

I don’t see anything, what are you barking at?

---

**It is really nice to work together and create dinner for all of us.**

During the day, we all do our own things: taking a nap on a hammock and dreaming of bursting out of a blackberry, swimming at the beach and playing with the other dogs, walking the trails with our companions. The dinner routine turned into a ritual almost intuitively. It was part of the scheduled program, but no one was required to help in the preparations, yet everyone did. It was a new improvisational arrangement as we learned more about each other.

We were a group of people sharing a meal. We were guided and guiding ourselves through this shared but asynchronous experience through food- recipes that were contributed by all of us, but primarily from the co-facilitator, Dori Miller. But how does food do that? How would it be different if we all brought our own foods and didn't share in their forming?

We worked together on a meal in a large outdoor kitchen space, also shared with guests not part of our residency that had amazing grill masters and were so inspiring to watch and talk with. It was a sort of divided experience of socializing. We were conversing, mycelial-ly, among humans, food items, canines, neighbors, and kitchen space/practices.

---

The Visual Arts Experimental Garden programming has been going well. We are just trying to find a balance with structure while being open to play and improvisation. But something that is starting to become more present in my thoughts is that we are somewhat narrow in the way we are promoting engagements. Of course, all are welcome in the space anytime, but there are implications when we are only creating specific offerings aligning with neurotypical social structures, and it is flawed.

I believe the anti-social ice cream social was a step or two in a more inclusive direction, as we had the option to be in person, or to have the treat and score delivered. In moving forward with our goals and ideas for programming, we are looking at Carolyn Lazard's work, which among listing specific ways in which accessibility needs to be considered, excitedly points out that as a small group, we have a large degree of maneuverability to make changes to contribute to the



future we want to be part of. The very definition of “small-scale” that allows organizations to evade ADA compliance can be seen as a strength, as small-scale arts organizations are perhaps more capable of meeting the needs of their audiences than larger institutions.” (Lazard, 2019, p. 8)

---

I still feel the undulations tipping me to the right.  
 There is a made up pattern  
 How I mow the lawn  
 Wave lines of the atmosphere  
 downy phenomena  
 glides around grass infused callouses.

I'm not ready to share  
 canvas with the ants  
 I'm sorry  
 I cut your flowers with the mower  
 There are others over there  
 friend.  
 Wave lines.

That is my pencil.  
 Human interpretations and catching up with bird paths

Spiders and I have not had an ideal history,  
 but today we worked together to find a way out of the busy parking lot and into a grassy area,  
 hopefully safer.

To be in a place where there are people-  
 families, dogs, and plants- trees, grasses, “weeds”, fauna-  
 microscopic beings, but feel still,  
 there is room to breathe.  
 Just breathe In-finite  
 But not an indicator of presence

Radiant heat from the patio after the air has cooled. The ants seem to appreciate it.

Paw pad to finger pad

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*Figure 9. Planting seedlings at the Visual Arts Experimental Garden (2022)*

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Lock all of the doors- maybe even the windows. It helps keep me inside, even when there are pressures to leave.

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Just over 2 pounds, and no harness fits, as everything is too big. My sweet, perfect, Mabyn.

Already so smart and starting to do "sits." Puppy class is going to be great! I know you need to be around other dogs right now to get along with them when you are older.

So the building is a bit overwhelming for you (and me too), and the next smallest puppy is closer to 8 pounds, and very hyper. There was a sweet and similarly timid border collie, Sage, who seems to be much more in our comfort zone. A little part of me believes you and Sage connected because of your bond with Tiny (our border collie companion). We needed to be sectioned off from the rest of the class during socialization time because the others are large and rambunctious- we don't fit in there. It is a dangerous situation, because of your size and

because of your anxiety around the big room and big puppies. You and Sage needed to be together.

Our trainer, Janine, saw that you are brave, and that you are capable of getting past this fear. At least it is warm and you can be outside, but what is the process to addressing this? Small exposures to dogs from distances that do not trigger your fear, and rewarding the encounters with treats and praise. In time, hopefully the distance will get shorter, and your fear will transform into no concern and even comfort. You will probably never be the most “friendly” of dogs, but that isn’t important. You deserve to not be afraid.

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I can’t do everything on my own. I need help from other people, and from the non-human entanglements too. These are collaborations of sorts, exponential in reality, but finite in comprehension. But when asking for help, like when we were getting ready to pickle the radishes for the VAEG opening there needs to be a layer of trust. When Michael Pollan discusses specialization and the subsequent inability to do things for oneself being a serious fault (Pollan, 2008), I can’t help but disagree, because at the core of that concept is a lack of trust. Danielle happened to walk in and we started a casual conversation about what we were doing. We asked if she had pickled before, and to everyone’s benefit, she did! Without knowing each other very well, we all trusted in her experience, and knew that it would result not only in a delicious snack, but would contribute to the fabric of community charging the site.

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*act*

*habit*

*ritual*

*tradition*

ticklish being compulsory air  
through dreamt shapes

entrained to floss postures attuned

and near-mint toothpaste

bores a flaw of alliance

---

“The task is to become coherent enough in an incoherent world to engage in a dance of being that breeds respect and response in the flesh, in the run, on the course. And then to remember how to live like that at every scale, with all the partners.” (Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness* 60)

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