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Forms Follows Action:
Performance in/against the City in New York and Los Angeles (1970-1985)

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ABSTRACT

Forms Follows Action:
Performance in/against the City in New York and Los Angeles (1970-1985)

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This critical/theoretical history of performance art investigates the relationship between the body of the artist and the infrastructure of the city in Los Angeles and New York City between 1970 and 1985, with specific attention to how performance art resists, renegotiates, and responds to architectural functionalism. Using performance studies as a lens of analysis and intervention, it examines the connections between performance practices and 'the regular flow of the city,' and explores the potential of these performances to engender new spatial-subjectivities by imagining kinesthetic actions that defy political economies of power. The research examines three physical tactics that were adopted, adapted, or transformed by selected artists during a seminal 15-year period, theorizing these "techniques of the body" as sites and contextually specific kinesthetic interventions in the city. In paying particular attention to the contested state of urban public space in these cities during this time period the dissertation indexes how issues of race, gender, class, and ethno-nationality were at the very heart of the distribution and manifestation of power, wealth, and privilege in urban and cultural spaces.

The dissertation traces the ways in which performance artists bypassed the white walls/cube of the gallery and studio for the bricks, concrete, and steel surfaces of the city in order to address, express, and/or challenge the insidiousness of state control, power, and abuse during a period of nationwide socio-political instabilities while contributing to the changing aesthetics and politics of an expanding and changing art world. In line with recent scholarship that seeks to understand the city and its architecture(s) as live performance and the kinesthetic actions that exist

therein as part of placemaking processes, it considers how Los Angeles and New York City were at the center of new and contested forms of urban development, protest, and spatial theorization during the 1970s and early 1980s. In both cities the deindustrialization of large urban regions, changes in labor processes, the reorganization of housing markets, the rise of the service sector, and the increasing ghettoization of permanently unemployed lower class, reflect the rise of neo-liberalism that would reach its full force with 1980s 'Reagonomics.' Drawing from thinkers that sought to retheorize the spatiality of social life, as well as urban planners and architectural critics who looked to reshape the contemporary city and our views on it, the dissertation interweaves the rapidly evolving spatial and urban discourse of the period with that of performance art.

In defining the performances that structure this project and their particular physical manifestations, I posit a framework that combines theory and practice for understanding performance events. Numerous narratives from the 1970s are difficult to access archivally, a situation compounded by a lack of feminist, queer, and anti-racist / anti-colonial initiatives in the art world and more broadly. As a transition moment between forms of documentation, post-paper but pre-digital, it is a largely undervalued period. Throughout this process, I have also employed my own practice as a movement-based artist to deploy performing as a form of knowing and knowledge production. Accumulating first-hand understanding of these works by conducting field research using my own body in order to better comprehend their kinesthetic particularities was a critical methodological tool. Combining spatial, art historical, and performance analysis methodologies, this project offers a historical genealogy, conceptual framework, and practical entry point into architecturally engaged performances and practices in New York and Los Angeles to contribute to scholarship in theatre and performance studies, art and architecture, and spatial theory.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to begin by acknowledging the most important person in this project, the one who has read and re-read it more than anyone else. My mother, Diane Charbonneau, has been editing my texts since the first grade. In addition to her own career, she has always corrected, commented, and sometimes helped me rewrite my essays, articles, and assignments. In French and in English, she is always there to guide me with support, compassion, and attention to detail. This PhD is as much hers as it is mine, and I can't thank her enough for all of her work throughout the decades. I would be remiss to not mention my father, François Morelli, who has also been an unconditional ally, sounding board, and an unending source of ideas and sources. We share many similarities in our trajectories, and it has been an honor and pleasure to become closer through the completion of this project. Whenever I felt unsure about my path, my dad was there to encourage me to move forward and trust the process, just as he had many years ago.

I moved to Chicago in 2014 to begin this PhD and to live with my partner Arièle Dionne-Krosnick for the first time. This degree also tells the story of our lives together. Three cities later, two additional pets, and many amazing moments, we find ourselves at a threshold as she prepares to start her own PhD and I bid farewell to mine. Arièle never ceases to inspire me, and throughout this process she has become a collaborator and a constant presence to negotiate the many twists and turns of research, academia, and the art world. During this time, she has become my first reader, editing and commenting all of my papers before they are let into the wider world. I trust her because of her honesty and attention to the finer details of everything she reads. I have her to thank for getting through this, and most importantly for making it an enjoyable and memorable process. Every milestone was celebrated with her, every setback was managed together. Working on a PhD can be lonely, but I never felt that. I always had my best friend, my partner, and my hero working alongside me on her own amazing path.

I want to thank my advisor Ramón Rivera-Servera for guiding me in this process from the very beginning. Your support throughout the years has been unwavering and I can't quantify the many ways you've allowed me to grow as a scholar, artist, and person. I also want to thank my committee members Marcela Fuentes and Mechtild Widrich. Marcela has been with me throughout this journey, providing valuable feedback on both my practice and theory and opening my eyes and mind to new angles in the field of Performance Studies. Mechtild has similarly anchored me in the world of Art History, and her support as an editor and mentor helping me get started in academic publishing has undoubtedly shaped the confidence and pleasure with which I write today.

There are too many others to thank, but I want to mention the three members of my cohort: Mlondi Zondi, Ivan Bujan, and Scott Leydon. I've learned so much from the three of you, and the conversations we had during our time together in coursework continue to drive my thinking. Mlondi's friendship and generosity made so many things possible I can't begin to list them, I am forever indebted to his brilliance and care. I look forward to sharing a career path and a growing friendship with you in the future.

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INTRODUCTION

Walking Through Walls

> A city is not merely an assortment of buildings and streets, nor is it only what city planners construct. There is something that goes beyond the built-up places and structures—something that has to do with people and life itself. How people live together, how they move, what they do, how they do things, and how they do these things together. A city is even more than buildings and the movement and actions of its inhabitants. The city is a huge production machine; cities produce knowledge and industrial goods and unique ways of organizing their inhabitants in the form of laws, markets, and cultures.
>
> — Imanuel Schipper, *City as Performance* (2014)

The surface of the wall is cold and damp, a result of the confined space I have chosen for my afternoon attempt at walking through a wall. It is early fall and the weather has been relatively summery, but in this architectural crevice I am hidden from warmth and sunshine. I have been working on this project for weeks, finding novel walls around Toronto to launch myself at repeatedly. My ritual and technique are established by now, bicycling in the neighborhoods around my apartment, finding an interesting looking structure, setting up my camera on the ground, and then throwing myself against it until I become exhausted, distracted, or bored. Each action has been markedly different, depending on the context I find myself in; the material qualities of the wall; the interactions I have with passers-by; and the fatigue I have left lingering in my bones from my previous attempts. Viewed next to each other, each event also has its similarities, the regular rhythm of my corporeality colliding with immovable verticals; the urbanism of downtown Toronto, a post-industrial city in the late phases of gentrification; the whiteness of my body ably moving through public spaces. My attempts at obstructing quotidian patterns of motion through the city with this simple yet intriguing actions generate exchanges with an incidental audience, a phenomenon that is accentuated by a lack of stage and/or a declaration of my presence as an action of “performance art.”

I first began trying to walk through walls in October 2011 as part of a Practice-Based-Research seminar at the University of Toronto, Ontario. The mandatory course, lead by Professor Bruce Barton at the Centre for Theatre, Drama, and Performance Studies, asked students to deploy performing as a form of knowing and knowledge production. This methodological approach is a primary tool of the Performance Studies handbook (Levin and Schweitzer 2017; Rose and Hunter 2009). *Walking Through Walls* took the form of a series of ongoing site-specific interventions that, to borrow the words of Imanuel Shipper in "The City as Performance," highlighted how urban spaces depend on people, always having the "potential to be reshaped, transformed, and used differently." (Schipper 2014, 22)

On this occasion in 2011, the wall I have chosen to challenge is adjacent to a very busy street in Toronto. While I am partially hidden from viewers in my nook, anyone walking by can clearly see my activity. Barely five minutes into my action, a woman stops by and asks me if I need help. I reply that "I'm ok," but follow up with a call to help me assess how I might walk through this wall. Instead of leaving me and dismissing my gesture, she begins to engage discussing the materiality of the wall and how I might cross it. She is a scientist working in a nearby federal building, and that in her field of research, the use of a laser or other heat source to meld the wall could aid me.

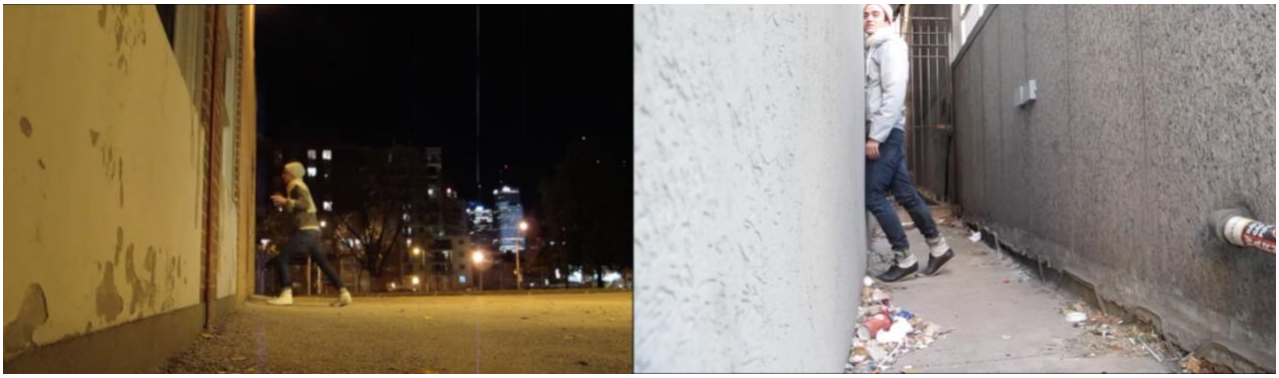


Figure 1. *Walking Through Walls*. Still from video. Didier Morelli, 2011.

Our exchange lasts under two-minutes, but in that brief moment we generate a series of solutions to my query that could, if executed properly, alter the state of the urban space we find ourselves in. Over the next few years, I have had numerous conversations that mirror this one on the streets of various cities in different countries. All of them begin with my moving body, rubbing up against the architecture of the city in an attempt to reconfigure usages of public and private space while questioning the political economies of urban centers. They all end with newfound ways of existing in these spaces, subverting socio-political, architectural, aesthetic, and kinesthetic structures that are habitually built and rebuilt by our routines, codes of conduct, and the distribution of power across urban places.

Form Follows Action:
Performance In and Against the City, New York and Los Angeles (1970-1985)

> […] a situation allowing those producing a performance to place it in whatever locale seemed most suitable meant that theatre could use to its own advantage the already existing connotations of other spaces both in themselves and in their placement within the city, and this was in fact consistently done.
>
> —Marvin Carlson, *Places of Performance: The Semiotics of Theatre Architecture* (1989)

Since its formal inception in the early 20th century, performance art has a rich tradition of pushing the boundaries of architectural space and its prescribed usages towards new and radical ends. From the eccentric Dadaist outpourings onto Spiegelgasse Street in Zurich (1910s) to Bryony Roberts & Mabel O. Wilson's intervention at Mies van der Rohe's Federal Center in Chicago in collaboration with the South Shore Drill Team (2015), performers have and continue to consciously take to the street as a means of physically subverting the city's urban order. *Form Follows Action: Performance In and Against the City, New York and Los Angeles (1970-1985),* is a critical history of performance art that elucidates this phenomenon. Establishing a relationship between the moving body of the artist and the infrastructure of the city in Los Angeles and New York City between 1970 and 1985, it argues that performance artists resisted,

renegotiated, and responded to architectural and urban functionalism in this time period with their work. Using performance studies as a lens of analysis and intervention, this research connects performance practices and the 'regular flow of the city,' exploring how these performances engendered new spatial-subjectivities by imagining kinesthetic actions that defied political economies of power. Divided into three chapters— Chapter 1 - Acts of Locomotion: Walking, Running, and Crawling after Kim Jones, Papo Colo, and William Pope.L; Chapter 2 - Acts of Interruption: Falling After Trisha Brown and Bas Jan Ader; Chapter 3 - Acts of Occupation: Living In / Standing On after Tehching Hsieh, Suzanne Lacy, and Leslie Labowitz—the project examines three physical tactics that were adopted, adapted, or transformed by selected artists during a seminal 15-year period, theorizing these "techniques of the body" (Mauss 1934) as sites and contextually specific kinesthetic interventions in the city. In paying particular attention to the contested state of urban public space in these cities during this time period the dissertation, argues that race, gender, class, and ethno-nationality were at the very heart of the distribution and manifestation of power, wealth, and privilege in urban and cultural spaces.

Form Follows Action: Performance In and Against the City

A notion that best articulates the relationship between the subversive, movement-based performances under study, the rationale of the built environment, and the political economy of architectural space, is the principle after which this dissertation is named "form (ever) follows function." As a quintessential 20th century design cliché, it has repeatedly been employed to characterize the Modernist principles espoused by the likes of infamous architects like Le Corbusier and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. Formulated by the American architect Louis H. Sullivan (1856-1924) in his 1896 essay "The Tall Office Building Artistically Considered," it

referred more precisely to the notion that a skyscraper's exterior design should reflect its *intended* interior function. That the style of architecture should reflect a certain purpose made sense at the time (Rawsthorn 2009), but starting in the 1930s the credo was taken further to imply that decorative elements, or ornamentation, were superfluous in modern constructions.[1] Postwar American modernist architecture (1945-1985) followed suit, with Mies van der Rohe's "Less is more" premise characterizing some of the most important and iconic private and public building projects. By the 1972 destruction of the Pruitt-Igoe housing complex in St. Louis, Missouri, many felt that alienation produced by modernism's openly rational approach to designing the built environment had reached its logical conclusion. As a patriarchal utopian dreamscape of clean and efficient lines, the social and spatial ingenuity of "form follows function" came into question as structures aged and the inhabitants that lived therein used these buildings differently than they were intended. By moving away from the *intended function* or capitalist efficiency of the built environment towards its *actual use* in the movement-based-practices that attempt to shape (and defy) it, *Form Follows Action* seeks to theorize what Andre Lepecki describes as a "[…] critique of the smooth kinetic functioning of the modern city, based on ideals of efficient flow of bodies and commodities." (Lepecki 2006, 97)

Writing in the introduction of a special issue of The Drama Review (TDR) in 2014 entitled *Performing the City*, Carol Martin touches on performances' unique relationship to the built environment as both an object of study and an analytical lens. Re-conceptualizing the city as a "live performance," she suggests that the field of performance studies, in its interdisciplinary nature, can be used to analyze how a city is produced and performed because of the ways it "bridges social, political, theatrical, spatial, temporal, and architectural modes of thought."

[1] It should be noted that Sullivan himself was known for ornamentation.

(Martin 2014, 12) Thinking of the city as a space where quotidian and unfamiliar performances co-exist, she evokes examples of outstanding social, political, and aesthetic actions that make the "familiar strange." These moments engender perceptual shifts that "enable insight into how we enact ourselves in everyday urban environments." (Martin 2014, 13) Citing the particularities of American "environmental art" during the 1960s and 1970s that shifted paradigms of performance by mixing up the space of the stage with that of the audience, she describes a seminal work by dancer/choreographer Trisha Brown in *Man Walking Down the Side of a Building* (1970). For Martin, this work is a prime example of how artists, embracing new political, conceptual, and aesthetic ideals, lead incursions into "otherwise static or forbidding urban landscapes." (Martin 2014, 14) This intervention, alongside a series of other similar kinesthetic acts that disrupted the political economies of the built environment starting in the 1970s, are at the heart of a seminal moment in the emergence of the performing arts onto the streets of the city in the United States.

Figure 2. *Man Walking Down the Side of a Building*. Photo: Carol Goodden. Trisha Brown, 1970.

In *Greenwich Village 1963: Avant-Garde Performance and the Effervescent Body* (1993), dance historian Sally Banes discusses the cultural transition in the artworld of the 1960s that lead to the practices discussed in this dissertation:

> The Sixties artists' search defined an era. It became part of the massive political and cultural upheaval of the late 1960s when the scene of action moved out not only from the galleries and theaters, but from the ghettoes, universities, workplaces, and kitchens, and into the streets. When these artists' transgressions erupted beyond the boundaries of art, the Sixties as we know them begin. (Banes 1993, 9)

Bypassing the white walls/cube of the gallery and studio for the bricks, concrete, and steel surfaces of the city, performance artists from the 1960s and into the 1970s contributed to the changing aesthetics, politics, and sociality of an expanding and changing art world. Framed by Robert Morris' "Notes On Sculpture," (1966) Michael Fried's "Art and Objecthood," (1967) and Rosalind Krauss' "Sculpture in the Expanded Field," (1979) the 1970s markedly moved from the "concrete" and "literal" materiality of the art object (Morris 1966, 223), criticizing its theatricality (Fried 1967, 8), and finally recognizing a historical postmodern turn into an expanded field, the "real space of architecture." (Krauss 1979, 41) This transition away from the sanctity of the sacred art object, its maker, and the formal presentation space marked a collapse in the codes, scales, and natures of practices as artists moved successively and indiscriminately across mediums, landscapes, and sites. Within this changing paradigm, Banes argues that the "performing body [was] central to all the interconnecting arts of this period." (Banes 1993, 3)

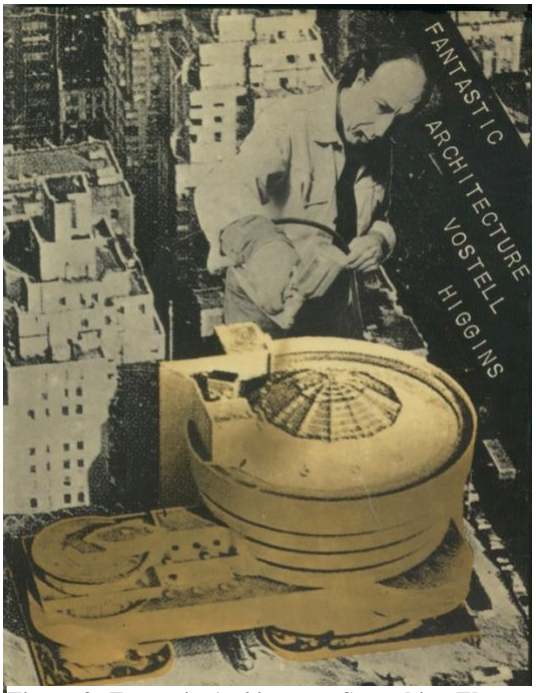


Figure 3. *Fantastic Architecture*. Something Else Press: Wolf Vostell and Dick Higgins, 1970.

The performing body of the late 1960s and 1970s also reshaped the field of architecture, where Happenings, Fluxus, and other increasingly interdisciplinary performance-based practices in dance and experimental music challenged the constitution of built environments. In *Fantastic Architecture* (1970), a

compilation of collages, scores, and captions, the artists and editors Dick Higgins and Wolf Vostell explored the concept of architecture as action and event. Bringing practices of performance to architecture, "the last art still in a primitive state," the book relied on the action-based, collaged, and mediated interventionist vocabulary of Allison Knowles, Geoffrey Hendricks, Richard Hamilton, and many others to disturb the familiarity of everyday spaces by asserting that "action is architecture!" This impetus to rethink architecture through a performative, largely movement-based language that at once identified the everyday workings of the urban sphere while infiltrating to enact political and social change took physical form throughout the next decade. In an essay entitled "The Dynamism of the City: Urban Planning and Artistic Responses to the 1960s and 1970s," Greg Foster-Rice writes about artists and activists in the 1960s and 1970s for whom practice was "not just a commentary about the city but also an extension into and of the city."[2] (Foster-Rice 33, 2014) Recalling Lewis Mumford's description of the city as a "theater for social action," a place that "creates the theater and is theater," Foster-Rice points to the Los Angeles-based collective Asco for their social, political, and aesthetic repurposing of symbolic public spaces. Describing *Instant Mural* (1974), an event where a member of the collective was taped to

Figure 4. *Instant Mural*. Photo: by Harry Gamboa Jr., 1974.

[2] For the exhibition catalogue *City Lost & Found: Capturing New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles, 1960-1980* (2014) at the Art Institute of Chicago.

a wall that had previously been the site of the 1971 Chicano Moratorium protest against police intimidation and brutality, the author demonstrates how the kinesthetic instantaneity and performative ephemerality of Asco's interventions produced "subversive tactics" that countered the LAPD's policing of Chicano neighborhoods (Foster-Rice 42, 2014). Asco's thought-filled, movement-based actions at the intersections of performance art, the urban environment, and political economies of the city defied authoritarian power. Through documentation and mediation of images capturing performer's bodies rubbing up against and defying symbolic architectural sites within the city, they also expanded the reaches of their immediate eventfulness by extending the performance in time for an ever-widening audience (Widrich "Performative Monuments" 2014, 15). As Baz Kershaw writes about the interrelatedness between protest and forms of mediation in performance, "in discussing protest events we are almost always dealing with mediations of those events rather than the events themselves." (Kerhsaw 1997, 260) This form of empowerment in marginalized communities is deserving of its own historicity and methodological approach, which is where this dissertation seeks to position itself by attending to the kinesthetic details, socio-political intricacies, and aesthetic particularities of the "events themselves" through their surviving embodied and material archives.

Scholarship on the interrelatedness between the agency of the moving, performing body and the sociality of its immediate built environment has increased in recent years as a response to relational aesthetic events unfolding in public spaces, the rise of live performance in institutionalized contexts, and emergent mass protest movements following the 2008 financial crisis. In the last decade, important art historical research on participation, spectatorship, and the public sphere has garnered attention (Bishop 2012, Jackson 2011), in addition to other works that more specifically reflect on the nature of walking as an aesthetic and socio-political mode of

production (Evans 2012, Kosnoski 2011, Heddon and Turner 2012, O'Rourke 2013, Pujol 2018). This impetus to analyze the relationships between performing bodies, their audiences, and the places wherein these events unfold as part of the overall meaning making process of a work has largely lacked the kinesthetic vocabularies and interdisciplinary, practice-based methodologies of performance dynamics. Performance Studies, seeking to understand the city and its architecture(s) as live performance and events, has pushed these reflections further. In Marvin Carlson's *Places of Performance: The Semiotics of Theatre Architecture* (1989), the author bridges performance scholarship and objects of study to the spatial theories of architecture and urbanism. Throughout the past ten years, an important strand of performance studies scholarship has straddled the realms of the social, political, cultural, and aesthetic, by addressing the intersecting worlds of architecture and performance from both a macro- and micro-lens. In the year following Carol Martin's special issue of TDR: Theatre Drama Review entitled "Performing the City," (2014) Cathryn Dwyre and Chris Perry published a thematic issue of PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art on "Performance and Architecture." (2015) Along with *Performance and the City* (2009), edited by Kim Solga, D.J. Hopkins, and Shelley Orr, these collections preliminarily set the stage to understand the built environment as a dynamic, malleable set of social, political, and aesthetic structures wherein performance has a central role in shaping everyday architecture. They also, in turn, methodologically and theoretically focus on the kinesthetic actions that exist therein as part of the placemaking process. This is true of a special issue of Canadian Theatre Review edited by Laura Levin and Alana Gerecke entitled "Choreographies of Assembly" (2018) where the movement economies of Occupy Wallstreet, Idle No More, and the Black Lives Matter are theorized from the vantage point of performance, embodiment, and the city. These recent case studies show that Performance Studies is uniquely

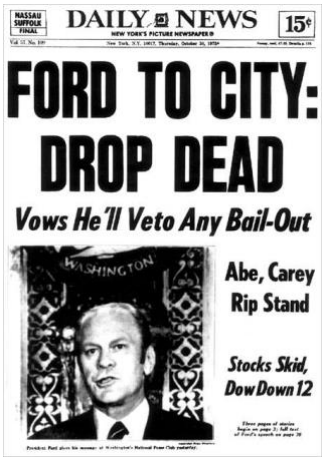
placed to attend to social and aesthetic protest as an "integral aspect of civil society," (Kershaw 1999, 260) where systems of resistance/transcendence in response to the dominance of power can be clearly articulated, deconstructed, and addressed through their reiterative formation as embodied, spatial, and kinesthetic realities. This dissertation historically, theoretically, and methodologically contributes to these lines of research by reaching into the 1970s and 1980s to apply new lens and perspectives to overlooked objects of study in art and urban realms, framing them through the connections of moving bodies and political economies, and interpreting them from the vantage points of performing then and now.

New York and Los Angeles (1970-1985)

One of the main objectives of this research is to observe the ways in which performance artists decidedly adopted the brick, concrete, and steel surfaces of New York City and Los Angeles specifically in order to address, express, and/or challenge conventional aesthetics, the insidiousness of state control, and other abuses of power during a period of nationwide socio-political instability. In doing so, the dissertation outlines how movement-based-performances were inherently linked to political economies, the built environment, and the immediate context of their outdoor public presentations. Drawing from Randy Martin's notion of a *social kinesthetic*, "the orientation, sensibility, or predisposition that informs approaches to movement, the historically specific microphysics that generates and governs motional force fields," (Martin 2012, 68) each chapter asks how the political economy of the city factored into shaping movement-based trajectories of occupation, locomotion, and interruption. How did the mobilization of artists, responding to the specifics of US foreign policy, racial segregation, violence against women, immigration debates, and a shifting cultural landscape mobilize their bodies in ways that challenged organizational rules or logics of habitual, coded behavior

imbedded in the materiality and fabric of urban life? How did embodied events, generated by individual artists and collectives, reflect the precarities or opportunities of urban living? Were New York and Los Angeles' corporal economies, with their contested forms of urban development and spatial theorization in the 1970s and 1980s, explicit factors in this? What did movement-based-performance tell us about the deindustrialization of large urban regions, changes in labor processes, the reorganization of housing markets, the rise of the service sector, and the increasing ghettoization of permanently unemployed lower class during the rise of neo-liberal forces that would reach their full force with 1980s Reagonomics?

In New York City, the practitioners featured in this dissertation deployed a kinesthetic, movement-based vocabulary that reverberated with the shifting economic and political forces that drove capital growth and struggles along with important real estate speculation in the 1970s and 1980s. Consciously or not, all of the artists were heavily immersed in a landscape of protest as the city itself, and performances of dissent, became a feature of everyday life. At the height of the city's near-bankruptcy in 1975, President Gerald Ford's denial of a federal bailout in a speech before the National Press Club on October 29 gave life to the infamous New York Daily News headline "Ford to City: Drop Dead." This physical, kinesthetic, and anthropomorphic metaphor is particularly apt when thinking about the kinesthetic forms of embodied protest highlighted throughout this dissertation. As artists occupied, locomoted, and interrupted New York's urban space, they refused to *drop dead*, choosing instead to aesthetically and kinesthetically transform the architectural space of the city and its sociality with movement-


DAILY NEWS 15¢

FORD TO CITY: DROP DEAD

Vows He'll Veto Any Bail-Out

Abe, Carey Rip Stand

Stocks Skid, Dow Down 12

Figure 5. The Daily News front page on Oct. 30, 1975, after Mr. Ford said that he would not approve federal help for the city.

based performances. One of the formidable examples of this transformation came in the creation of loft-culture, a sociological phenomenon Sharon Zukin critically outlines in her analysis of the relationships between culture, capital, and real estate development since the 1970s. First published in 1982, *Loft Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change* catalogued the experimental appeal of artist converted loft spaces, with their "avant-garde *mise en scène* or *décor*," (Zukin 1982, 2) and the conflicts between various social groups that competed for their use. Zukin's first overview of the creation of the "loft market" underscores a chain of events where lower middle-class business owners and their work force, many of whom were new immigrants, were replaced by artists who themselves also became victims of gentrification as developers moved in during the 1980s.

The aesthetic appeal of lofts, remodeled, rethought, and remade from the ground up by artists in movement, were prominently featured in Jim Stratton's *Pioneering in the Urban Wilderness* (1976), an early attempt at documenting the reimagination of post-industrial spaces by creatives. For Stratton, SoHo "generated a new militance among the harried artist-tenants and, simultaneously, started the juices flowing in [sic] middle-class pursuers." (Stratton 1976, 7) In telling the story of the neighborhood's transition, the book positions the 1970 SoHo Artist Festival as an iconic example of artists reshaping real estate markets through movement-based, cultural intervention. In the leadup to the event, Stratton draws attention to the aesthetic desires many outsiders had in being let into loft culture: "[the festival's] most unusual drawing card was the opening of some 150 lofts to the curious public." (Stratton 1976, 34) Coinciding with the protests that resulted in

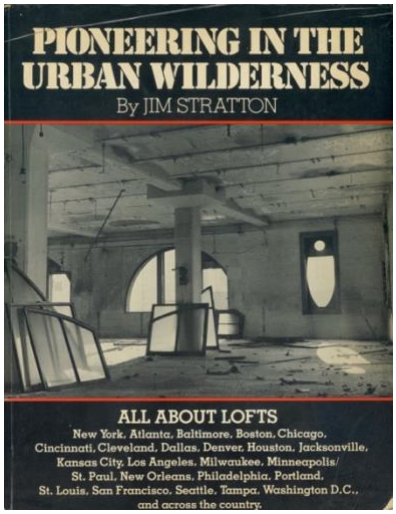


Figure 6. ***Pioneering in the Urban Wilderness*****. Jim Stratton, 1976.**

the Kent State massacre, the mood of the SoHo festival is best captured by two images featured in *Pioneering in the Urban Wilderness*: festival headquarters at 16 Greene Street draped with black crepe, and dancer/choreographer Yvonne Rainer's procession of mourning for the dead at Kent State. In both images the exterior *mise en scène* of loft spaces, cast iron fire escapes and cobblestone streets filled with performers in movement, frame the event. The dramaturgy and choreography of protest, bodies assembled in a processional walk that borders militaristic marching and funerary rites, directly addresses the political potential of civic spaces as sites of assembly, dialogue, and resistance in performance (Kloetzel 2019, 19). These interventions singularly underscore New York City's real estate development at the hands of artists in the 1970s, with loft living conversions and public interdisciplinary, often dance-like events held on and off of the streets becoming significant sites of aesthetic production and socio-political commentary.

Figure 7. Soho Artist Festival (1970) in *Pioneering an Urban Wilderness*. Page 35.

Rainer's Kent state massacre action in the streets of SoHo aligned with a body of American visual and performing art aimed at protesting and denouncing the United States' war in Vietnam (1955-1975). It also echoed larger social movements from the 1960s and 1970s that saw mass physical mobilization onto city streets to protest the violation of civil liberties, denounced social injustice and defended inalienable rights. Within a five year period in New York City, this specifically included the Columbia University protests (1968) in response to both

the Vietnam War and racial segregation, the Stonewall upheaval where members of the LGBT community reacted to a police raid of the Stonewall Inn (1969), and the mobilization of citizens in South Jamaica, Queens denouncing the fatal shooting of Clifford Glover, an unarmed 10-year-old African American boy who was killed by an undercover policeman (1973).[3] These protests throughout the metropolis shared a common deployment of protesting, choreographed bodies in public spaces, mobilized in the outdoors in order to defy political economies of power like unjustified war, the policing of Black and Brown bodies, and anti-gay legal systems. They also constructed a communal, shareable, and well-documented and mediated "dramaturgy which stressed qualities such as multiplicity, discontinuity, abrupt eruptions of dramatic intensity, sudden shifts and changes of direction, tempo, focus." (Kershaw 1997, 260) Although visual and performing artists participated in this with their own aesthetic and kinesthetic acts of outdoor protest, they also simultaneously engaged in paving the real estate landscape for the sanitization of public spaces via processes of gentrification throughout New York City.

In *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places* (2010), Zukin picks up on previous work to chart how gentrification created "new public spaces," which encouraged the "docility of [its] public." (Zukin 2010, 42) Charting a paradigm shift from a city of production to a city of consumption (Zukin 2010, 221), the book makes abundantly clear that the "low rents and the gritty local character of the streets" (Zukin 2010, 100) that generated the unregulated 1970s art scene and protests gave way to large-scale crime fighting police clean ups of the 1980s. As the prominent American artist Martha Rosler argues in "Culture Class: Art, Creativity,

[3] While the late 1960s and early 1970s proved to be an especially tumultuous time on New York City streets with successive violent protests for different causes, many of them responding to forms of police brutality, the Harlem riots, which spanned almost four decades (1926, 1935, 1943, 1964) are worth mentioning here. Many of these incidents came as a result of the neighborhoods dense urban makeup, including its racial and ethnic diversity, lack of employment and housing, and an increased policing of minorities.

Urbanism, Part I" in "any understanding of postwar capitalism, the role of culture has become pivotal." (Rosler 2011, 14) In Part II of this series on the transformation of culture into a resource and commodity, she further elaborates on the artist's conversions of spaces in the 1960s and 1970s into a docile, urban experience: "Although artists, flexible service workers, and "creatives" more generally may not be the source of capital accumulation, it is inarguable that the rising value of the built environment depends on their pacification of the city, while the severing of relations to class history – even of one's own family in many instances – has produced at best a blindness, and at worst an objectively antagonistic relation, to the actual character of urban traditions of life and of struggle." (Rosler 2011, 24) As Aaron Shkuda demonstrates in "The Artist as Developer and Advocate: Real Estate and Public Policy in SoHo, New York'" artists were directly engaged in gentrification through advocacy and policymaking, thus sparking "urban redevelopment by conceptually and physically creating the loft apartment." (Shkuda 2015, 1001) The mid-1970s proved to be a tipping point (Shkuda 2015, 1009), as both demand for lofts increased making it profitable for building owners to rent or sell for residential purposes rather that industrial ones. With this in mind, this dissertation traces the trajectories of individual artists moving with their bodies throughout the city as their relationship to architecture paralleled an increased privatization of public space. *Form Follows Action* argues that these coinciding factors, which made any unusual kinesthetic trajectories or dissenting forms of embodiment untenable, are crucial to understand how movement-based-performance artists developed coherent and thought-filled tactics to subvert architectural functionalism.

Situated across the continent against the Pacific Ocean, the city of Los Angeles presented a different type of urban landscape for artists to maneuver with their moving bodies. Unlike New York City, where post-industrial loft conversions, a grid of vertical density and sidewalks, and a climate of economic transition dictated real estate markets and architectural development, Los Angeles' post-war urban expanse of sprawling suburbs in the 1970s was mostly framed by automobility. Endless expressways, protected enclaves or gated communities, and the politics of sanitized public spaces shaped the embodied experiences of individuals moving through the city and its many suburbs. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the English architect Reyner Banham's seminal book *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies* first published in 1971. Coinciding with the earliest works studied in this dissertation, the romanticized vehicular romp through the city gives insight into the language of mobility that characterized the architecture of Los Angeles. In the forward to the 2000 edition, Anthony Vidler describes the book as a "freeway model of history, one that saw the city through movement and as itself in movement." (Banham 2000, xli) Arguing that Banham's study goes beyond the traditional projects of architecture and urbanism, he suggests instead that the book engages "the phenomenology of experience itself." (Banham 2000, xlviii) This reading of Banham as a study of the city in movement aligns with this dissertations' methodological interest in deciphering how Los Angeles can be read through the intersections of movement-based performances and the political economy of urban life.

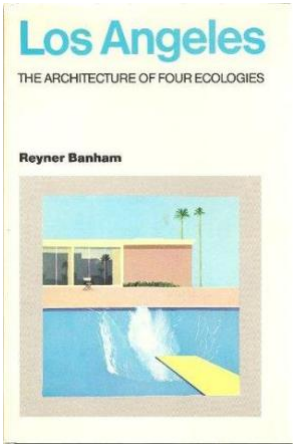


Figure 8. ***An Architecture of Four Ecologies*****. Reyner Banham, 1971**.

Artists working in Los Angeles reflected these urban realities in their works, starting most notably perhaps with Edward Ruscha's *Every Building on the Sunset Strip* (1966). Transforming traditions of capturing vernacular architecture in documentary photography associated with the likes of Walker Evans, Ruscha's 25-foot length accordion-folded book chronicled and remediated an iconic aspect of Los Angeles' expansive Sunset Boulevard.

Figure 9. *Every Building on the Sunset Strip*, Edward Ruscha, 1966.

This continuous image, a phenomenological testament to Banham's description of the city as "itself in movement," brings the viewer to experience the West Coast metropolis as a series of contiguous Californian architectural structures. Viewed from the perspective of the street, the canonical document has also come to re-enact what can only be described as a quintessential image of Los Angeles in a fictitious light, what Mechtild Widrich describes as "monumentalization" or the "fixation of a possibly fictional interpretation of history through physical reconstruction in the present." (Widrich "Is the "Re" in Re-enactment" 2014, 141) As William Hackman describes it *in Out of Sight: The Los Angeles Art Scene of the Sixties* (2015), instead of "monuments, mid-century Los Angeles was, as Ruscha never ceased to remind us, a city defined by signs, a repeating loop of signifiers that seemed to lead only to one another." (Hackman 2015, 180) In Ruscha's mediated portrayals of Los Angeles' liminal architecture of mobility, Hackman sees an attempt at finding "a place to

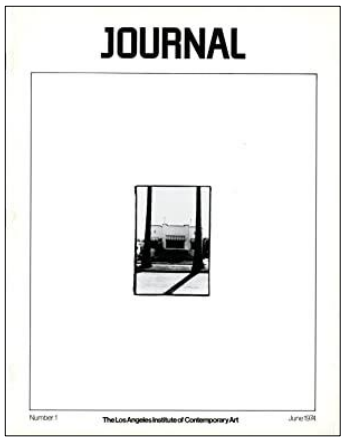


Figure 10. The Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art Journal. Edited by Fidel Danieli, 1974.

stand—a place situated, however precariously, between suburbia and the sublime." (Hackman 2015, 181) When describing the first issue of The Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art Journal (1974) edited by Fidel Danieli, Hackman underscores the cover image, a "miniscule black-and-white photograph of a quintessentially Southern California stucco bungalow framed by two towering palm trees" taken by Judy Fiskin. (Hackman 2015, 237) Not only was Los Angeles once again defined in artworld parlance by its architectural identity, but it is done so in order to counteract the mediated image ascribed to it by the New York centric Artforum. In both instances, photographic representations of architectural spaces contributed to a performative monumentalizing of the sites and cities not dissimilar from the distillation of the idea of the action of performance art events in their mediation in black and white images and grainy video reels. Continuing to determine its own aesthetic vis-à-vis the East Coast metropolis, the Los Angeles art world turned to its urban singularity as a way of differentiating itself from New York City's gritty density of glass, steel, and concrete towers.

These contrasting urban spaces also came with their own specific set of embodied and kinesthetic experiences. From the outset of *The Architecture of Four Ecologies*, Banham speaks of the city through his own kinesthetic act of driving, describing how "mobility outweighs monumentality" to a unique degree (Banham 2000, 5), providing a "freedom of movement that is the prime symbolic attribute of the Angel City." (Banham 2000, 18) For Banham, this *language of movement* facilitates rapid door-to-door transportation on demand, a fluidity that comes at a cost with a total surrender of personal freedom, a "willing acquiescence in an incredibly demanding man/machine system." (Banham 2000, 199) This allusion to a man/machine system is significant considering the type of urban development Los Angeles saw as a result of its dependency on the automobile in the postwar period. In the "Infinite Game: Redeveloping

Downtown L.A." (1991) geographer Mike Davis attributes the economic decline of retail real estate in downtown Los Angeles to the explosive growth of suburban outlets and shopping centers therein (Davis 1991, 82). With mostly affluent white middle-class citizens driving off towards gated community enclaves in the 1960s, inner-city areas along the fabled Wilshire Boulevard struggled with vacancy. Downtown Los Angeles fell into economic disrepair, characterized by foreclosures, job and plant layoffs, an increase in unemployment and homelessness, and a resulting divide between the inner-city and outer-city living conditions. While automobility presented itself as a kinesthetic opportunity for some, it was not for ethnic and racial minorities who suffered due to underdeveloped and underfunded public transit, redlining practices in the housing market, and other forms of urban segregation meant to entrench social and physical confinement. Even Banham, the notorious British architect who visited Los Angeles from the comfort of his convertible, recognized that "this view of mobility […] doesn't acknowledge those who cannot move—the disenfranchised who cannot "learn to drive" to know the city." (Banham 2000, 5)

As in New York, the art world and its various institutions reflected the urban space of the city while playing a role in shaping it. Hackman highlights how in the 1970s the Community Redevelopment Agency, "a quasi-government body charged with remaking downtown through private development, instantly saw that including an art museum in the plans would go a long way towards making the area more inviting." (Hackman 2015, 240) Not immune to gentrification, Los Angeles saw its own forms of disenfranchisement and urban renewal at the hands of wealthy developers and government neglect. In *My Los Angeles: From Urban Restructuring to Regional Urbanization* (2014), geographer Edward W. Soja traces this trajectory: "Ever since the Watts Riots of 1965 and the first round of "urban renewal" in Bunker

Hill, dreaming planners, civic-minded entrepreneurs, and optimistic corporate leaders have periodically proclaimed the imminent emergence of a bustling Manhattan like, 24/7 downtown core." (Soja 2014, 6) According to Soja, the Watts rebellion would prove to be a pivotal moment in American history, marking "the end of the long postwar economic boom in the United States and signaling the onset of a period of crisis-generated economic restructuring that would affect to some degree every major metropolis in the industrialized world." (Soja 2014, 27) Mobilizing nearly 35,000 protesting bodies over the course of six days over a 46-square-mile swath of Los Angeles, the Watts riots reacted to urban inequality. A response to Marquette Frye's arrest, a 21-year-old African American man driving his mother's Buick, by a white California Highway Patrol motorcycle officer, the event characterized the kinesthetic restrictions posed on racialized individuals living within segregated Los Angeles. As Bayard Rustin wrote in 1966, Watts was "carried on with the express purpose of asserting that [African Americans] would no longer quietly submit to the deprivation of slum life." (Rustin 1966) It also became a highly mediatized performative event, with photographs of the buildings, cars, and city infrastructure set ablaze or destroyed as well as protestors clashing with police forces making the covers of all of the country's major newspapers. This dissertation follows this historical and theoretical trajectory, outlining how artists following the Watts rebellion protests similarly employed their bodies in choreographies as a response, in contradiction, or even in accord with post-war restructuring of the city. Following their own feminist, anti-war, and aesthetic ideals and concerns, the movement-based performances in question challenged the structure of the city through various forms of kinesthetic protest, some more explicitly made for the camera than others, that revealed the political economies and power inequalities of the automobile's mobility, the architectural

oversight of marginalized populations, and the sanitized and privatized functionalism of the suburban enclave.

In "Landscape in Motion: Nostalgia and Urban Redevelopment in Ed Ruscha's "Then & Now: Hollywood Boulevard, 1973-2004," (2015) Matt Reynolds draws attention to the ways in which the Los Angeles artist started "producing thousands of pictures of LA's vernacular architecture just as "The City" was becoming an object of renewed inquiry in the work of critics and theorists such as Jane Jacobs, Kevin Lynch, and Denise Scott Brown and Robert Venturi." (Reynolds 2015, 1061) As the wholesale displacement of indigent communities by giant corporate office towers, condominiums, and cultural palaces such as the Music Center and the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) shaped downtown Los Angeles, Ruscha and his contemporaries created works that resonated with "urban and suburban sprawl, car culture, an emerging ecological consciousness, and commercial development." (Reynolds 2015, 1061) This dissertation argues that retheorizations of the spatiality of social life in the 1970s (Castells 1977, Harvey 1973, Lefebvre 1974) and new forms of urban planning (Jacobs 1961) were intertwined with the dynamic practices of movement-based performance artists. As theorists, critics, urban planners, and policy makers rethought and reshaped the post-war, post-industrial American city, performance artists and their interventions indexed how normative spatial-order functioned at the level of the body. As issues of race, class, gender, and ethno-nationality often determined their own positionality vis-à-vis the built environment, artists rejoined movements of urban unrest by adopting and/or adapting postures of occupation, locomotion, and interruption as forms of kinesthetic protest.

Locomotion, Interruption, Occupation

Three basic kinesthetic principles organize the overall structure of this dissertation: locomotion, occupation, interruption. Each chapter theorizes art historical objects of study, performance artists, their works, and their urban lives, while adopting and adapting an analytical lens usually reserved for dance or other movement-based events. As such, it departs from most of the critical literature and scholarship investigating the overlap between art and the city that traditionally come out of Art History, focusing primarily on art as object, product, capital, and/or material. Starting in the 1990s, some of the pioneering and most notable examples of this include Suzanne Lacy's *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art* (1995), Rosalyn Deutsche's *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics* (1996), Miwon Kwon's *One Place After Another: Site Specific Art and Locational Identity* (2002), and Nato Thompson's *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2011* (2012). These oeuvres looked to map and define the complex terrain of artists reaching broader audiences outside of traditional art spaces, introducing a new aesthetic and critical vocabulary that included 'site specificity,' 'relational aesthetics,' 'socially engaged art,' and other forms of 'public art.' In lieu of these works, which employ art historical and theoretical methodologies that are sometimes static, prioritizing aesthetic analysis and empirical rigor over the dynamic flow of performance's phenomenology and movement-based realities, this dissertation adopts a Performance and Dance Studies methodology to read works alongside their political economies in motion. In doing so, it aligns with Performance Studies scholar Nick Kaye's definition of *site-specificity*, which he ascribes to an "incursion of performance into visual art and architecture, in strategies which work against the assumptions and stabilities of site and location." (Kaye 2000, 3) In *Site-Specific Art: Performance, Place and Documentation* (2000), Kaye suggests that space, as *practice place*, admits a kind of unpredictability that might be "subject not only to transformation, but ambiguity." (Kaye 2000,

7) Using the language of performance to enrich the discourse of site-specificity in Vito Acconci and Dennis Oppenheim's outdoor body works from the 1970s, Kaye outlines how the moving body is an unstable site that reveals a place "always *in process* and always *in excess*." (Kaye 2000, 163) This active reading of movement-based-performance events, all too often reduced to their meaning as visual signifiers devoid of kinesthetic identity and/or uncertainty, is at the root of this dissertation's overall argumentative and historical project.

Positing the performance artist's body as a dynamic and critical site of rupture with the normality of what the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu might describe as a *habitus*—"the durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations," which produce and reproduce regulated practices (Bourdieu 1977, 78)—each chapter employs the phenomenological vocabulary of Dance Studies and movement-based-performance to think through spatial and physical disorientations of political economies in the city. Adopting principles of embodiment from Maurice Merleau-Ponty in the *Phenomenology of Perception* (1976) and adapting them through more contemporary lens with Sarah Ahmed's *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (2006), Emily S. Lee's *Living Alterities: Phenomenology, Embodiment, and Race* (2014), and Harvey Young's *Embodying Black Experience, Stillness, Critical Memory, and the Black Body* (2010), the dissertation considers embodiment as it manifests itself in and against the built environment. Here, I rejoin Dance scholarship rooted in the phenomenology of the moving body as well as the broader social, economic, and political reach of kinesthetic interruptions. The writings of Randy Martin, André Lepecki, Susan Leigh-Foster, Anne Cooper Albright, and Mark Franko form the base of my theoretical argument and methodological approach, providing both the lexicon and the lens to think through movement-rich actions as intentional-filled, deliberate forms of socio-political, cultural, and aesthetic intervention.

In “Dance as Social Movement,” (1985) Randy Martin sets the groundwork for this research by advancing that the study of how dance is made, “the explicit direction and expression of the body,” can serve “as a map for those felt but perhaps unknown reaches of the social experience.” (Martin 1985, 54) The moving bodies in Chapter 1 articulate this through locomotion—the ability to move from one place to another. Here, the mobility of walking, crawling, and running through the city is seen as an “intrusion in space,” a displacement that is “felt as a new spatial environment between dancer and audience.” (Martin 1985, 64) Juxtaposing William Pope.L’s crawl along Broadway in Times Square (1978), Papo Colo’s run until exhaustion along the defunct elevated West Side Highway (1977), and Kim Jones’ (aka. Mudman) peripatetic journey from downtown Los Angeles to the Pacific Ocean along Wilshire Boulevard (1976), the chapter argues that these artists employed locomotion as a kinesthetic tactic of protest in performance art. In all three case studies, horizontal movement from one location to the other across the built environment intervenes in the city’s unobstructed flow of pedestrian bodies and automotive vehicles; the enforcement of ‘law and order’ by police and security forces; and processes of urban renewal and gentrification heavily underway in the 1970s and 1980s. The Vietnam War, America’s colonial relationship with Puerto Rico, and issues of racial segregation, unemployment, and homelessness are placed in contrast through different embodiments of locomotion as a response to the city, the state, and the aesthetics of dominant art movements. Borrowing from Susan Leigh Foster in “Walking and Other Choreographic Tactics: Danced Interventions of Theatricality and Performativity” (2002) these pedestrian performances can be read through the mobile, kinesthetic “rhetoric of resistance” (Leigh Foster 2002, 129) they deploy. Locomotion is a tactic that momentarily disrupts “the coercive power of strategic

structures" (Leigh Foster 2002, 130)—the sidewalk, the highway, the boulevard, the electrical pole—that otherwise go unnoticed and/or unchallenged.

Chapter 2 focuses on kinesthetic interruption in the city—the act of falling from one built surface to another and/or the ground. An outstanding and spectacular act in itself, this tactic is framed as an intentional "moving through disequilibrium," (Martin 2012, 63) what Randy Martin describes in "A Precarious Dance, A Derivative Sociality" (2012) as a dancer's ability to divine through spaces made for infinite possibility. Unlike locomotion, which is defined by performers moving across horizontal planes with definite trajectories, interruption is predicated on a vertical slippage that temporarily transcends time and space. In doing so, this chapter considers the work of the New York-based dancer choreographer Trisha Brown and the Dutch born, Los Angeles-based artist Bas Jan Ader. Distinct yet intimately linked, Ader and Brown's falls, a few months apart in 1970, offer new analytical and perspectival entry points into the given environments and structures they inhabited—the cast iron loft in SoHo and the bungalow in the suburb of Claremont, California—with their actions interrupting the city's regular flow of economic goods, industrial activities, and household rituals; the aesthetics of dominant art movements; and indexing processes of urban renewal, gentrification, and suburbanization underway in the early decade. Claiming the "dead-space between" (Martin 2012, 63) by falling from their respective rooftops within a few months of each other in 1970, these "derivative forms of pedestrian movement" across vertical planes "lay claim to the city, [inverting] its conventional coordinates, and render spaces of lost utility subject to another principle of speculation." (Martin 2012, 63) The act of tumbling off of, or being lowered down from a roof obstructs the spatial organizations of the home turned studio, providing a moment of levity that speaks to each artists participation in the changing urban experiences and political economies of Los Angeles and New York City.

Occupation, the act of entering, living, using, and/or taking control of a particular place is not necessarily defined by a singular kinesthetic logic (i.e. immobility, standing, lying down), but by the opposition it creates vis-à-vis other ritualized and ingrained patterns of dynamic motion. In "Toward a Kinesthetic of Protest," Randy Martin describes this gesture of arrest as a protest that "embodies what it seeks to achieve, stilling the impossible so that an alternative might become livable." (Martin 2006, 791) Outlining how the "occupation of social space produced by protest is fleeting," each event in Chapter 3 produces a "gesture of arrest that unleashes its own kinesthetic." (Martin 2006, 800) In contrast to locomotion and interruption, both which are defined by the coherence of their trajectories within a context, occupation gains coherence because of the sites it descends and takes hold upon. This is made apparent in the works of the Taiwanese-born, New York-based performance artist Tehching Hsieh in *One Year Performance 1981-1982 (Outdoor Piece)* and the Los Angeles-based feminist collaborative duo of Suzanne Lacy and Leslie Labowitz Starus during *In Mourning and In Rage* (1978). Geographically divided and politically different, their occupations speak to each other in the oppositions they created to the habitual choreographies of efficiently moving and transient bodies in Manhattan and downtown Los Angeles. Combining kinesthetic acts of entering, living, using, and/or taking control of delineated and highly symbolic sites, Hsieh, Lacy, and Labowitz's occupations exposed the restrictions of geographic scales and the powerful logics of movement imposed on marginalized and vulnerable bodies. Their performances moved in a multitude of ways but became coherent through the sites they descended and took hold upon, sites their occupation transformed by being physically present for prolonged periods of time. As such, Hsieh, Lacy, and Labowitz's occupations offer new theoretical and experiential entry points into given built environments, with their performances challenging the city's regular movement economies of

motor vehicles, pedestrian bodies, and homeless communities; household rituals and gender dynamics; and public policy as it relates to sexual violence, immigration, and security.

In and Against

Locomotion, occupation, and interruption are presented throughout the dissertation as kinesthetic, choreographic acts,—"in and against"—to align with scholarship in Performance Studies that theorizes protest as a performative event that is integral to the production of society in the 20th century. As Baz Kershaw writes in his seminal article "Fighting in the Streets: Dramaturgies of Popular Protest 1968-1989" about dramaturgies of protest of the late 1960s,[4] "the synecdochic spectacle of protest challenges a system of authority *in its own terms*, because in such societies the *display* of power – its symbolic representation in multifarious forms of public custom, ceremony, and ritual, and then their reproduction throughout the media – has become in some sense more important to the maintenance of law and order than authority's actual power of coercion and control." (Kershaw 1997, 257) If protest has "gained this new kind of potency […] because liberal democratic systems weave political conflict into the very fabric of society," then I argue that performance artists during the time period of this dissertation adapted these postures of kinesthetic resistance with "spontaneity and improvisation" (Kershaw 1997, 260) to create their own spectacles within this new called "performative society." (Kershaw 1997, 257) Rejoining Kershaw, I posit that the analysis of performance art events of locomotion, interruption, and occupation reveals aspects of protest, both social and aesthetic,

[4] In his article, Kershasw describes the Los Angeles riots that followed the beating of Rodney King as a liminal event that gave "protest a potent ideological transcendence – beyond subversion, beyond resistance – because in liminality may be found the very figure of new notions of freedom." (Kershaw 1997, 275) While I do not share Kershaw's total optimism for the freedom or transcendence of protest, since postures of power and control have adapted to modes of dissent, I do feel these notions of liminal performance are productive in framing the kinesthetic events from this dissertation as their own, agency filled disruptions of normative spatial order in the 1970s.

which "resonate with their historical moment in especially telling ways." (Kershaw 1997, 260) Through the performative, kinesthetic and social lens of protest, many of the artworks, artists, architectures, and historical events in this dissertation become newly intelligible and connected to each other.

Writing more recently about 'protest performances,' Marcela Fuentes has redeployed this term in the 21st century. Her work rejoins this dissertation's goal to bridge the social, aesthetic, and political economies of performance art with the spatiality of everyday life:

> These events that I call 'protest performances' open new possibilities to explore contemporary political subjectivities, that is, ways in which subjects position themselves vis-à-vis current conflicts and antagonists. Protest performances defy traditional notions of efficacy, challenging social analysts to revise the conceptual tools used to evaluate actions that are part protest, part conceptual art, part sarcastic prank, part civil disobedience. These crafted protests not only redefine the manner in which protestors voice their political claims and demands; they also redefine the role of spectators who participate as witnesses and as agents of multiple re-plays. 'Tell, watch, join, share': protest performances resort to discursive, visual, and embodied tactics to reveal the workings of systems that are difficult to understand but whose effects are felt across the world. (Fuentes 2012, 450)

The embodied language of "challenging traditional notions of efficacy" used by Fuentes to describe 'protest performances' here mirrors my own categorizing of techniques of locomotion, interruptions, and occupation as modes of spatial dissent employed by socio-political movements and performance artists to disrupt systems of dominant power. Similar to Fuentes, I demonstrate how responding "to the 'invisible hand of capital', protestors and artists used performance as antagonistic practice and also a channel for civic engagement." (Fuentes 2012, 463) In doing so, I contribute to a lineage of contemporary Performance Studies and Dance scholars—Susan Leigh Foster, "Choreographies of Protest" (2003); Randy Martin, "Toward a Kinesthetic of Protest" (2006); André Lepecki "Choreopolice and Choreopolitics: or, the task of the dancer" (2013)—

who work at the crossroads of movement-based-performance, recalcitrant physicality, political economies of power, and embodied protest in everyday settings.

In each chapter, kinesthetic protest performs different types of resistances depending on the architectural contexts, artists, and the political economies of the city. One example of scholarship that attends to these nuances of kinesthetic protest is Susan Shawyer who in her reading of the Occupy Newfoundland movement has written about the act of "occupation." Rejoining an area of research that parallels my own by citing the lifeworks of Tehching Hsieh, she frames "occupation" as an example of a "protest dramaturgy of endurance" that performs activism over time. (Shawyer 2018, 454)[5] Similar to Shawyer, I approach protest as only one form of social choreography, a site of meaning within a variety of enactments of kinesthetic kinships, relationships, and dynamics (Levin and Gerecke 2018, 7). As Anusha Kedhar has written in an article entitled "Choreography and Gesture Play an Important Role in Protests" for the New York Times on the relevance of movement, choreography, and performance in protest surrounding the current Black Lives Matter movement: "Movement matters. Bodies matter – particularly when people are protesting the black body's disposability at the hands of the state. Choreography, movement and gesture are not peripheral but central to the politics of protest." (Kedhar 2014) Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies provide "models for analyzing not only

[5] Citing the work of Chantal Mouffe and "agonistic pluralism," Shawyer suggests that we move towards an understanding of power and protest in which those with opposing views are "no longer perceived to be an enemy to be destroyed but as an 'adversary,' that is, somebody whose ideas we combat but whose right to defend those ideas we do not put into question." (Shawyer 2014, 454) Mouffe's own descriptions of agnonism in *The Democratic Paradox* (2020) deploy a vocabulary of democracy that is largely performative: "A well-functioning democracy calls for a vibrant clash of democratic political positions. […] Too much emphasis on consensus and the refusal of confrontation lead to apathy and disaffection with political participation. Worse still, the result can be the crystallization of collective passions around issues which cannot be managed by the democratic process and an explosion of antagonisms that can tear up the very basis of civility." (Mouffe 2000, 184) The active ideas of "vibrant clash," "confrontation," "apathy, "disaffection," crystallization," "explosion, and "tear up" are all rooted in a performative, embodied language of kinesthetic kinship and refusal.

the *why*, but also the *how* of performance" (Shawyer 2018, 454) and I elaborate on locomotion, interruption, and occupation to recognize and ruminate on shared tactics, focusing on how actions are performed and how ideas are represented in the moving body and its immediate built environment in New York and Los Angeles between 1970 and 1985.

Movement-Based-Research

In the introductory chapter to her book *Geographies of Learning, Theory and Practice, Activism and Performance* (2001), Jill Dolan presents the potential of performance as a practice that allows "[…] us to rehearse new social arrangements, in ways that require visceral investments of bodies, of time, of personal and cultural history." (Dolan 2001, 16) Arguing for different *geographies of learning* as she calls them, Dolan offers a research, pedagogical, and methodological agenda that foregrounds the primacy and potential of practice to engage in physically, materially embodying socio-cultural circumstances (Dolan 2001, 90). Following this tradition, as well as other performance studies and urban scholars who have paved the way for intertwining theory and practice, this dissertation engages in a practice as research methodology. By revisiting three of my own performances as introductions to each chapter—*Five Dollar Crawl After William Pope.L* (2011); *Gravitational Pull of My Head* (2013); *Ceci est un □ à compléter chez soi : This is a □ to be completed at home* (2017)—I provide new and privileged methodological insight into acts of interruption, occupation, and locomotion as they were performed then and now. Establishing and prioritizing a theoretical framework that valorizes embodied knowledge as a means of engaging with historical, urban, and aesthetic archives, this dissertation contributes to the expansion of academic discourse by including the body and its lived experience(s) as forms of valued knowing and knowledge production.

Form Follows Function distinguishes itself from other art historical and urban scholarship by pursuing movement-based-performance research which enacts kinesthetic actions in urban infrastructure as a way of knowing and challenging the city. In doing so, it adopts and adapts dance studies methodologies by practitioners, curators, and theoreticians who have historically posited first person experiences of choreography and embodied motion through space as a means of understanding performance and performativity. In *Engaging Bodies: The Politics and Poetics of Corporeality* (2013), Anne Cooper Albright demonstrates how movement is a physical inquiry and a way of experiencing the world that is necessarily reflected in her own critical writing. Advocating for combining moving and thinking (Albright 2013, xi), Albright suggests that performing bodies cross over stylistic, geographic, and historical boundaries by calling static definitions of identity into question (Albright 2003, xii). She engages with Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and more specifically with later feminist phenomenologists (Iris Marion Young and Judith Butler), approaching movement practices (like contact improvisation) as a methodology—positing her body as a way of knowing (Albright 2003, 11). My approach to practice as research steps outside of the disciplinary boundaries of dance and the dance studio and applies Albright's theorization of the moving body to my performance art—suggesting the intelligibility of formal gestures like crawling, climbing, falling, and standing as points of contact and entry into past performances. Here, I rejoin Albright who suggests that the introduction of embodied knowledge into "history courses opened up a creative space where historical fact [meshes] with intellectual exploration." (Albright 2003, 139) For the author, contemporary choreography can be used as a "springboard" to reflect on how and for whom the past is preserved (Albright, 140), whereby reconstructions of previous performances can give valuable insight into the "dancing past." (Albright 2003, 142) These are crucial points since *Form Follows*

Action engages with art historical and urban archives to revive them in a contemporary context—making past movements, gestures, and actions in cities intelligible through a form of reinterpretation and reperformance. Albright opens up a space to revise original works, suggesting that the ones that "are self-conscious about their approach" and not merely copies the original are most effective (Albright 2003, 142). This kinesthetic methodological precedent lays the groundwork for my own practice as research, presenting an opportunity to think about how in "order to be effectively and potently embodied in performance, history has to be recast, so to speak—situated in a different light and taken up by different bodies." (Albright 2003, 149)

The question of entering or engaging with historical performances through practice as research as a methodology brings up the important question of *difference*—not only as it relates to the passage of time and radically different urban political economies in New York and Los Angeles, but also as it manifests itself as I, a white, male, able-bodied, upper-middle-class performer seek to relate to performance artists of different racial, gender, ethnic, and social backgrounds. Who am I to assume that my occupations, locomotions, or interruptions of the city resemble those of William Pope.L, Suzanne Lacy, Papo Colo, Kim Jones, and so on? Can practice as research be used in order to account for these differences—or must it, when placed in relationship to a historical archive and questions of identity, always struggle to justify itself as a valid work in rapport to its predecessor? Here, my approach departs from Albright who grapples with this question briefly (Albright 2003, 151), but does not expand upon it further—leaving uncertainty as to how difference does not invalidate her perception of other bodies as she relates to them kinesthetically. Instead, I turn to T. Nikki Cesare Schotzo's article "To Carry the Archive with Us: The Multi-Burdened Crawls of William Pope.L and Didier Morelli" (2013) where the author reflects on this disjuncture as it manifested itself in my 2011 "(re)performance"

of William Pope.L's crawls in the context of a graduate seminar at the University of Toronto. Addressing "(re)performance" as a mode of practice as research, Cesare Schotzko presents it as an action that necessarily challenges the relationship between the archive and the live performance. Echoing Albright, the author argues that the work points to the ways that the archive may travel across "space and time, and across bodies." (Cesare Schotzko 2013, 53) Of particular interest, however, is the way in which she conceptualizes this "(re)performance" as a case where "[…] it isn't that the live body is fully visible but haunted by the body or acts it (re)performs; rather neither body is wholly live or wholly "nonlive," and neither can exist independently of the archive." (Cesare Schotzko 2013, 54) Cesare Schotzko argues that my performance event rendered the archive and performance at times indistinguishable from each other—placing both audience and performer into "[…] the space of performance *and* into the *place* of the archive: each dependent upon the other." (Cesare Schotzko, 54) What this approach suggests is that the "new" work need not wholly (perfectly) reproduce the conditions or reality of the previous work, but that it engages it discursively. Following this logic, *Form Follows Action* does not seek to recreate or reproduce the original works or to claim any ability to sense or embody city spaces as these performance artists previously have—but to carry these archives of occupation, locomotion, and interruption forward as practical means of dialoguing with performance art practices, their history of engaging the city, and their intellectual credibility as forms of kinesthetic protest and embodied knowledge.

This conception of practice as research as a methodology that engages with a historical archive of performances inscribes itself within a tradition in performance studies scholarship that seeks to theorize embodied knowledge as an important system of knowing as well as *transmitting* knowledge. When Cesare Schotzko describes the intersection between the enduring

materials of the archive (texts, documents, buildings, bones) and the so-called ephemeral *repertoire* of embodied practice/knowledge (Cesare Schotzko 2013, 53) in *Five Dollar Crawl After William Pope.L.*, she is citing Diana Taylor's work on cultural and social memory as an embodied act of imagination and interconnection (Taylor 2003, 82). In *The Archive and the Repertoire* (2003), Taylor puts forth the idea that embodied performances have always played a role in conserving memory and consolidating identities (Taylor 2003, xix)—shifting the attention away from the primacy of archive as a space of tangible knowledge to the importance of the repertoire as a site where we may find actions passed on that do not remain the same (Taylor 2003, 20), but retain traditions of embodied practice. Evoking the notion of "ghosting", Taylor claims that "[…] performance makes visible (for an instant, live, now) that which is always already there […]." (Taylor 2003, 143) Similar to Albright, Taylor emphasizes that these performances actually alter cultural repertoires—that is that performance accomplishes a moment of revisualization, it "[…] promises or threatens to reappear, albeit in another shape or form." (Taylor 2003, 144) This emphasis on reiterative performance practices, artistic or political, on the recoding of performances as time unfolds is crucial. *Form Follows Action* approaches previous performances of kinesthetic protest in the city by playing on these as repertoires (aesthetic and social), by engaging their material archives (images, videos, texts) and their kinesthetic dynamics (occupation, locomotion, interruption) as interrelated anchor points. As Taylor argues, we must read the archive and the repertoire in a "constant state of interaction" (Taylor 2003, 21), and so I posit my practice as research as a means to work them in tandem—connecting (and ghosting) the images and aesthetics of past bodies challenging urban spaces to my present-day reiteration of their subversive techniques of occupation, locomotion, and interruption.

I am aware that by positioning myself and my own contemporary practice in relationship to the archive, —a mediated space of photographs, videos, and first-person accounts of kinesthetic actions in the cities of Los Angeles and New York City between 1970 and 1985—I am opening myself up to criticisms that I create a space-time nexus event that negates the historicity of the works in question while fetishizing them as unique, original moments. In addition, in each chapter, I pay limited attention to and/or do not discriminate between the objects of study and the way(s) in which they were recorded, documented, and disseminated. Mediation, remediation, and their relationship to contemporary aesthetic, performative, historical, cinematic and other re-enactments represent a rich field of study that has not been my explicit focus here (Borggreen and Gade 2013, Carrigy 2021, Jones and Heathfield 2012, McCalman and Pickering 2010, Schneider 2011). This is largely because I have turned to phenomenological Dance and Movement Studies methodologies which prioritize a transmission of embodied gestures through kinesthetic forces rather than visual, written, or auditive representations. It does not mean that I do not appreciate the differences and distances between past and present, there and here, and the influence of the documentary image, video, or text as a carrier of meaning. I am, after all, informed by these representations in my analysis of the works since by their very materiality they most evidently transcend the moment of their creations. By bridging the ontological gaps between *liveness* and *documentation* through my creative practice and critical, theoretical writing, I hope to attain a fluid understanding between historical performance art events, their performative qualities, and the structures of the built environment.

Combining Performance Studies, Art History, and Dance Studies has at times demanded that I forgo discussions, interpretations, or the creation of hierarchies between the different forms of records of live art. None of the case studies in this dissertation were documented in the same

way, with the same attention, or with the same intentions. In order to focus on their kinesthetic potentials, it was imperative to read them as closely as possible to their embodied qualities rather than their recording devices and surviving physical traces. I hope this contribution continues expanding on notions of *liveness*, a contested concept Philip Auslander has previously described with the appropriate nuance as such:

> "The progressive diminution of previous distinctions between the live and the mediatized, in which live events are becoming more and more like mediatized ones, raises for me the question of whether there really are clear-cut ontological distinctions between live forms and mediatized ones. Although my initial arguments may seem to rest on the assumption that there are, ultimately I find that not to be the case. If live performance cannot be shown to be economically independent of, immune from contamination by, and ontologically different from mediatized forms, in what sense can liveness function as a site of cultural and ideological resistance, as Bogosian, Phelan, and others claim?" (Auslander 1999, 7)

This idea of contaminated, messy, and enmeshed archives where overlaps, ghostings, and "surrogations" (Roach 2, 1996) blur the boundaries between past and present objects of study that mirror each other best represents the models of remediation I follow throughout this dissertation. As Joseph Roach writes about performance: "I believe that the process of trying out various candidates in different situations—the doomed search for originals by continuously auditioning stand-ins—is the most important of the many meanings that users intend when they say the word *performance*." (Roach 1996, 3) Embracing this doomed search in the archive, happily dislocated from a quest for originals, is where I make my most fruitful observations and encounters with past performances.

Here, I find Mechtild Widrich's rebuttal to the "flattening thesis" in which mediation is framed as a collapsing of content to be useful in describing how I approach practice as research and my writing in/out of the archive. Throughout her work, Widrich has argued that the "connections between layers of mediation—and actual acts and things—in space and time add up

to a new kind of monumentality and site-directedness." (Widrich 2018, 134) The useful conceptual monumentalization of performance—or the "fixation of a possibly fictional interpretation of history through physical reconstruction in the present (Widrich "Is the "Re" in Re-enactment" 2014, 141)—allows Widrich to clearly define the *re-* of re-performance as a single point in a matrix of reiterations: "The reference to earlier performance in re-performance is thus a means to make us aware that times have indeed changed, not to recreate experience, but to allow for the tension between that which seems familiar (the bodily gesture) and the jolting difference not just in the setting of performance (the ongoing construction of corporate architecture in the desert) but in its meaning." (Widrich "Is the "Re" in Re-enactment" 2014, 145) My acts of repetition then, "far from erasing all differences between an event and its later instances, is a marker that allows us to see this difference more clearly, often creating new meaning, formally and contextually, which can only be understood in the light of the distance to the reference work or event." (Widrich "Is the "Re" in Re-enactment" 2014, 145) For Widrich, performance documentation enacts a performative function every time an "interactive subject" encounters these remediations (Widrich "Performative Monuments" 2014, 15). I situate myself, my practice as research, my intervention and reading of these living archives as this *interactive subject.*

This approach to practice as research as a method for understanding how performers move through cities also draws from SanSan Kwan's *Kinesthetic City: Dance & Movement in Chinese Urban Spaces* (2013). In accordance with Widrich's idea that it is unsurprising that performance artists have developed close relationships with particular architectural sites insofar as their commemorative, documented work hinges on a dynamic relationship between work, setting, audience and urban context (Widrich "Performative Monuments" 2014, 25), Kwan opens

up her own "dancer's body" as a means of knowing how urban spaces function (Kwan 2013, 3). The author responds to the concerns of using practice as a means to generalize the experience(s) of the city, and so she states clearly how she does not "[…] presume to inhabit, know or even "read" the other bodies in the Chinese cities of [her] study." (Kwan 2013, 9) Instead, she offers the experiences of her own body as a way to apprehend space. Like Kwan, I argue that my practice as research stems from the experience of my own body and practice. I do not look to universalize, essentialize or claim absolute knowledge of previous embodied experiences or performance events in the city. Instead, *Form Follows Action* builds on the idea of a kinesthetic ethnography (Kwan 2013, 127) in offering entry-points into bodily acts of performance protest—practical reference-points to discuss and explore particular tactics used to subvert political economies of urban functionalism. As Kwan offers the act of walking as a point of entry in the opening passages of her chapter "Vibrating with Taipei: Cloud Gate Dance Theatre and National Kinesthesia", she propels her reader into the pedestrian architecture of Taipei by generating a first-hand account of her experience of it as a walker (Kwan 2013, 27). Characterizing the bustle of Taipei as a city with a particular choreography, Kwan looks to demonstrate how dance, specifically that of the Cloud Gate Dance Theatre, responds to the architecture of the city and its movement. *Form Follows Action* performs a similar intervention, but instead of presenting walking as an analytic for how cities move, it employs different acts of locomotion (crawling, climbing, and running), occupation (standing, sitting, living), and interruption (falling) as means to examine how these may subvert the cities' flow.

In this ethnographic lens, my approach to practice as research is in dialogue with a Northwestern University Performance Studies multi-generational tradition of notable scholars (Ramón Rivera-Servera, D. Soyini Madison, E. Patrick Johnson) who have presented theory as a

practice of performance: as experienced, learned, and felt on one's own body (Rivera-Servera 2012, 19). As Dwight Conquergood has written, performance "both for the fieldworker and stage actor, requires a special doubling of consciousness, an ironic awareness" during which one "must take oneself simultaneously as both subject and object." (Conquergood 2013, 20) This self-conscious transcendence of the dialectic between theory and practice that was foundational to this branch of the field continues to inform my research today. In the introduction to each chapter, I demonstrate my own "deep involvement" (Madison 2010, 6), "turning inward toward self-reflection and my own positionality in the field" (Madison 2010, 10) by reading my own past performances as events to be critically untangled—objects of study in themselves as well as analytical lens to read and interpret the kinesthetic particularities of past artistic practices, the resonance of historical moments, and the nature of the built environment. In line with this school of thought, I illustrate how performance ethnography, in addition to providing space for deconstructing essentialist notions of selfhood, also provides "a space for meaningful resistance of oppressive systems." (Johnson 2003, 9) This ability to identify and disentangle complex movement-based-performances, their aesthetics, and the relationship they have to the built environment while simultaneously accounting and advocating for their efficacious resistance to systems of control and power is crucial to my research. While not always perfectly methodologically aligned with ethnographic approaches, these affinities between my practice as research and performance ethnography demonstrate how embodied practices serve as useful points of contact with performance, both aesthetic and social.

Form Follows Action also employs practice as research to challenge the ways in which we approach cities, echoing Kwan who states that her experience of being in the city provide evidence of a "[…] moment of blurringly fast change interrupted by the eruptions of the ever-

present past. New development projects in the city and older architecture reflect against one another […].” (Kwan 2013, xix) Describing the dances and protest she studies, as well as her own bodily engagement with the city, Kwan argues that a “space-time-body-event” (Kwan 2013, 24) that combines all these elements provides her with a privileged look at the composition of the city and its performances. *Form Follows Action* engages with cities (Los Angeles and New York City) that are rich with the sediments of the past as they continue to expand into the future. Writing about New York City, Sharon Zukin states that the metropolis and some of its neighborhoods offer “[…] kairological images of living simultaneously in the past and in the present and in contrasting class world of poverty and privilege.” (Zukin 2010, 122) Urban redevelopment in Los Angeles and New York City has given place to radical changes since the 1970s, however it has also been subject to important preservation of streetscapes, buildings, and public spaces. Although considerably altered, as entire communities and social classes have been pushed out, these cities continue to bear the traces and stories of their past. Performance, here, is employed to become conscious of the urban as both spatiotemporally specific, but also inscribed in a reiterative force that bears traces of previous events, architectures, and performances. In employing practice as research, I rejoin urban practices that are deeply invested in approaching the city as environments that must be experienced first-hand (Reyner Banham, Doreen Massey, Edward Soja, and Sharon Zukin), practicing the kind of “spatial consciousness” or “geographical imagination” posited by David Harvey in *Social Justice and the City* (1973).

Positing performance as research to offer critical and practical insight into the formal, historical, and urban histories of performance practices that looked to subvert architectural functionalism in New York and Los Angeles between 1970 and 1985 by engendering new spatial subjectivities is a crucial methodological framework that distinguishes *Form Follows Action* from

previous works that have ventured to explore similar issues concerning performance art, urban environments, and their political economies. In doing so, it offers insight into processes of embodiment in the city as they relate to tactics of locomotion, occupation, and interruption—rendering forms of kinesthetic protest intelligible to a broad audience and actively engaging in furthering academic discourse that seeks to valorize practice as a valuable methodological tool.

CHAPTER 1

Acts of Locomotion:
Walking, Running, and Crawling after Kim Jones, Papo Colo, and William Pope.L

Realizing how long it takes to crawl, rather than to walk, through a crosswalk (much, much longer than the pedestrian signal allows for), and that Morelli was below the sight lines of the many cars impatiently waiting at the now-green light, I better understood the literal risk this performance put both Morelli and his vigilant classmates in. And, perhaps, by extension, put myself in. While I had previously feigned a casual stroll behind Morelli, I now matched my steps with his; while I had measured space between his performance and my observation of it, I now refused any distance between us.

> —T. Nikki Cesare Schotzko, *Learning How To Fall:Art and culture after September 11* (2014)

It is a cool November morning and I begin my day at 6:30AM in preparation for *Five Dollar Crawl After William Pope.L*, a 1.6-mile crawl from my apartment at 120 Maitland Street to the Centre for Theatre, Drama, and Performance Studies at the University of Toronto, Ontario.[6] The action is to be followed by a one-hour lecture on the visual and performance artist William Pope.L. Having slept poorly the night before in my small and overheated one-bedroom apartment in anticipation of the day to come, I rise with the idea to recite Rock Carrier's iconic story on the Canadian Five Dollar Bill in French during my performance. Throughout the night, and in the weeks leading up to the event, I've tried to negotiate the exact reason *why* I've decided to introduce my lecture on Pope.L through the act of crawling. Presenting on an artist of my choosing as an assignment in Professor Nikki Cesare Schotzko's "DRAMA 1003: Introduction to Solo Performance" course, I found myself compelled to explore Pope.L's work to whom I had

[6] The action, which took place on November 11, 2011, coincided with Remembrance Day, a memorial holiday observed in Commonwealth Nations since the end of the First World War to pay tribute to members of the armed forces that have died in the line of duty.

an autobiographical and visceral connection.[7] That Pope.L's works were originally meant as collective community acts (Duray 2015), which he states no one accompanied him on most of the time, further affirmed my desire to experience the crawl first-hand before lecturing on it.[8] Conscious that I could never crawl *as* Pope.L or even *with* Pope.L given the spatio-temporal context of my work and the physicality of my body—privileged by my white masculinity, middle-class status, and my comfortable living conditions as a graduate student in the Canadian city of Toronto in the year 2011—I set out with the intention to crawl *after* Pope.L. Following in his tracks, and those who have answered his invitation to assume a horizontal position of activity

[7] William Pope.L attended the Mason Gross School for the Arts at Rutgers in New Brunswick, New Jersey, between 1979-1981 where he and my father, François Morelli, met and became friends. Pope.L has since been part of my contemporary art education, in addition to being a friend of the family.

[8] My father participated in *Bringing the Décarie to the Mountain* (2005), a crawl lead by Pope.L in Montreal, Canada. Leading a dozen people from the Décarie expressway to the base of Mount Royal, the piece reflected on the displacement of Montreal ethnic communities caused by the building of the Décarie highway for Expo 67. The image of my father, crawling alongside Pope.L, made an impact on me and continues to resonate today, as did the scars, bruises, and broken skin on his hand, knees, and elbows following the performance.

in the city, I looked to embody the crawl for myself and understand it as a kinesthetic tactic of locomotion capable of intervening in the city's political economy and movement rationale.

The moment one shifts from a vertical, bipedal position of navigating space to a horizontal, four-legged one, the experience of everyday architecture and infrastructure changes dramatically. As I assumed the position of the crawl outside of my apartment building, wearing a Quebec Nordiques National Hockey League Jersey (#2 for Mario Marois), as well as William Pope.L's printed image fastened to my head with masking tape, I immediately felt the awkwardness of my physical weight distributing itself evenly across my hands and knees. Avoiding dog excrement, broken glass, many passers-by, and the discomfort of not being able to see ahead of myself without wrenching my neck forward, I made it to the first street-corner (barely 100-yards away from the start) disoriented by the clumsiness of my movements. Quickly, my body, so used to moving fluidly and without restraint across sidewalks and crosswalks, sensed that the exertion of the crawl and the corporeal experience of navigating the city far outweighed any previous acts of physical exertion I had explored in the past.[9] As dance scholar André Lepecki describes his experience of the crawl during the summer of 2004 as curator of an artist laboratorium at the *In Transit* festival in Berlin, "On the ground, the first thing the group found out is that the terrain of cities and buildings has

Figure 11. ***Five Dollar Crawl After William Pope.L,*** **Photo: Kyle Turner. Didier Morelli, 2011.**

[9] Since the age of five I have partaken in competitive and recreational sports almost obsessively (soccer, swimming, archery, and running). At the age of 21, I turned my focus to endurance-based sports where I have since competed in triathlons (swim, bike, run) and foot races on the track, roads, and trails.

nothing to do with a planar surface. The moment one gives up one's verticality, the first thing one discovers is that even the smoothest ground is not flat." (Lepecki 2006, 99) In his recollection of this experience, Lepecki asserts that the collective crawl at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt "marked a critical moment in [his] relationship to Pope.L's performance." (Lepecki 2006, 98) Shifting from the position of observer—which emphasizes the verticality of the spectator's stance—to the horizontal plane of participant, Lepecki draws attention to the kinesthetic qualities of the crawl and the embodied knowledge it offers once engaged with as a performer. It is in this shift in perception, in the movement to crawling through the dense streets of Toronto at morning rush hour, that the potential of the crawl as a kinesthetic act of protest with the ability to temporarily trouble movement economies and architectural functionalism became most apparent.

Throughout the next two hours, I physically learned the difficulties of crawling through the streets of a busy metropolis. Initially moving relatively rapidly and athletically along the North side of College Street's sidewalk, the rubbing from the concrete and asphalt on my arms quickly caused the skin on my elbows and knees to open up and my rhythm to drop.[10]Feeling increasingly sore in my shoulders, back, hips, and hamstrings from the irregular and unrehearsed movement, I moved with more urgency

Figure 12. ***Five Dollar Crawl After William Pope.L*****, Photo: Kyle Turner. Didier Morelli, 2011.**

[10] I have my father to thank for saving my elbows and knees from worst damage. A few days before my performance, he informed me that Pope.L recommended in 2005 that he and other crawlers bring protection for the elbows and knees to minimize the damage of a prolonged military crawl through the streets of Montreal.

and intention, less focused on caring for the possible obstacles and dangers—cars, tour buses, commuters, lamp posts, potholes, and shifts in terrain—in my immediate surroundings. The poem I recited repeatedly from the beginning became a mantra— "Les hivers de mon enfance étaient des saisons longues, longues…", a driving tempo meant to focus my wandering mind away from the dryness in my mouth and the exhaustion. Horizontally oriented and working to move forward in order to reach the end of my planned route, I became completely isolated from the city above and around—focusing primarily on the patterns and movements of the feet around me and the car tires beside me. The slowness of my movement, the labor of my gesture, forced me to pay particular attention to the labor of and effort in each action—the city no longer measured by my unbroken two-legged stride but by my awkward fumbling pace.

In Motion:
Tactics of Urban Subversion

> The military crawl is just one more element in the indexing of kinetic techniques of violence, associated with the imperial power of Superman, of White America, all revealed and activated by an extremely nice black man crawling on *The Great White Way*, alongside the mass graves the legacy of colonialist and imperial policies keep opening around us daily.
>
> —André Lepecki, *Exhausting Dance: Performance and the politics of movement* (2005)

This chapter considers the works of the Los Angeles-based performance artist Kim Jones (b. 1944), the New York-based artist Papo Colo (b. 1946) as well as the visual and performance artist William Pope.L (b.1955). It argues that these three artists and their works not only demonstrate the emergence of locomotion as a kinesthetic tactic of protest in performance art in Los Angeles and New York City during the 1970s and 1980s, but that their actions outline critical developments in urbanism, economics, and culture as well as the broader political economies of each particular city. In all three examples, locomotion is employed as performance

tactic in order to intervene in the city's unobstructed flow of pedestrian bodies and automotive vehicles; the enforcement of 'law and order' by police and security forces; and processes of urban renewal heavily underway in the 1970s and 1980s.

Kim Jones is of primary interest because of his public appearances as Mudman in Los Angeles where he navigated through particular architectural and infrastructural sites as staging grounds for performances. Highlighting Los Angeles' automotive culture, above-ground electrical grid, and sprawling low-level housing units, Jones' walking and climbing works become markers of the city's automotive-driven urban rationale while simultaneously challenging its functionality. As a Vietnam War Veteran, Jones' gestures are significant as abandoned, destitute, and disabled veterans stranded in metropolitan inner cities during the 1970s shaped the demographics of urban homelessness. In New York City, Papo Colo's early performance works in SoHo as a relatively newcomer from Puerto Rico are of particular importance. Part of a critical moment in the city and SoHo's transformation into the iconic contemporary commercial and touristic space of today, Colo's 1970s explorations of outdoor environments as sites to test the bounds and limits of his body are relevant in conjunction with a period of rapid urban change. Running until exhaustion and paddling against the current, Colo's performances of locomotion respond to the rapidly shifting landscape of the city by appropriating and repurposing abandoned, vacated, and forgotten architectural and infrastructural spaces as sites of intervention. From here, we turn to William Pope.L's *Times Square Crawl* (1978), one of more than thirty acts of crawling through city streets undertaken by the artist. His deliberate act of "giving up of verticality" as a means to engage issues of race and homelessness in the urban core of New York City spoke directly to the rise in income inequality and the widening gap on the housing market. Pope.L's locomotion of crawling provides a politics of its

own by shifting the embodied horizontality of the disenfranchised in city streets away from a position of inactivity.

Locomotion in the city—the ability to move from one place to another—is not in itself an outstanding act. In *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984) the French philosopher Michel de Certeau dedicates an entire chapter to "Walking in the City". He describes how "ordinary practitioners of the city", also known as "walkers", "follow the thicks and thins of an urban "text" they write without being able to read it." (de Certeau 1984, 93) Connecting the act of walking to that of enunciation (de Certeau 1984, 98), de Certeau describes pedestrian motion as a lack of "place", it "is the indefinite process of being absent and in search of a proper." (de Certeau 1984, 103) Here, he traces the ways in which walking in a city can constitute a method for individuals to use their bodies to resist the discipline of *habitus* imposed by social space, "cultivating a subjectivity that allows them to autonomously interpret the environment around them, and to not be subjected to interpretation by it." (Kosnoski 2011, 115) de Certeau offers a way in which to think of different modes of locomotion in the city as "tactics":

> A tactic is a calculated action determined by the absence of a proper locus. No delimitation of an exteriority then provides it with the condition necessary for autonomy. The space of a tactic is the space of the other. Thus it must play on and with a terrain imposed on it and organized by the law of a foreign power. (de Certeau 1984, 36-37)

The notion of a tactic allows us to think of locomotion as a kinesthetic action capable of intervening in normative political, aesthetic, and social economies. By applying it to performance art, this chapter provides a theoretical, historical, and methodological framework to demonstrate how artists' use of locomotion in Los Angeles and New York City emerged as a deliberate means to subvert architectural and urban functionalism with their individual bodies in movement.

Thinking of movement-based-performance as a basic form of embodiment in everyday life, dance scholar Susan Leigh Foster troubles the distinction made between symbolic action and physical intervention in "Choreographies of Protest" (2003). Throughout her essay, she demonstrates the central role that physicality plays in constructing both individual agency and sociality (Foster 2003: 395). Working against classic theories of political protest that oppose thought and action by theorizing the body as either agitated and irrational or calculated and with narrowly defined interests, Foster rejoins Baz Kershaw's previously cited work on performance and protest to posit a framework that considers the body as an articulate signifying agent capable of tactical interventions (Foster 2003, 396). This is a crucial framework for understanding locomotion as a mode of spatial dissent—be it social, political, or aesthetic. Expanding this notion in an earlier essay entitled "Walking and Other Choreographic Tactics: Dance Inventions of Theatricality and Performativity" (2002), Foster speaks directly to experimental performance practices in the late 1960s and early 1970s that engaged in a re-assessment of the exclusive right of the theatre to house art and dance. She delineates how artists combined site-specific explorations of outdoor environments and non-traditional movement vocabularies in order to challenge previous paradigms of performance—spatially and corporeally (Foster 2002, 127). Here, she demonstrates how tactics of "kinesthetic protest" in urban spaces were not only present in social contexts (like the events of the lunch counter sit-ins of the 1960s or the ACT-UP die-ins of the late 1980s she describes in her 2003 article), but also in artistic communities.

Foster draws on the works of de Certeau, presenting his analysis of resistance as a means to theorize "[…] theatre as a strategy and theatricality as a possible tactic—a framework that accords the body and its movement a central role." (Foster 2002, 131) This reading of de Certeau

and his conceptualization of bodily motion as articulation capable of formulating a trace in the city enables dance—or in this case performances of locomotion—to "[…] operate alongside other kinds of tactical operations as a thought-filled form of action." (Foster 2002, 131) Throughout this chapter, locomotion is a kinesthetic vector that interweaves political economies, aesthetic acts, and forms of protest. Each case study establishes how "[…] each body is unique and makes distinctive choices, but always in relation to a larger sociality, the features of which are unfolding through and alongside all individual actions." (Foster 2002, 141-142)

Kim Jones (aka Mudman): Across Boulevards, Up Poles, and On Roofs

> i'm alone in the santa monica mountains. it's the month of may. i don't belong here. i prepare myself for the journey back to the city of los angeles. i need to live with rats.
>
> —Kim Jones, *a story by kim jones: valley of death* (1979)

Starting in 1972, the visual and performance artist Kim Jones engaged in a series of public performances in the streets of Los Angeles and its surrounding area portraying his alter ego Mudman. Jones appeared almost naked and completely slathered in mud; wearing a nylon stocking over his face; carrying rubber coated sticks and cheesecloth tied together with wax and resin on his back. Facial expressions remained undetectable behind the veil of his brown stockings. Wavering between "the military, the agrarian and the just plain razed" (Smith 1990, 34), Mudman resembled something between the over equipped American soldier and the well-camouflaged National Liberation Front of Southern Vietnam soldier. Moving slowly and with apparent difficulty, wearing combat boots and slightly hunched over, Jones made his way through the Southern Californian metropolis by foot—standing atop roofs, walking across boulevards, and climbing light poles.

A modern Prometheus in his own right, Mudman portrayed the viciousness of modern warfare and the haunting residue engraved in the psyche of the individuals, soldiers and civilians alike, who experienced its horror. Mudman appeared ten years after the movement against the involvement of the United Sates in the Vietnam War began, and six years after President Johnson faced a major protest in Los Angeles (1967) leading to the Riot Act and violent clashes between police and protesters. Throughout a six-year period, between 1973 and 1979, the artist intervened in Los Angeles's movement economy by directly targeting its iconic urban features. Dressed as Mudman and wandering by foot along Wilshire Boulevard, one of the main arteries of the metropolis, Jones generated a series of actions that focused on telephone poles, sidewalks, and engaged passers-by while employing locomotion as a means of halting the regular flow of pedestrian and automotive bodies. This section will ground Mudman in the architectural context of Venice Beach before demonstrating how his peripatetic performances contrasted with Los Angeles' iconic infrastructural dependency on the automobile. It will also argue that Mudman challenged the the city's increased obsession with safety, security, and cleanliness as a result of increased homelessness from disabled Vietnam War Veterans and other undesirable populations who were increasingly restricted from freely navigating public spaces.

In tracing an arc that ties Kim Jones' performance work to the urban infrastructure of Los Angeles, it is important to consider Jones' arrival to performance art in the early 1970s. Jones describes his beginnings as a performance artist as inspired by his viewing of the works of Viennese Actionists like Hermann Nitsch and Rudolf Schwarzkogler as well as Eva Hesse and Vito Acconci in the pages of *Avalanche Magazine*. A recent graduate with a Bachelor in Fine Art (BFA) from Cal Arts Chouinard Art Institute, Los Angeles (1969-1971) and in his first year of a Master in Fine Art (MFA) at the Otis Art Institute, Los Angeles (1972-1973), Jones defined his transition out of painting and into the use of new materials (plaster, foam, rubber, plastic) for installation and sculpture, as well as performance art, as a pivotal change in his practice.[11] Jones associated himself with Otis faculty members like Miles Forst and Lowell Darling, who were associated with the Fluxus art movement and conducted weekend Fluxus camps that Jones attended (Joyce 2007, 22-23).[12] Coming out of this early climate of experimentation, Jones explains the appeal of urban and non-urban public spaces as they represented, early on in his career, one of the only places to create new work.[13] Living on

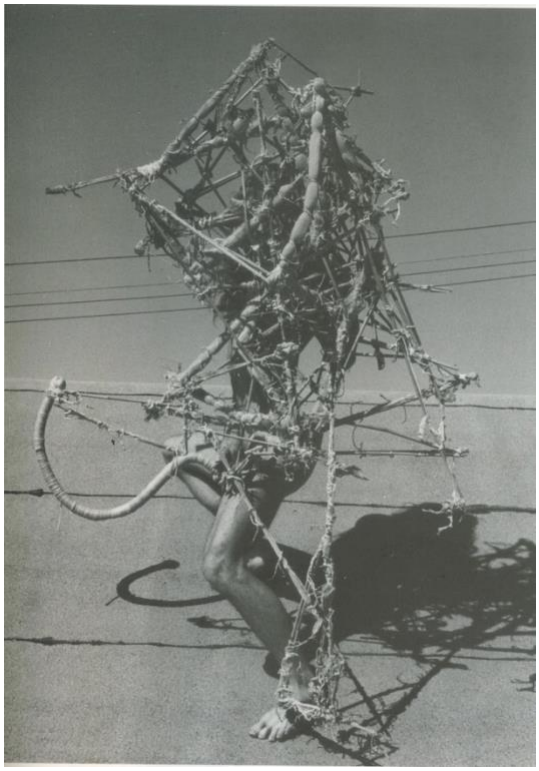


Figure 13. *Roof Sculpture*. Photo: Judy Schaffer. Kim Jones (aka Mudman), 1973-1974.

[11] Skowhegan Lecture Archive, Kim Jones (2000).
[12] In my conversation with Jones, he stated that "Fluxus was too playful" for him, reiterating a sense of his work being imbued with a kind of seriousness or severity that distanced him from his predecessors while reinforcing an image of himself as a cultural outsider: "He's part of the art world, but he chose the idea of the outsider." (Falkenstein 2016)
[13] Interview with the artist: August 23, 2016.

Market Street in Venice Beach following his return from the Vietnam war in 1969, Jones started to conceive of "sculptures as extensions of his own body, often naked or minimally clothed, and began to interact with them, recording these interactions in photographs." (Joyce 2007, 23) These early performance shoots, some of which were documented by his girlfriend Judy Schaffer, marked the beginnings of Mudman. Having access to a flat and almost empty roof surface from his studio space, Jones was captured squatting atop strips of tar paper in *Roof Sculpture* (1973-1974), prominently visible power lines crossing the image along the horizontal plane intersecting with the sprawling sculpture on his back. These early performances offer insight into how Jones came to transform outdoor architectural spaces into sites of action—using the surface of his studio roof as a place to stage the figure of Mudman with the city of Los Angeles as a backdrop.

In a 1982 issue of High Performance Magazine, Jones published an original image of Mudman atop the roof with the visible Southern Californian skyline in the background: palm trees, mountains, white stucco homes, and utility poles. In this version of the image, Jones hand-drew skulls and covered the rooftop with extra wiring and sticks protruding from the sculpture attached to his back. This drawing, coupled with the presence of his body atop the roof, act as a disruption of everyday space by playing on the veracity of the photograph (as documentation) and the surrealism of the drawing (as appendage). In a 2007 article for *Art in America* reviewing Jones' exhibition "Atlas" at the Luckman Fine Arts

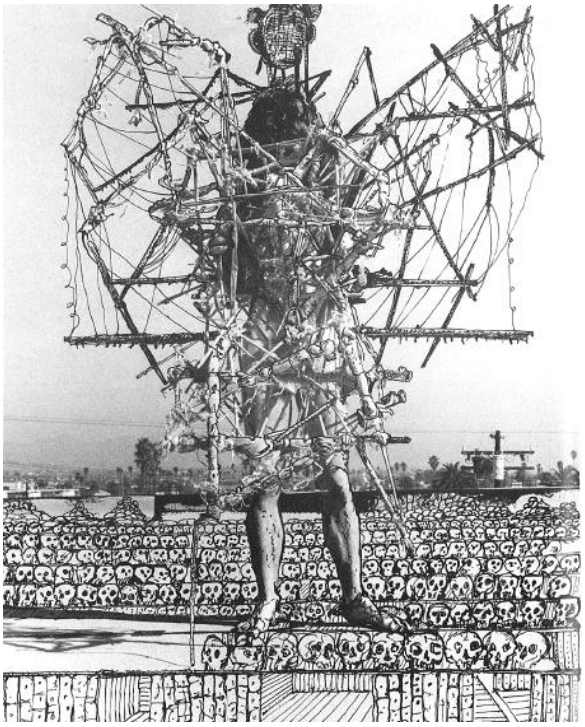


Figure 14. *Roof Sculpture*. High Performance Magazine. Kim Jones, 1982.

Complex at California State University in Los Angeles, art critic Stephen Maine offers a description of this work: "The artist refers to them as "roof sculptures" because they are documented in striking, weirdly timeless black-and-white photographs of him wearing them on the nearly featureless rooftop of his studio building in Venice, Calif." (Maine 2007, 187) Maine's emphasis on "timelessness" and the "featureless rooftop" misses an integral part of Jones early performance work—that is its dependence on the rooftop as an actual site, and not a mere accident or coincidence. Jones explicitly states that these early works were aimed at "framing himself" as Mudman by adopting pre-existing architectural spaces or creating new ones.[14] Reframing *Roof Sculpture* as a site-specific work— "as the cultural mediation of broader social, economic, and political processes that organize urban life and urban space" (Kwon 2004, 3)—Jones' decision to stage these short performances atop his Los Angeles studio, and not inside of it, becomes significant.

Made to resemble the coastal northern Italian city bearing the same name, with its canals, gondolas, and buildings with Venetian façades, Venice California was widely considered a derelict urban space leading up to the 1970s (Smith 1971). It underwent considerable change following an influx of artists in the late sixties and early seventies, many of whom were drawn to its beaches and low rents (Alleman 1979). Home of Robert Irwin, Ed Moses, Ron Davis, and a stomping ground of the then emerging architect Frank Gehry who lived in nearby Santa Monica, Venice presented what architecture critic Michael Webb described as "unplanned and with an air of impermanence", with houses and stores "jammed up against landmarks; industrial structures and warehouses" everywhere (Webb 1987). "Artists and craftsmen seeking cheap rents and lots

[14] Interview with the artist: August 23, 2016.

of space" (Smith 1971) found their place alongside other "outsiders", a title often ascribed to Jones by critics and observers of his work and echoed by the artist when he describes himself looking "like an outsider, not an artist" while performing as Mudman.[15]

If we consider performance studies scholar Nick Kaye's rethinking of site-specificity, for "it is *performance* which returns to define site-specificity, not only as a set of critical terms and as a mode of work, but as a way of characterizing the place these various site-specific practices reflect upon" (Kaye 2000, 12), then we can situate *Roof Sculpture* as a product of the artist's relationship to architecture and movement. It delineates a critical point in Jones' oeuvre as he begins to form his performance practice through an expanded relationship between his ambling body, sculpture, and architecture—a sentiment he confirms when he later describes Mudman as "an abstract sculpture." (Maine 2007, 187) Considering Mudman a "living sculpture" (Nicholson 2007, 89), ties the work back to the transformation of everyday architectural spaces into sites of performance: "There was no place to show work at that time. It was a *comfortable* thing to do. I started out in Venice where I knew people and it was *comfortable* going out on the street and showing my art." (Stiles 2006, 66) Acts of locomotion— "going out on the street [in Venice] and showing my art"—was at the very core of his artistic practice during this period.

Copies of Jones' resume for various fellowships, exhibitions, and studio applications in the early 1980s further expose this use of outdoor spaces as they list his earliest performances explicitly by their locations (i.e. 1976, "Wilshire Walk," Los Angeles, California). As early as 1978, when Jones begins to perform with the support of official art institutions, his resume shifts as these performances now include the title of his sponsor (i.e. 1978, LACE, Los Angeles,

[15] Interview with the artist: August 23, 2016.

California). While this shift might simply demonstrate the evolution of a blooming performance artist's career, from early anonymity, through emergence, and into later establishment, it also traces how a lack of official performance spaces prompted Jones to take to the streets for his works. As art historian Jenni Sorkin notes in her article reviewing the legacy of the performance-specific West Coast-based magazine *High Performance*, this period in Los Angeles contemporary art is marked by a use of everyday, otherwise unusual performance sites: "Making use of alternative, artist-run spaces and public sites such as the street, beaches, and the city at large, Los Angeles artists explored intimate ideas and preoccupations before standing groups of spectators, comprising mainly other artists." (Sorkin 2003, 42-43) With this in mind, *Roof Sculpture* adopts as its site the definite traces of Venice Beach architecture—original 1920s California bungalow tilted roofs, once prolific in the beach areas but in quick decline towards the end of the 1970s (Los Angeles Times 1979). Jones' first public performances as Mudman then repurpose an otherwise obsolete architectural space, his body atop a Venice Beach building converted studio foreshadowing his arrival into the city's landscape as a figure in locomotion.

The explicit adoption of "public sites" space for performance art throughout the 1970s is of importance when we consider Jones' seminal act of locomotion in city space, *Wilshire Boulevard Walk* (1976)—a two-part performance occurring first on January 28th, 1976 when Jones, as Mudman, started from "1 Wilshire Boulevard, near Pershing Square, at the heart of the city's ragged downtown, and

Figure 15. *Wilshire Boulevard Walk*. Kim Jones (aka Mudman), January 28 1976.

moving west to Santa Monica State Beach along the mercantile spine of the metropolis, passing through diverse neighborhoods along its 18 miles." (Maine 2007, 187) Lasting 12 hours, this leg of the performance spanned from sunrise to sunset—an act Jones reversed on February 4th, 1976 by walking from downtown at sunset and arriving at sunrise at the ocean's edge along the same route. For this piece, Jones collaborated with Carp, an organization dedicated to helping artists locate proper environments for performances of alternative forms of fine art founded by Barbara Burden and Marilyn Nix in Venice, California in 1975.[16] Emphasis must be placed on Jones' choice of performance space, Wilshire Boulevard. In 1976, Wilshire Boulevard was considered one of the "world's renowned streets" with, at its downtown core, an emerging "unique pedestrian center." ("Wilshire Urban Towers Opening," Los Angeles Times 1975) Development projects like "The Westholme" a high-rise condominium marked a certain real estate boom along parts of the boulevard. Real estate predictions for Los Angeles' residential and office building spaces as early as 1973 announced a "new era" of demand (Green 1974), under the auspices of earlier crises like a proposed plan in 1971 that caused tensions between local residents and policy makers over parts of the boulevard receiving more attention than others (Hebert 1971). What represents Wilshire Boulevard best is the urban diversity and controversy it offered along one unobstructed stretch of infrastructure, or as journalist Robert Sifagoos described it: "Wilshire Blvd. is not just an ordinary crosstown thoroughfare extending from downtown Los Angeles to the beach in Santa Monica. It is a cord holding together a multitude of separate subeconomies." (Sifagoos 1972)

[16] It is important to note that like the artists discussed in this chapter, Carp reflected a period in visual arts and performance art history where artists left conventional gallery spaces for different exterior urban and non-urban settings. Carp never maintained permanent space for exhibition, and facilitated works by artists like Vito Acconci, Dianne Blell, Dennis Oppenheim, and Dorothy Wiley in public spaces and private homes, on college campuses and over commercial television (www.gangofcarp.com).

With its expansiveness, the iconic boulevard also foregrounded one of Los Angeles' defining modes of transportation and a crucial factor of urban planning—the automobile. Disagreements surrounding the development of the boulevard often revolved around city planners' desires to facilitate automotive transportation. This was the case with a proposed Beverly Hills freeway and street widening (Burleigh 1974) in 1974 to accommodate economic growth, a motion fought vigorously by locals who felt that city planning had "been wedded to parking lots instead of parks policy for so long that it [was] indistinguishable from the goals of developers." (Burleigh 1974) It is in this climate of urban development, along a boulevard that represented some of Los Angeles' social, economic, and cultural diversity by tying together five major business districts and spanning from the Pacific Ocean's shoreline in Santa Monica, through Koreatown, and ending in the heart of the Financial District, that Kim Jones performed his most considerable act of locomotion.

"At once displaced and at home in the anonymity of an urban setting," (Sorkin 2003, 49) Jones defied "easy assimilation into civilian society." (Sorkin 2003, 51) *Wilshire Boulevard Walk* is no exception to this, as Jones propelled himself across the city with the use of his two legs—the ambiguity of his performance making for a "certain uncomfortable tension among the spectators who, in a complex transference of action and perception, begin to perceive their own identity as located between that of the performer/participant and spectator, in an equivocal interplay of

Figure 16. *Wilshire Boulevard Walk*. Kim Jones (aka Mudman), January 28 1976.

contraries." (Festa 1987, 33) This observation, made by performance scholar Angelika Festa, reminds us that Mudman was best experienced in a work like *Wilshire Boulevard Walk*, "in the context of everyday life-suddenly appearing as a specter on the street, smelling bad and being messy, shuffling about with his mud and sticks." (Festa 1987, 33) Jones' intended audience for this performance further confirms that his work was aimed at destabilizing pedestrian and automotive "everyday life." In a promotional document for Carp's 1975-1976 programming season, *Wilshire Boulevard Walk* is billed as an "Exhibition observed by pedestrians and automobile drivers." Jones himself reiterates his concern for these two groups of people in a letter to Linda Burnham, founder of High Performance, inquiring about an upcoming review of the piece *Fag Drag* (1980) where he similarly walked along Hollywood Boulevard: "Three questions for the reviewer: 1) Did her or she get out of the car? 2) Did he or she talk with any of the locals? 3) Did the reviewer try to make any contact with me, eye contact, etc.?" Underlining the word *locals*, Jones confirms his desire in these movement-based-performances of locomotion to draw in the attention of the everyday Los Angelite[17]—the experience of his moving body acting as a kinesthetic catalyst.[18]

Seen through the lens of movement-based- performance and notions of embodiment, Mudman highlights how "some spaces extend certain bodies and simply do not leave room for others." (Ahmed 2006, 15) In *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (2006), the

[17] In a text by Jones describing *Fag Drag* published in High Performance in 1980, the artist articulates a clear sense of awareness as to how his audience experienced his work: "The photographer (Charles) arrives, driven by his wife. He jumps out of the jeep flashing pictures of me. I try to look interesting." (Jones 1980, 48) Like the other artists in this chapter, Jones understood the drama of both the live event and the documentation of his works, further suggesting a clear intentionality in employing locomotion as tactic for intervening in the city—viscerally and visually.

[18] "Fag" here refers to the name of a sculpture Jones dragged along Hollywood Boulevard during this performance, an object he later described as *My Dog "Fag"* on a handmade sign in a subsequent exhibition. It is unclear what the artist's message is here, however the specter of a homophobic slur does seem questionable considering West Hollywood's symbolic prominence as the heart of the LGBTQ community in Los Angeles during the 1970s.

feminist scholar Sarah Ahmed makes the point that it is "through this movement that the surface of space as well as bodies takes shape" (Ahmed 2006, 53); a theoretical framework we can apply to Jones in *Wilshire Boulevard Walk* in the way his performance of locomotion responded to the infrastructure of the city and its political economies with marked resistance. Jones' use of his own two feet—walking 15 miles—is an act that defied Los Angeles' topography, which was seen predominantly as "anti-pedestrian". Two columns in the New York Times' "What's Doing in Los Angeles" section during the period reveal this tension within the city. In 1973, journalist Steven V. Roberts began his article with a clear statement regarding the city: "First Things First – Rent a car. All the cliches are true—Los Angeles is 100 suburbs in search of a city—and there is simply no other way to get around." (Roberts 1973) Two years later, in 1975, reporter Robert Lindsey reaffirmed this sentiment in his article: "You won't see much of Los Angeles without an automobile, but there is a mass transit system, and it needn't be disregarded completely." (Lindsey 1975) The necessity of driving is echoed by the British architect Reyner Banham whose magnum opus on the city, *Los Angeles: the Architecture of Four Ecologies* (1971), worshiped the space of the freeway as the "crowning glory or prime headache" produced by the organizing urban principle of the automobile (Banham 1971, 18). The "freedom of movement" afforded by the car lead Banham, like many others, to draw a delineation between those who drove and those who didn't—underlining a sharp economic and social divide in the city's urban experience:

> One can most properly begin by learning the local language; and the language of design, architecture, and urbanism in Los Angeles is the language of movement. Mobility outweighs monumentality there to a unique degree, and the city will never be fully understood by those who cannot move fluently through its diffuse urban texture, cannot go with the flow of its unprecedented life. So, like earlier generations of English intellectuals who taught themselves Italian in order to read Dante in the original, I learned to drive in order to read Los Angeles in the original." (Banham 1971, 5)

By drawing the space of Wilshire Boulevard into his performance—making the kinesthetic act of *walking* explicit by inserting it into the piece's title—Jones distorted Los Angeles' urban image of a city defined by the sleekness, isolation, and efficiency of the automobile.

In parallel with Mudman's bipedal locomotion, a defense of Los Angeles' "pedestrian merits" appeared in a series of essays by Los Angeles Times columnist Art Seidenbaum in the early 1970s. In 1970, Seidenbaum described his experience of walking the same trajectory as Jones along Wilshire Boulevard: "I have a soft sport in my head for Walking Wilshire Blvd. Several years ago, thanks to an ambulant architect named Wayne Pippin, I walked a blister from One Wilshire downtown to the statue of Saint Monica where Wilshire abuts the ocean." (Seidenbaum 1970) Three years later, in 1973, Seidenbaum returned to walk the length of the boulevard with Wayne Pippin himself, who described this activity as "learning Los Angeles by foot" as "there is no better way to learn where you are than on your own feet." (Seidenbaum 1973) These walks created a precedent for Jones' performance of locomotion and how unusual it would have seemed at the time. Seidenbaum reiterated this when he described an encounter with a woman who stopped them on the corner of Vermont Ave and asked: "Where are you from?", since she "couldn't believe that four people from here would want to walk." (Seidenbaum 1973) This, Seidenbaum states, was a replay of an earlier incident where a postman waved to them saying "Welcome to Los Angeles"—reaffirming how walking in the city was seen as the act of an 'outsider' by its locals. In an after note to the 1973 article published two days later in the Los Angeles times, Seidenbaum repeated how novel walking could be: "Los Angeles looks like a city when you walk Wilshire, not like one of the old jokes about 70 suburbs or Pasadena's largest parking lot. A ribbon of city, not a blob." (Seidenbaum 1973) In these articles Seidenbaum offered an alternative experience of Los Angeles in his focus on walking Wilshire Boulevard.

This perspective on the city corroborated Jones' own performance of locomotion, which also contradicted notions of Los Angeles as strictly negotiable by car.

In 1976, the same year as *Wilshire Boulevard Walk,* Seidenbaum cited the work of American landscape architect Lawrence (Larry) Halprin in an article entitled "Some Sites for Sore Sidewalkers": "Elegance on what landscape architect Larry Halprin calls "the floor of the city" used to be part of state or civic pride […]. "Asphalt," wrote Halprin, "is the symbol of all that is worst in the city, and the asphalt jungle has become a synonym for an unpleasant environment."" (Seidenbaum 1976) By citing Halprin, Seidenbaum evoked the work the architect's preeminent wife and collaborator, the American postmodern dancer and choreographer Anna Halprin. Her work on kinesthetic awareness, especially as it related to the *RSVP Cycles* (1970), a system to guide interdisciplinary creative processes, spoke directly to the intersections between movement-based-performance and architecture as creative process. While *Wilshire Boulevard Walk* may not as easily be traced back to the Halprins and their practices—Jones' decision to center the piece on the act of *walking* the length of the boulevard, like Seidenbaum, went against the urban *habitus* of the city, which impressed that "L.A. may not be for walking." (Rolfe 1971) According to the Los Angeles Times cultural critic and L.A. native Lionel Rolfe: "people stopped getting around by foot, walking—especially here in Southern California—has become, like the little toe, almost vestigial." (Rolfe 1971) Similar to Anna and Lawrence Halprin, Jones invested in movement-based-performance by thinking of it in relation to the built environment—or as Anna Halprin herself described it when discussing the nature of the outdoor dance deck her husband built specifically for kinesthetic exploration: "Movement within a moving space, I have found is different than movement within a static cube." (Halprin 1956, 24) While Halprin referred here to a non-urban outdoor space overlooking California's

Mount Tamalpais, her words are valuable considering how Jones' *Wilshire Boulevard Walk* was not simply the "antics of an urban eccentric" (Durland 1984, 26) but a challenge of the boulevard's political economy as well as that of the "static" white cube.[19] Intervening in the city's urban rational with movement-based-performances of locomotion, Jones intentionally moved "out of the confines of the gallery" (Wiley 2008, 345) into the spatial and socio-political realms of the city.

The uses of Los Angeles' urban infrastructure as a staging ground for kinesthetic acts of protest of locomotion is further demonstrated when considering the city's emphasis on security, order, and cleanliness following the Vietnam War protests of the 1960s and the Watts Riots in 1965.[20] While Jones himself is hesitant to directly attribute his work to his time in the Marines, there is little doubt that Mudman reworked and incorporated past experiences from the war into specific aesthetics, kinesthetics, and socio-political commentaries. Repetitive and almost

Figure 17. *Untitled*. Acrylic on Color Photocopy, 17 x 11 inches. Kim Jones (aka Mudman), 1955-1999.

[19] Jones' own connection to "nature" is undeniable, with the organic qualities of Mudman coming through in his choice of materials: mud and sticks. Jones describes how the mud for each performance came locally. Travelling to New York, Paris, and other locations in the 1980s, Jones went out before each performance to gather dirt—covering his body with local soil (Interview with the artist: August 23, 2016). In doing so, Mudman takes on a new dimension of site-specificity, animating the very material on which the urban space he traverses is supported.

[20] On August 11, 1965, Marquette Fry, a 21-year-old African American man behind the wheel of his mother's Buick was arrested for suspicion of drunk driving by a white California Highway Patrol motorcycle officer named Lee Minikus. A roadside argument erupted between the arresting officer and Marquette's family, and the situation soon escalated. In a socio-political climate of racial and residential segregation, as well as police discrimination, a riot erupted in the Watts community—a predominantly African American neighborhood in South Los Angeles with several large housing projects built for World

obsessive forms of walking appeared to be a central component of Jones' performances, an act of locomotion he engaged in while at war through daily marches as well as his role delivering mail (Nicholson 2007, 89). These experiences in the military, in particular in their relationship to experiences of masculinity in the public sphere, shaped Jones' use of locomotion. His relative comfort and ease in walking long distances through the streets of Los Angeles at all hours of the day, dressed as Mudman, mark his privilege as a white male in the 1970s capable of asserting his presence in an urban space. Another trigger for his peripatetic performances may have been his battle with Perthes Disease at a young age, which left him immobilized for a period of time—his walks as an exploration of a disease that according to him, left one of his legs shorter than the other (Nicholson 2007, 89). Two decades later, the American with Disabilities Act (1990) was signed into law by congress. In the lead-up to the creation of this civil rights law that prohibited discrimination based on disability, Vietnam War Veterans like Jones who returned from war with various disabilities were prominent and vocal activists. Engaging in a peripatetic movement-based-performance, a walking Vietnam War Veteran on the streets of Los Angeles during the 1970s, was thus a significant socio-political critique.[21]

In a 1990 article for the New York Times, art critic Roberta Smith sheds light on responses to Mudman by incidental audiences whom evoked interrelated notions of disability, homelessness, and the Vietnam War: "Some observers have compared Jones's Mudman to a

War II workers who migrated from segregated Southern states. Lasting five days, the Watts Riots were critical in shaping Los Angeles urban rationale thereafter.

[21] When asked about his relationship to *walking* as a kinesthetic act of locomotion, Jones described how difficult walking in the military had been. He stated that he regularly walked up and down mountains, with walking in addition to building forts being one of the main activities of his time in service—recalling one time where he remembers "walking while sleeping." In contrast to this, Jones described *Wilshire Boulevard Walk* as a "meditation"—like "a train" where the artist could get off, stop, rest, and then get back to the walk (Interview with the artist: August 23, 2016).

tree, others to a homeless person, and the latter connection makes sense, since so many homeless men are Vietnam veterans."[22] (Smith 1990, 34) Towards the end of the 1970s, California had the largest number of Vietnam War veterans with 981,000 of the nearly 9 million nationwide ("California Has Most Vietnam Veterans," Los Angeles Times 1979). With Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other psychological, often less physically visible disabilities largely unrecognized as conditions following involvement in the front lines of war, Vietnam War veterans were largely neglected because of the unpopularity of the war: "One has only to begin with the absence of the welcome ritual to begin understanding the difficulty Vietnam veterans have had "coming home."" (Burke 1975) While many of the POW and physically disabled veterans received attention from the state, Los Angeles Times staff writer Kathy Burke described how it was "the average veteran, the man who returned intact physically and, in most ways, mentally, who is often most neglected." (Burke 1975) This lack of support created conditions for high unemployment rates amongst veterans, with estimates in the state of California in the 1970s reaching above 10% and as high as 14% for African American veterans who were victims of further discrimination (Burke 1975; Mayer 1974; Carberry 1973). A 1971 article from the Los Angeles Times with the subheading "Walking the Nation's Streets" (Witcover 1971) confirms the very visible presence of Veterans on almost all of the streets of major American cities. Reporter David Lamb summarized the Vietnam veteran's situation in 1975 thus: "His unemployment consistently has been higher than that of his peers who did not go to Vietnam, his educational benefits provide less buying power than those of the World War II veterans, his priority is not high in Washington, where in 1973 the office of Management and Budget

[22] Jones's relationship to the homeless is a reoccurring theme in interviews and articles about his early work, with the artist reporting that many Los Angeles individuals began to "warn him of the cops on the next block, empathizing with a figure who was, to look at him, at fellow outcast." (Maine 2007, 187).

proposed a 160$ million cut in compensation for severely disabled Vietnam-era vets." (Lamb 1975) All of these factors contributed to an urban context in the mid 1970s where veterans represented "a social and economic problem that [could] not be solved soon." (Carberry 1973)

Through an otherwise mundane pedestrian act of walking, *Wilshire Boulevard Walk* confronted the urban realities of a city seeking to police a growing homeless crisis, a direct fallout from the Vietnam War. [23] Writing in 1976, Art Seidenbaum described how city planners sought to 'address' unwanted activity on the streets—mainly loitering of any type—with an added emphasis on "security." In his article he noted how plazas, like those in Beverly Hills (which Wilshire Boulevard traversed), prohibited individuals to sit down: "Keep moving is almost the motto of the new buildings with thematic sculpture and handsome setbacks. Human loitering is more fearsome than littering these days." (Seidenbaum 1976) This sentiment was echoed by the urbanist Mike Davis who described in his relatively dark portrayal of post-Watts Los Angeles a space that merged "urban design, architecture and the police apparatus into

Figure 18. *Wilshire Boulevard Walk*. Kim Jones (aka Mudman), January 28 1976.

[23] Edward Soja notes how, after the 1970s, homelessness particularly grew in places like the United States due to the weaker welfare system. An agglomeration of forces concentrating homelessness and limited facilities for the homeless "in and around city centers, along what in LA and other cities is called Skid Row" (Soja 2014, 150) is of particular importance when we consider the nature of Jones' decision to perform Mudman along the entire length of Wilshire Boulevard, which ends just blocks away from Los Angeles' historical 'Skid Row' neighborhood.

a single, comprehensive security effort" (Davis 1992, 224) where the "universal and ineluctable consequence of this crusade to secure the city is the destruction of accessible public space." (Davis 1992, 226) Davis argues that the city sought to "make public facilities and spaces as 'unliveable' as possible for the homeless and the poor." (Davis 1992, 232) Mudman, this locomoting figure in an everyday public space, materialized what some described as "flashbacks" from war for veterans suffering from PTSD (Cimons 1979). This kinesthetic activation of political economies of the city is what art critic Steven Durland cited in a 1984 profile of the artist for High Performance as a "universal experience" of "having your survival depend on immediate circumstances beyond your control." (Durland 1984, 29) Mudman's locomotion on the streets—the fact that the "street is Jones' milieu" (Durland 1984, 29)—highlighted his use of movement-based-performances of locomotion as a tactic to confront social and kinesthetic expectations of inactivity and paralysis projected onto him as a Vietnam War veteran. By adopting the streets, and all of their adjacent structures (sidewalks, poles, roofs, etc.) as spaces for public movement-based-performances, Jones challenged the limitations placed on bodies, especially those deemed unwanted and disabled, in urban centers. Applying Randy Martin's logic in 'Toward a Kinesthetic of Protest' (2006) that "protest embodies what it seeks to achieve, stilling the impossible so that an alternative might become livable" (Martin 2006, 791), *Wilshire Boulevard Walk* performatively employs locomotion to articulate "avenues of difference in what otherwise passes as an undifferentiated body politic." (Martin 2006, 794) Juxtaposing and imposing his body in motion against the city's otherwise regular surfaces and normative political economies, Jones subverts architectural functionalism with a locomotion that pushes against attempts to minimize disturbances caused by the homeless in Los Angeles.

Proposals for an alternative body politic, one of movement-based-performance and locomotion, is also present in *Telephone Pole Piece* (1978). Jones described this work in a 1978 issue of High Performance:

> "Unannounced I went to several telephone poles in Los Angeles and climbed them. The activity was observed by pedestrians and automobile drivers and passengers. It has to do with a list that I made in 1975 of the various things that I like to think about being: a house, a future man, a primitive man, a portable tv, an explosion, a vacant lot man, a telephone pole, a garbage man, everyman, a backpacker from back east, a tree and so on.
>
> In the future I plan to climb other poles in LA and other places in the world."
> - Kim Jones (Jones 1978, 37)

Accompanying the work was an image of the piece captured by the photographer Ned Sloane, dated February 6, 1978. Here, Jones could be seen climbing a utility pole while looking back down at the camera, the electrical grid of wiring above interweaving with Mudman and the structure full of protruding sticks tied to his back. Mudman, a "mud-caked homo sapiens sprouting a landscape out his back" (Durland 1984, 26), is a portable assemblage that startled pedestrians. Extending his own body into its immediate environment through a kinesthetically activated, living, "aggressive and adaptive" sculpture (Goddard 2003), his body in upward motion registered extraordinarily against

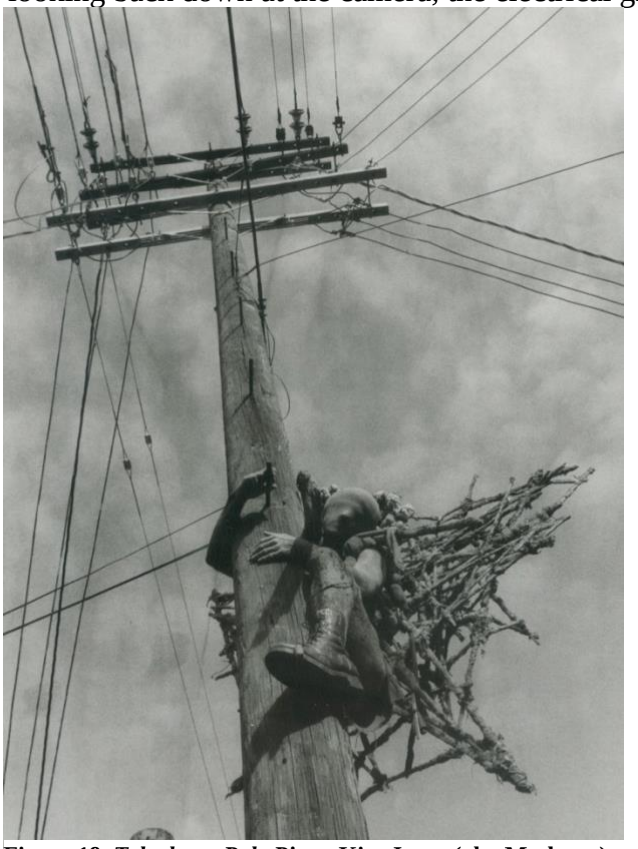


Figure 19. *Telephone Pole Piece*. Kim Jones (aka Mudman), 1978.

the somewhat sculptural telephone pole. The sticks fastened to Mudman's back are especially prominent in this image, recalling the performative nature of expanded sculpture as the materiality of the manicured, wooden telephone pole clashes with the organic, more natural seeming structure he carries with him everywhere. Much more akin to the thicket of the Vietnamese jungle than the pressed wood of a construction site, the sticks temporarily bridge the spatiality of war with that of the Los Angeles sidewalk. Randomly organized in an assemblage that resembles a bird's nest, the sculpture, carried on Jones' back up the utility pole, also breaks the neat and orderly grid of electrical wires above which serve to keep Los Angeles running smoothly with power: stop lights and all. A propeller plane can barely be seen crossing the clear sky in the background, a soaring symbol of industrial society and vehicular motion. Photographs from other angles show Jones hovering above ground in an alleyway, his suspended body climbing up the surface of the poll considerably altering the urban landscape with his sculptural thicket of sticks. Art critic Colin Westerbeck from the Los Angeles Times described an image of the performance as "the power grid gone awry, a reminder of how primitive our high-tech civilization is." (Westerbeck 2007)

Mudman was disquieting in this political economy and spatial context because of the "startling contrast" (Smith 1990, 34) he offered to the regularities of Los Angeles' infrastructure and architecture. In *Telephone Pole Piece*, his climbing body drew attention to the city's treeless skyline. The environmental historian Jared Farmer observes in *Trees in Paradise, California History* (2013) how trees in Los Angeles were historically neglected, characterizing the city as a "sun-bleached mess" (Farmer 2013, 365). Farmer describes Los Angeles, in its early 20th century period of electrification and telecommunication, as a city where "the planting of utility poles—processed pine tree trunks—far exceeded the placement of live trees." (Farmer 2013, 365) When asked about his actions as Mudman by incidental audiences, Jones sometimes responded "I've been thinking about becoming a tree" (Westerbeck 2007). While this reply to curious onlookers was more akin to free association than offering any clear sense of agenda for his performance, his statement read alongside his act of crawling up utility poles—processed pine tree trunks—suggests an awareness in his work to transform this everyday infrastructure into something other. Like Mudman himself, sometimes likened to a tree because of his organic attributes and his branchlike appendages (Smith 1990, 34), utility poles in *Telephone Pole Piece* are denaturalized through the movement-based-performance of locomotion. In 'trying to become a tree', in climbing up and down utility poles while being highly aware of this gesture as one that was

Figure 20. *Telephone Pole Piece*. Kim Jones (aka Mudman), 1978.

viewed by “pedestrians and automobile drivers and passengers” (Jones 1978, 37), Jones distorted the spatiality of everyday Los Angeles by renegotiating infrastructural sites into spaces for locomotion.

Papo Colo:
Running the West Side Highway

> I want not only to live there as an individual, but I want to try to do something about the living conditions down there [the Caribbean], to do that as an art form—not only a practical art form or a metaphysical art form but as applied arts, like making houses, making an environment for the community and with the community. That is my dream—a utopia.
>
> —Papo Colo, *Performance Artists Talking in the Eighties* (2000)

In 1977, the Puerto Rican born artist Papo Colo performed *Superman 51* by running down the deserted West Side Highway in Manhattan while dragging behind him 51 wooden sticks attached to his body until he collapsed. Written on each stick was the name of a US state including Puerto Rico. Colo’s gesture was meant as a protest against the rejection of President Gerald Ford’s proposal to grant statehood to Puerto Rico in 1976. Using the highway as his staging ground for a brief (approx.10 minutes) yet dynamic performance, Colo drew attention to the systems of connecting networks that tie the US states together as a unified territory—the automobile and its system of roads. His running body—simultaneously alien and citizen of the

United States—highlighted the contentious nature of his Puerto Rican identity and citizenship as it manifested itself in the streets of New York City. Sometimes obstructed or enhanced by costume, vehicle, or sculptural elements, Colo adopted the streets of New York City in the 1970s as an environment to test the boundaries of his own physicality as well as make pointed social and political commentary about culture, politics, power, and citizenship in the United States through his relationship to the city's iconic infrastructure. This section will argue that by running along a condemned highway, swimming against the current of an urban river, and performing several interventions along Canal Street at the edge of SoHo, Colo employed movement-based-performance as a means of unsettling processes of urban renewal and gentrification heavily underway in New York city in the 1970s. His locomotion was also particularly targeted at Manhattan's unique automotive infrastructure, specifically the abandoned Elevated West Side Highway. Repurposing this symbolic site, a part of a vast interconnected federal system of highways that defined American

Figure 21. *Superman 51*. Papo Colo, 1977.

trade and industrialism, Colo kinesthetically activated the space to address Puerto Rico's exclusion from this network and continued colonial pressures from the US-mainland.

Arriving in New York City in the early 1970s, Papo Colo was met with an already well-established metropolitan art center and market: "In the sixties and seventies it was very difficult for artists not to be seduced by the goings on in New York." (Benitez 1998) Many parts of the city were already undergoing considerable urban change due to the presence of artists. Whether it be SoHo, which housed artistic communities and communes starting in the 1960s because it presented ideal real estate opportunities in the forms of cheap rent, large warehouse, and factory like spaces (White 2015), or the first generation of abstract expressionists who found lofts in Greenwich Village in the 1940s ("The Manhattan Roots of Loft-Living," Washington Post 1983), the city had long been a center of artistic production. In SoHo, spaces like the visual artist Gordon Matta-Clark's *Food* at 127 Prince Street (1971-1972), although a shortly lived project, were crucial real-estate opportunities that fostered and cemented New York's vibrant art community and its relationship to the city's architecture. Frequenting the Chelsea Hotel and studying literature for one year a Columbia University upon his arrival in 1971 (Gomez 2000), Colo entered a New York art scene already deeply entrenched in the transformation of its immediate urban space. Co-founder of the alternative arts space "Exit Art"[24] (1982-2012) with his partner Jeanette Ingberman (1952-2011), Colo went on to play an important role in the

[24] Exit Art (1989-2012), as an alternative art space and nonprofit gallery that moved from SoHo to various other locations in Manhattan, could be the subject of its own chapter as to the ways in which artists transformed architectural environments in New York City for their own uses. Often described as 'raw' because of its bare-bones interior, Exit Art embraced a community of practitioners, many of them artists of color on the fringes, who explored issues of what Colo and Ingberman termed the "hybrid state," with its "parallel cultures." (Lippard 1991, 30) The idea espoused by the gallery that "every exit is an entrance" (Gomez 2000) further lends it to a reading of its evolution as a space where the urban realities of New York's 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s art and real estate worlds converged.

development of the New York real-estate art scene in different parts of SoHo, Chelsea, and Hell's Kitchen.

Moving back and forth between New York and Barcelona for a few years before fully committing to SoHo as his chosen home, Colo presented, early on in his career, an interdisciplinary body of works that included and often combined sculpture, installation, painting, and performance. Recalling his upbringing in Puerto Rico, he describes the artists and printmakers who had their workshops half a block away from his home whom he admired because of their strength and spirituality (Montano 2001, 255). Colo seems to have found early examples of societal outcasts in them, "like freaks in the neighborhood" (Montano 2001, 255) who piqued his curiosity because of their position vis-à-vis mainstream culture. In his earliest movement-based-performances in Manhattan that took place around his home on Canal Street in the late 1970s, the artist explored the relationship between sculpture and the body performing various acts of locomotion. In *Coronation* (1976), he hung large wooden sticks from ropes fastened to buildings across the skyline, juxtaposing their aerial presence with that of the Twin Towers in the background. In a later publication by Exit Art Press entitled *Assemblages and acts* (1980), Ingberman describes the work as "a simple constriction of man confronting a more complicated structure. It is at the same time an aggressive act and an attempt at conciliation between two metaphors of power, the threatened god coronated by the crown of thorns." Like Kim Jones whose performances were described as an "aggressive and

Figure 22. *Coronation*. Papo Colo, 1976.

adaptive" sculpture, Colo's early works reflected a similar attention to the conflicts created by bodies in movement carrying sculptural objects in urban spaces. In *Walking Sculpture* (1976), Colo created a wooden apparatus—a spider-like figure with multiple legs sprouting from a central core—meant to be pushed through the streets of SoHo: "*Walking Sculpture* is a work that exists in a continuous transportation of form, there is no final resolution of structure. The piece is dynamic in it's [sic] flexibility, assembled differently each time by the participants […]. The continuous changing of form demystifies the piece as a "work" of sculpture and becomes an "act" of sculpture." (Ingberman 1980) In these early performance works, which Ingberman titles "*ACTS OF SCULPTURE* (1976-1977)", Colo engaged with locomotion as a performative act and the expanded field of sculpture in outdoor architectural spaces.[25]

Figure 23. *Walking Sculpture*. Papo Colo, 1976.

Nowhere is Colo's use of locomotion as a movement-based-performance to tactically intervene in an infrastructural space of urban renewal more apparent than *Superman 51*, where the artist staged his kinesthetic action on the West Side Highway. Documentation of the performance reveals the centrality of this space, with Colo's running body across the surface of the deserted highway highlighting its vacancy from automotive traffic. Elevated above the city floor, offering an

[25] Here, it is important to recognize the proximity between Kim Jones and Papo Colo's oeuvre with the seminal text *Sculpture in the Expanded Field* published by Rosalind Krauss in 1979. Both artists explore "intervention into the real space of architecture" (Krauss 1979, 41) however do so in more performative ways than the artist mentioned by Krauss (Sol LeWitt, Robert Irwin, Richard Serra, among others) by kinesthetically activating sculpture through their own locomotion.

unobstructed view of New York's West Side, Colo's performance gives the impression of an abandoned city. When asked about his choice of location, Colo replied that the West Side Highway "was available" and that the "artist community used it as a park"[26], echoing statements from the previous section made by Kim Jones regarding the convenience of spaces close by to their living quarters. But the West Side Highway, like Venice Beach for Jones, was much more than just an accessible space to perform on. This is especially relevant considering Colo's description of the "city as a space of theatre" for acts of "playfulness" to occur,[27] which in turn echoes Kim Jones' description of Venice Beach as a "comfortable" space for showing his art.

Figure 24. *Superman 51*. Papo Colo, 1977.

Similar to Kim Jones, Papo Colo's resume from the 1970s reveals the importance of each site and its physical context in his work. In a section titled "Performances, Public Acts, and Installations", Colo intersperses early pieces done in recognized institutional spaces with those conducted on the streets in Manhattan. For the year 1977, "*Superman 51,* West Side Highway, New York" exists alongside "*Artyard*, Brooklyn Museum, New York" and "*Low Clouds*, Smithsonian, Washington, D.C."[28] Colo clearly articulates having an early sense of the potentially restrictive nature of performing in institutional spaces, stating that "in the streets you

[26] Interview with the artist: September 10, 2016.
[27] Interview with the artist: September 10, 2016.
[28] Franklin Furnace Archive, Papo Colo's CV from "History of Future Netcasts (1999-2000)."

are not attached to an institution."[29] Documents in the Franklin Furnace Archives for "The History of the Future Netcasts" (1999-2000), an online series aimed at giving a sense of the "look and feel of the developing neighborhoods of Soho and Tribeca in the 70s" and thereafter through performance, [30] also gives the work the alternative title *West Side Highway Drag: Superman 51*. In both instances the West Side Highway as a particular architectural site was integral to the work, a defining structure that shaped it as a movement-based-performance and made the execution of kinesthetic locomotion possible. Like Jones, Colo also aligns *West Side Highway Drag; Superman 51* with 1960s minimalism by displacing the "artist-subject by the spectator-subject" and also securing this displacement through the linking of the artwork to a particular environment (Crimp 1993, 16-17). This choice of architectural context manifests what Nick Kaye designates as a "site-specificity linked to the incursion of performance into visual art and architecture, in strategies which work against the assumptions and stabilities of site and location, […]." (Kaye 2000, 3) His performance, in its title, execution, and documentation, offers what Kaye describes as a "*working over* of the production, definition and *performance* of 'place'." (Kaye 2000, 3) More specifically for our purposes, Colo links the artwork to a particular environment through a movement-based-performance of locomotion by running and dragging sticks until exhaustion and collapse.

One of the many products of renown city planner Robert Moses' 1930s vision of an era of elevated expressways, the West Side Highway embodied New York City's engineer general's desire to transform the face of the city through large-scale urban restructuring projects heavily funded by Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal (1933). Opened in 1932 with a military and civic

[29] Interview with the artist: September 10, 2016.
[30] http://franklinfurnace.org/research/projects/thotf/text5.html

parade ("Traffic Starts on New Section of West Side Motor Highway," New York Herald Tribune 1932), the Miller—as it was also known, named after Manhattan Borough President Julius Miller—was conceived for vehicles and traffic flows of its era, with narrow on-ramps, tight turns, and poor drainage plaguing its existence. Already outdated and neglected by the 1950s, it found its final demise on December 16, 1973 when an entire section of it collapsed taking with it a tractor-trailer and a passenger car (Perlmutter 1973; "Truck and Car Fall as West Side Highway Collapses," New York Times 1973). During the next ten years, large sections were closed to regular traffic. The West Side Highway Project, in charge of overseeing its next stages, drew harsh criticism for its initial inactivity (Prial 1973). Local residents resisted a proposed plan to tear down the structure and build a new Federal Government funded interstate highway along the Hudson (Burks 1974). Banning trucks from the structure forced the use of neighboring streets resulting in increased congestion and air pollution (Herzlinger 1979). Edward C. Burks, who covered this debate for the New York Times, reported how the highway had created "a climate of acrimony on the West Side" with the proposal of five alternative plans for the highway polarizing the positions between residents, city planners, elected officials, and local businesses (Burks 1974). With the State Department of Transportation recommending in 1969 that the highway be designated part of the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways so that it become eligible for Federal funding (Herzlinger 1979), many felt an irreversible change underway. They echoed what the urban thinker Jane Jacobs sharply criticized as a practice where the "wistful myth that if only we had enough money to spend […] we could wipe out all our slums in ten years, reverse decay in the great, dull, gray belts […] and perhaps even solve the traffic problem" (Jacobs 1961, 4). All of these coinciding factors made the West Side Highway a critical space and cornerstone of New York City's urban renewal in the 1970s.

Infrastructural renewal, political economies of displacement and gentrification, and Colo's movement-based-performances of locomotion come into sharp focus when we consider how "Colo focused on the body as a site of cultural, poetic, and political production—specifically, his own body, one that resides between identities, between his birthplace of Puerto Rico and his chosen home in the U.S." (Krasinski 2016) Travelling across a condemned structure on the brink of demolition because of neglect and disrepair, Colo's gesture reminded his audience of New York City's state of political, social, and economic instability. While the live audience for *Superman 51* may have been relatively small—an assemblage of friends, a photographer, a videographer, and a few helpers to aid in tying his body to the 51 sticks using rope—most of them locals would have been familiar with the debate surrounding the infrastructure. In one of the images documenting the performance, a cyclist passing in the northbound lane looking curiously back at the performance reminds us of the uncanny nature of the act. It also echoes the repurposing of the highway after its closure into an alternative site for urban performances and activities of locomotion. Colo's kinesthetic movement drew attention to the West Side Highway as a potential outdoor space for activity other than vehicular transportation. In doing so it challenged The Daily News front page on October 29, 1975, which read "FORD TO CITY: DROP DEAD", paraphrasing the 38th President of the United States attack on the city denying it of federal assistance to avoid bankruptcy. While *Superman 51* may have ended with a drop, it was in no way a dead one as Colo, exhausted and gasping for air, continues to defy his immediate surrounding. This powerfully juxtaposed image of his collapsed body against a sea of concrete reflected on the relationships between the agency of moving bodies and authority of the highway, an essential industrial infrastructure dominated by the velocity of vehicles.

Described as a 10.6 mile "corridor" by Edward C. Burks, the West Side Highway posed a problem by demanding that urban planners satisfy the uncertain "traffic needs of the nineteen-eighties" (Burks 1974, 39) while addressing present-day pressure from various interest groups. Colo's run across this corridor drew attention to both the absence of the automobile and the materiality of the highway—a system connecting city, state, and national nodes together—and how they contributed to the formation of a sense of national unity and cohesion. Writing in his travel diary *America* (1986), the French sociologist Jean Baudrillard described the American car and its essential place in shaping the American imaginary:

> The way American cars have of leaping into action, of taking off so smoothly, by virtue of their automatic transmission and power steering. Pulling away effortlessly, noiselessly eating up road, gliding along without the slightest bump (the surfaces of the highways and freeways are remarkable, matched only by the fluidity of the cars' performance), braking smoothly but instantly, riding along as if you were a cushion of air, leaving behind the old obsession with that is coming up ahead, or what is overtaking you […]. All this creates a new experience of space, and, at the same time, a new experience of the whole social system.
> (Baudrillard 1986, 53).

Colo challenged this sleek description of the automotive vehicle with his moving body, re-inscribing a sense of the visceral into the mechanistic description of America through his effort-filled, noisy, stumbling, and stuttering gestures. His locomotion, although also heroic in its own right, defied the smoothness and effortlessness of vehicular motion on the highway by allowing the body to reach its physical limitations.[31] His body, as vehicle for all fifty plus one states, was a disjointed movement-based-performance that evoked the more than 100,000 cars a day that used the West Side Highway before its closure in 1973 (Burks 1975). His gesture denaturalized the

[31] Beginning in the mid 1950s, Puerto Rico began importing Venezuelan oil in order to refine and ship it to the United States. According to Tom Wicker from the New York Times, despite "the tax compact, the United States never has rebated to Puerto Rico the Federal taxes imposed on this product." (Wicker 1975) Colo's use of the highway, the space of the automobile, addresses the United States dependency and exploitation of the Commonwealth Island as a trade-partner for primary materials like petrol.

space of the highway as a connector between streets, cities, states, and countries, drawing attention to the human capital at play. The new experience of space he proposed through this kinesthetic trajectory brought attention to the collapse of New York City's infrastructure in the 1970s and its struggle to consolidate power as a Northeastern capital while facing economic uncertainty.

Superman 51, this "Sisyphean struggle" (Uszerowicz 2016), also related to Puerto Rico's infrastructural dependency on its colonizer—on the Commonwealth's continued movement to define itself vis-à-vis the United States, and more specifically, in relationship to New York City itself. President Lyndon B. Johnson surprised many in 1976 with his statement calling for a formal merger of Puerto Rico with the United States as the 51st state (Gupte 1977). Boosted by Operation Bootstrap in the early 1940s, Puerto Rico found itself with steep unemployment, overpopulation, and the danger of economic stagnation in the late 1970s (Rothmyer 1976; Vidal 1976; Davis 1975; Jones 1971). This caused serious environmental and health issues, with increases in air and water pollution from industrialization including the construction of schools and public housing units built with asbestos (Hornblower 1979). *Superman 51* related to New York City's Puerto Rican populations in the South Bronx and East Harlem "Barrios," which some, like the New York Times staff writer Ellen Hume wrote about as a long-established "revolving door" where "1.2 million Puerto Ricans have made New York their own colony of sort." (Hume 1979) Describing the area as "slums that are considered the most squalid of the squalid", (Hume 1979), Hume's derogatory account of the Barrio reflected the opinions of New Yorkers who felt that predominantly Puerto Rican communities like the 17-acre Charlotte St. area, a "blighted city," reflected poorly on the rest of the city. In these reports from the late 1970s, a tension emerged as mainland, predominantly white, Americans recognized that the

"United States has an important interest in Puerto Rico's future" and vice-versa (Martin 1977). This co-dependence was made apparent in 1975, when in a visit to New York City, the Governor of Puerto Rico Rafael Hernandez Colón arranged for a $600-million line of credit with New York banks to "help in the operating expenses of "public corporations" that run Puerto Rico's power, telephone, water-sewer and port services." (Wicker 1975) It is in this political economy, with New York City and Puerto Rico intimately connected to each other financially, demographically, and socially, that Colo staged his movement-based-performance on the West Side Highway.

Colo's own connections to Puerto Rico and Puerto Rican identity were not without their own tension. As the art historian Marimar Benítez describes in a 1998 article in Art Journal, for "Puerto Rican artists, the ascendancy of U.S. art posed a very real dilemma, a seemingly insurmountable conflict between the glamour of the metropolis and the social significance visual artists had attained as creators of Puerto Rican national identity vis-à-vis assimilation into U.S. culture." (Benítez 1998, 75) By his own admittance, Colo described feeling torn between his "roots in the rainforest" of Puerto Rico and his life in New York City.[32] Colo shared how coming to New York and establishing himself not in the Barrio, as many from Puerto Rico had, but taking up with an art scene in SoHo was a point of tension between him and others.[33] Colo embodied what some described as a "neo-Rican"[34]—a pejorative term initially used to describe islanders returning from the mainland (Nordheimer 1978)—although Colo never really left his

[32] Interview with the artist: September 10, 2016.
[33] Interview with the artist: September 10, 2016.
[34] The Nuyorican Movement would go on to adopt this title as a means to validate Puerto Rican experience in the Unites States. Artists, poets, and cultural workers from the 1960s and 1970s like Miguel Algarín, Jesús Colón, Giannina Braschi, and Raphael Montañez Ortiz lead the way in establishing institutional manifestations of the Nuyorican Movement in the forms of the Nuyorican Poets Café (1973) and El Museu del Barrio (1969).

adoptive island, Manhattan, for more than a few months at a time. His work must be understood as he describes it, made by "[people] like myself [who] have been marginalized by those who wield cultural power in our society," (Gomez 2000) but also balanced through the lens of an artist at a distance from his own ethnic community in New York City. Spatially, *Superman 51* and other public performances from this period illustrated this tension by squarely revolving around SoHo, more precisely Canal Street, and not East Harlem, the South Bronx, the East Village, or the Lower East Side where most Puerto Ricans lived.

With this geographic distance in mind, Colo's work not only wrestled "with the alienating displacement of values that all expatriates experience", but it also suggested that the artist's "double life as an insider and outsider only partly assimilated by the melting pot" (McCormick 1987, 127) was twofold as he struggled to reconcile his own urban identity on the island of Manhattan with that of other Puerto Rican artists and nationals. Writing retroactively about the work for "The History of the Future Netcasts" at the Franklin Furnace in 1999, Colo states:

> *Superman 51* is an act of political exorcism. *Superman 51* is a metaphor for the U.S.A. "Men", soldiers, leaders, etc. *Superman 51* is the discourse that was advertised in my native island of Puerto Rico. To become the 51st state of the union. The act is to attach to my body with ropes 51 sticks of wood. Each of the sticks has a name of a state in writing on the wood. And I run until exhaustion. Symbolizing ideas:
> A. A Sacrifice to become (a state)
> B. A martyr for its (independence).
> This dichotomy is spice. With the religious image of penitence and the stamina of mental and physical endurance.

Superman 51 is framed as an act of "political exorcism," thus suggesting a political removal of an evil spirit or force from a person or place. The space in question was the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico seeking emancipation from its US colonizer. However, it can also be read in an

autobiographical sense, as Colo personally exorcised himself of US rule while living in New York City. Travelling through the body politic of the United States control over Puerto Rico with his own gestural movement-based economy, Colo assumed a posture of locomotion against a pillar of might, the USA, that pointed towards an alternate social kinesthetics (Martin 2006, 796). This tactic of locomotion is what Randy Martin terms a *kinesthetic of protest*, a series of movements that challenges the apparent fixity of space by arresting, taking place, and/or blocking city-property with the body in order to expose mechanisms of exclusion (Martin 2006, 798). By dragging fifty-one states with his body, Colo embodied an alternative configuration of the United States. Sculptural pieces of wood mobilized by a body in performance, sticks of woods like the ones previously discussed in the section on Mudman, are again integral in this work. In this instance, they could be likened to Furring Strip Board (or 2 x 2-inch lumber), a basic unit of construction used to give a level surface for attaching wallboards and paneling. Colo's repurposing of this construction material in *Superman 51* further supports the argument that he looked to restructure the built environment with movement-based-performance.[35]

Similar to Jones' references to the military, this work also explored certain types of masculinity in locomotion related to athleticism and endurance. Colo's movement-based-performances materialized differently through the particularities of his Puerto Rican identity as he subverted the erasure of his brown body by making it hyper-visible. His own description of "outside space as very vulnerable" [36] further confirms this reading of his work. The curator Valerie Cassel Oliver identifies this in the catalogue *Radical Presence: Black Performance in*

[35] With each piece of Furring Strip Board branding the name of a State, Colo gestured towards an "architecture" of the United States, built by an intertwined system of Federal and State constitutions. Adding Puerto Rico into this equation, the artist integrates the Commonwealth Island into a legalistic and executive structure it did not benefit from due to its status as an unincorporated territory.
[36] Interview with the artist: September 10, 2016.

Contemporary Art (2013) as a key example of the ways in which artists of color, who engaged in public feats of endurance art, challenged traditional notions of spectatorship—and I would add spatiality. By working in a particular context, New York City's controversial West Side Highway in 1977, and employing specific guerilla tactics,[37] a strained and irregular locomotion as movement-based-performance, Colo's body was an effective presence. (Oliver 2013, 15) The abandoned space of the highway allowed Colo to take control of the public representation of his Puerto Rican body in the American metropolis, struggling against a history of (mis)recognition (Young 2010, 12) and asserting its sovereign presence as part of the complicated New York imaginary and changing urban realities and political economies.

A reading of *Superman 51* as a movement-based-performance of locomotion aimed at challenging processes of urban renewal must also consider the most poignant architectural landmarks present in the background of the piece, the World Trade Center. Hovering above Colo's collapsed horizontal body along the West Side Highway, in one of the most striking images documenting the piece, the Twin Towers are without a doubt evidence that the artist understood "the drama of the space in order to make [visually striking] images."[38] The use of the World Trade Center echoes *Coronation* (1976), which created silhouettes against the skyline that

[37] A performance series like *Secret Acts of Canal Street* (1976) offers a compelling read of Colo's work in this period as a form of "guerilla tactics." These performances, playful in nature, had the artist appearing for short periods of time (10-15 minutes) on the street in costume—surprising audiences with unusual actions.

[38] In an interview, Colo said he had learned the skill as a child of developing images from a photographer in Puerto Rico who documented "action shots." Colo described how he came to feel that "the friend of photography was the action" and that like an actor, "he understood the position that works" when it comes to framing documentation of his work (Interview with the artist: September 10, 2016). In addition to this, some have speculated that watching his father, a prizefighter in Puerto Rico, gave him an "appreciation of performing and how images, ideas and information can be persuasively packaged." (Gomez 2000)

replicated a "crown of thorns, a vision made eerie by the presence of the twin towers that once loomed over Soho and the downtown art scene." (Krasinski 2016) Keenly aware of New York City's architecture as heavily coded, as both functional spaces intended for particular purposes or uses, and symbols of power, Colo's use of his moving body to draw attention to the Twin Towers challenged their status as iconic, economic markers of progress in Manhattan's skyline in the 1970s.

Figure 25. *Superman 51*. Papo Colo, 1977.

A product of the late 1960s, the World Trade Center was from the outset a controversial project. Even before is completion, concerns about the ambitious transformation of the New York City skyline gave place to debates on how the twin towers and their immediate environment could be "humanized" and "pulled back into the city" through improved pedestrian circulation and mass transit facilities ("City Firm 'Humanizes' World Trade Center," The Sun 1971). Conceived by American banker David Rockefeller as an urban renewal project of Lower Manhattan, it brought together the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey in an effort to design a center that would "meet the needs of today's international business men." (Fulton 1970) As a result, dozens of small merchants were forcefully removed from their spaces (Burks 1971). A source of anxiety for some,[39] it was also propelled by a sense of excitement that it would be "one of mankind's most ambitious building

[39] Other concerns included whether the Twin Towers would interfere with television signals travelling across Manhattan to Staten Island and other more distant boroughs (Feretti 1970, 115).

ventures." (Fulton 1970) Officially opened on April 4, 1973, the landmark Twin Towers, only two of the seven buildings that made up the World Trade Center, stood tall at 1,350 feet above ground, bounded by the West Side Highway and Hudson River (Friedlander 1972). Designed by one of the main practitioners of New Formalism, Minoru Yamasaki, the towers—the tallest in the world at the time, surpassing the Empire State Building—offered a new unobstructed view of the city below:

> From there you see a majestic New York without perceiving the dirty sidewalks and streets, the pushing and the shoving you fight your way through at sidewalk level; nor hear the traffic horns nor choke on diesel fumes and unconsumed hydrocarbons. There is magic in altitude—crime and ghetto and politics and corruption become invisible. (Friedlander 1972)

By 1977, the World Trade center was home to 40 foreign banks (Kandel 1977) and was described as a "city" in itself, "a special city, where Arabs, Israelis and Russians comingle with less friction than in the United Nations." (Schumach 1976) With its own police and fire protection force, medical aide, and personnel to dispense of trash and deliver supplies, it was on the verge of achieving full occupancy (Horsley 1978). Already the site of public spectacle and feats of mental and physical endurance, with Philipe Petit's tightrope walk between the Twin Towers (1974) and George Willig, the "human fly's" escalating of the South Tower (1977), it promised an architectural and urban "journey into the 21st century" ("New York Titans Battle for Tourists," Los Angeles Times 1976) ripe for Colo to challenge with his running body.

In a 2016 interview, Colo describes civilization as cyclical struggle, emphasizing processes of formation and deformation: "Our history is an accumulation of barbaric events; civilization is destruction and construction. Art should reflect on that." (Uszerowicz 2016) Read through this lens, *Superman 51* literally puts in locomotion the various pieces that constitute statehood and the nation as a whole: it is both a construction of an idea of Puerto Rico as a state

and its collapse. Considered alongside the presence of the Twin Towers, Colo's "introspective critical observations on the faith and rituals of society" (McCormick 1978, 127) in *Superman 51* specifically opposed the power of the state as it manifested itself in architectural form. The performance, which lasted "10 minutes at full speed",[40] was an all-out, "shirtless and gasping," (Uszerowicz 2016) confrontation of a building that was "a symbol of government authority," a center whose twenty-four-hour police force wouldn't permit loitering because its tenants "were sensitive to that" and didn't "want to be harassed." (Clines 1978) The 35,000 "freshets of pedestrians flowing together through the concourse of the World Trade Center" (Clines 1978) moved with uniformity and regularity, a hallmark of architectural New Formalism in the ways it carefully organized a hierarchy of space, placing emphasis on the structural grid of the building.[41] The spatial and movement order of the World Trade Center, where the antics of a "chronic complainer who protested that cleaning women were drinking the water from his cooler" (Schumach 1976) made headlines in the New York Times, provided the ideal foil for a performance artist who looked to "disturb and dislocate the established cultural values" of a space, "to dislocate the status quo." (Montano 2001, 261) Colo's exhausted body, a product of his extreme locomotion, unsettled the World Trade center's civilizing power: "I don't have to be political to be political because I am not from the tribe. By my presence I break the stereotype and melt everything." (Montano 2000, 261) His collapsed figure against the verticality of the towers challenged their authority, grounding spectators who had let themselves be dulled by the

[40] A description of the work appeared in an article in Performing Arts Journal documenting the works in *Endurance*, an exhibition of photographs and artists' statements at Exit Art (March 4 – April 15, 1995).
[41] Primarily employed in public buildings and banking institutions, New Formalist constructions, built on a large urban scale, achieved monumental presence by emphasizing symmetry, a delicacy of details, and embracing classical structures such as colonnades, arches, and columns.

"magic in altitude [of the towers]—crime and ghetto and politics and corruption [made] invisible" by their altitude, modernity, and security (Friedlander 1972).

When Colo states that in *Superman 51* he intended to use his "body energy as an aesthetic and political metaphor", that the "falling was premeditated and despite the knowledge of defeat (the eventual collapse) I will persevere", (Colo 1996, 69) he highlights the critical importance of movement-based-performance and locomotion his work. For the Puerto Rican performance artist, the "center stage is here in NYC" (Kairé 2014), and *Superman 51* exemplified this by highlighting New York City's contentious urban space and political economies in the late 1970s. Asked about the performance in an interview with the curator Jessica Kairé in 2014, Colo described his relationship to running and to the number 51: "51 is the number of democracy, half plus one is the majority. Running is liberation, but come [sic] with a price. Obstacles will try to slow you down but you don't give up until your life is gone." (Kairé 2014) Colo embraced the notion that "all art is political" by appropriating the city as a space to explore the contradictions and conflicts of his identity as a Puerto Rican artist living and producing work in New York City: "All we need is a driver's license. We are Latin Americans with an imperial seal; kind of free slaves, but again we cannot be deported, because we are part of the U.S." (Kairé 2014) In *Superman 51*, he appeared as an island in a sea of abandoned concrete, a once accelerating life force, collapsed onto the pavement, with the figure of quintessential American capitalism and eventual globalism looming above.

Figure 26. ***Against the Current.*** **Papo Colo, 1983.**

Six years later, in *Against the Current* (1983), Colo once again adopted locomotion as a means to intervene in the city. Straining to push a canoe upstream in the "heavily polluted Bronx River" (Krasinski 2016), he worked against man-made order by drawing attention to the ways in which the river had become a sewer into which domestic and industrial waste regularly made its way.[42] Pointing to American colonial projects of forced urbanization, industrialization, and civilization that destroyed natural habitats, Colo drew on the river's connection to the Southern Bronx "Barrio". Reverberations of an ecosystem and its people exploited by the United States acted as a reminder that Puerto Ricans, whether in the dense urban jungle of New York City or the island of Puerto Rico, were continuously the victims of infrastructural and urban segregation.[43] In these movement-based-performances of locomotion, Colo defied political economies of power by intruding in the city's unobstructed flow of pedestrian bodies and automotive vehicles, as well as the architectural and infrastructural functionalism enforced by processes of urban renewal heavily underway in New York City in the late 1970s.

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[42] A 1985 article by Scott Armstrong entitled "Seemingly minor wastes pollute US waterways" for The Christian Science Monitor displayed an image taken by R. Norman Matheny of the Bronx River and captioned: "Tires and trash flow freely in New York City's Bronx River."

[43] According to the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, Puerto Rico was, between 1956 and 1968, amongst the top 10 location of testing grounds for Agent Orange and other herbicides used in the Vietnam War. These tests were described as "field tests of defoliants" applied to different "tropical trees and shrubs" to evaluate their "effectiveness as defoliants, desiccants, and killing agents."

William Pope.L:
Crawling Across Times Square

> When I put my distrust to work for a cultural practice that embodies the belief that theatre can change the world, I move beyond the proscenium. I move out into the streets, where I have worked since the late 1970s doing duration work and interventions. I do these actions in the street for no money. The people who happen by are the audience for that performance. I create images and situations with my body to engage folks, pique their curiosity, provoke them, make them laugh, make them angry. Change them. Let them change me. The only control I have is what the audience and my audacity allow me.
>
> —William Pope.L, "Beyond the Proscenium," *How Do You Make Social Change?* (2001)

Starting in the late 1970s, the visual and performance artist William Pope.L began a series of crawls throughout the streets of New York City and other major metropolitan centers around the world. The first of these events, *Times Square Crawl* (1978), marked the start of his use of locomotion as a means to generate dialogue surrounding his horizontal body: a street-specific and durational action aimed at exploring some of "the vulnerability that homeless men and women experience" by relinquishing "his own verticality in an aggressively vertical city." (Finkel 2015) Dressed in a suit, laboriously crawling on all fours through the heart of Manhattan, Pope.L's gestures took the politics of race directly to the streets in a way that echoed Adrian Piper's *Catalysis* series (1970-1971).[44] Like Piper, who "advocated creating an uncontained and unpredictable situation for a broader public than New York's museum-going audience" (Bowles 2011, 182) by appearing unannounced in the streets to prevent viewers from dismissing her as

[44] The art critic Barbara Pollack describes how Pope.L combines "the public intervention tactics of Adrian Piper with the poetics of Amiri Baraka" in his work (Pollack 2003, 123). Likening his "strategies" of making use of "the street" to African American artists who preceded him like David Hammons and Piper (Pollack 2003, 123), Pollack's use of the terms *tactics* and *strategies* supports a reading of Pope.L's work as intent on employing a shared and transferable physical vocabulary of tactics of locomotion. The artist himself uses this language when describing his work: "My intent has always been to create foment around topics such as: What are the most appropriate art strategies which to do social work? Should we wait until we find the most perfect strategy before we act?" (Chase 2006, 23)

art, Pope.L's *Times Square Crawl* depended on durational movement-based-performances through the densely populated metropolis as a means of disturbing the racial political economy of the city and the stigmatized distribution and presence of homeless bodies across the built environment. Working at troubling the "relation between art and real life" and employing Fluxus strategies of art making (Thompson 2002, 72), Pope.L explored false boundaries by placing "his body in the position of homeless people, taking it out of the vertical posture representing power, forcing him and his unwitting audience to look at bodies that have been rendered invisible." (Wilson 2002, 45) In the activation of crawling as a movement-based-performance of locomotion in Times Square in 1978, we observe how Pope.L intervened in the city's flow of pedestrian bodies; the enforcement of spatial order by police; and the "cleanup" of Midtown through processes of urban renewal underway in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Figure 27. Times Square Crawl. William Pope.L, 1978.

A native of Newark, New Jersey, Pope.L started these crawls during his 20s while completing an MFA at the Mason Gross School of the Arts, Rutgers University. Working under the supervision of the late Fluxus artist Geoffrey Hendricks, Pope.L developed an approach to art making that defied the social validity and commodity oriented nature of more traditional disciplinary practices (Bessire 2002, 96). Early on in his career, like Papo Colo and Kim Jones, Pope.L adopted the streets as a site of performance in order to work outside of the boundaries of institutional spaces: "My work has been on the streets because I didn't want to have anything to

do with theaters, or contracts. For quite a while, if you wanted to see my work, you had to be there." (Kennicott 2002) In *Thunderbird Immolation* (1978), created in the same year as his inaugural crawl, the artist performed with the fortified wine marketed towards the urban poor. Sitting barefoot and cross-legged in front of downtown New York City art galleries with "two bottles of Thunderbird, a bottle of Wild Irish Rose, a can of Coke, and matches," (Edgers 2002) Pope.L proceeded to mix drinks, pour liquid over himself, and make word arrangements out of matches. Conceived with the intention of working "outside of the boundary of the traditional," this performance marked the beginnings of works by the artist aimed at reaching everyday audiences in outdoor public spaces (Edgers 2002). They also point to his relationship to civil rights movement era protests, like the march in Selma, which Pope.L saw as a "paradigm of "performance": nonviolent but confrontational." (Kennicott 2002) Using the word "elegant" to describe their emotional and visual impact (Kennicott 2002), and one could add kinesthetic, Pope.L clearly situated his early work in its affinity to what Susan Leigh Foster describes as "tactics of non-violent direct action for which bodies rehearsed specific procedures of non-cooperation." (Leigh Foster 2003, 396)

Figure 28. *Thunderbird Immolation*. William Pope.L, 1978.

All three artists in this chapter use or are connected to Superman, a fictional male superhero who first appeared in DC Comics in 1938. Jones, Colo, and Pope.L present variations on the masculine figure of a fallen hero in their pieces' titles, costumes, and the actions they

produce with their bodies. More significantly, they literally grounded the quintessential figure of the superhero identified for his power of flight, verticality, and physical superiority. Instead they explored unusual, awkward, and altered modes of locomotion that defied the physical ease with which superheroes were made to move. Pope.L's work, which focused on the abject, spectacle, and the carnivalesque, was "securely grounded in the social, and personal biography." (Bessire 2002, 97) Following the widespread publicity around *The Great White Way* (2001-2009), a series of crawls initiated with the 2001 Whitney Biennial where Pope.L, in superman garb, travelled from Manhattan's southern tip all the way up the island along Broadway, many wrote about the autobiographic nature of the artist's crawls. In 2002, Philip Connors from the Wall Street Journal described how Pope.L, "a horizontal Pied Piper dressed as a superhero" could be read through the lens of his own family: "His brother has been living on the street, off and on, for about 20 years, although no one in his family currently knows exactly where." (Connors 2002) Pope.L's close relatives (brother, aunt, and two uncles) living on the streets is a reoccurring motif in reports on the artist. He himself describes the perniciousness of homelessness when he qualifies it as a "cycle where people are institutionalized and then released without the family being notified". (Finkel 2015) Writing about the potential for social change through theatre, the artist articulates how he always wanted to be a "socially committed artist", and that this came from his upbringing in a family who valued the literary works of Langston Hughes, the music of John Coltrane and Miles Davis, and the political leadership of Martin Luther King and Malcolm X (Pope.L 2001, 92). Defining his family as the most "personal and local model" for social commitment, he also identifies the challenges he inherited from them, "a group of folks bent on destroying themselves while perpetuating a love of life, a hatred of injustice, and a drive for jumping off the end of a syringe of heroin." (Pope.L 2001, 92) While it is important to consider

how Pope.L's family are "first order of theory" (Bessire 2002, 97) when interpreting his use of movement-based-performances of locomotion, it is crucial to consider how homelessness represented a growing crisis in New York City in the late 1970s.

Throughout the 1970s, New York City faced an important housing crisis. In 1971, the New York Times reported on the "use of trailers as temporary relocation homes" by the City Planning Commission in an effort to relocate families "uprooted by urban renewal, and other housing construction and fire." ("Planners Approve City Trailer Parks For the Homeless," New York Times 1971) Although the city moved through harsh economic times, urban regeneration was heavily underway in an attempt to push the metropolis into new "prosperity" with large private and public real-estate development initiatives. Housing official Frank S. Kristof wrote in 1974 how a "wave of abandonments experienced in the late nineteen-sixties [would] be dwarfed by a new tide that could in a few years make homeless up to 250,000 essentially low-income, mostly minority families who can least afford the disruption and the hazards of seeking living quarters in a city whose housing costs have reached new peaks." (Kristof 1974) Kristof's singling out of minority families is significant here, as the regeneration of urban spaces like New York City, or other large American metropolitan regions, gave place to credit allocations within the city limits that followed lines of racial segregation. Studies like urbanist Judith D. Feins' *Study of Urban Housing Disinvestment and Neighborhood Decline* (1977) clearly articulated the skewed weight given to race in "policy-induced shifts in investment incentives operating through the lending practices of institutions which specialize in conventional mortgage credit." (Feins 1977, 209) In 1977, a year before *Times Square Crawl*, emergency help from the New York City Department of Social Services took "an average of 25.3 days instead of the five-day maximum set by city and state regulations". (Wald 1977)

These elements came to a critical point when in the winter of 1979 the Coalition for the Homeless brought a lawsuit on behalf of all homeless men in the New York City. The lead plaintiff, Robert Callahan was a man who slept on the streets of the Bowery and symbolically spearheaded the movement. *Callahan v. Carey* ruled in favor of "homeless derelicts roaming the neighborhood of the Bowery" directing city officials to "furnish lodging and meals to the derelicts seeking lodging and shelter and meal at the 'Men's Shelter,' on the ground that such shelters for homeless men are mandated by the Constitutions of the United States and the State of New York". (Callahan v. Carey 1979) The decision was seminal and it forced the city to offer more substantial protection for homeless men.[45] However, the order was not without controversy in the Bowery where urban change made for "less sympathetic neighbors." ("Hypothermia," New York Times, 1979) The neighborhood, which for almost one hundred years had been considered an area in disrepair, was undergoing rapid shifts as the "old and cheap hotels [were] being converted to lofts and apartments, and the area's newer residents [were] resisting the shelter's efforts to expand." ("Hypothermia," New York Times 1979) *Callahan v. Carey* not only marked New York City's crisis of urban poverty, but it also pointed towards urban shifts as the increase in homelessness was met by the transformation and gentrification of entire neighborhoods.

With this context in mind, Pope.L's *Times Square Crawl* is both the product of lived experience and a broader political economy, one specific to New York City's urban environment in the 1970s. Locomotion was aimed at challenging homeless men's relationship to urban functionalism, the act of crawling in public space altering the spatial-subjectivity of the

[45] In 1982 a similar case was brought on behalf of homeless women, *Eldredge v. Koch*, extending the *Callahan* decree to shelters for homeless women, children, and later families.

horizontal body out of a position of passivity and into one of unsettling activity.[46] The artist addresses this when asked in a 2006 interview about the origin of his crawling performances: "One of the ways to answer this question is: I began to crawl when I became sentient. Another way to answer it is: I began doing pieces in 1979 in response to the steady increase of street people occupying the sidewalks of New York city, the community's refusal to recognize this calamity and my coming to terms with this lifestyle as an ongoing problem within my immediate family." (Chase 2006, 21) He goes on to state the ways in which the crawl, as a movement-based-performance, activates the position of vulnerability that is homelessness as it manifests itself in public spaces, specifically the street:

> As an artist-citizen, I felt compelled to bring a fresh attention to the plight of street folk. I decided the most authentic way to do this was to enter the situation itself and re-perform it on the streets. To me, poverty is an equal opportunity destroyer that can affect anyone of any class. I did not see much difference between what I called the vertical folks of economic stability and the horizontal folks of economic lack. I did not believe that the person lying on the sidewalk had given up. I saw a will to struggle and a strategy for coming to terms with a hostile environment that privileges verticality and punishes its opposite. I saw the street person's choice as creative, a protest and a refusal to be absented. I saw the act of lying on a sidewalk as a claim for visibility and power. (Chase 2006, 21)

In this passage, the artist highlights how being "horizontal doesn't necessarily mean being passive." (Connors 2002) This is a strong movement-based and kinesthetic statement. It speaks to the impetus behind *Callahan v. Carey* which was intended to coincide with New York City's winter as many homeless individuals had been "known to end up victims of "hyporthermia": frozen to death." ("Hypothermia," New York Times 1979) These crawls were grounded in political economies of movement, "the specific histories of the area of New York that the crawls

[46] Art critic Joanna Fiduccia cites the work of public art historian Rosalyn Deutsche on the "exclusion of certain bodies from the presumed vertical occupation of public space" in order to argue how the "horizontal bodies of the homeless, "crawling through the gutters," are denied in social space, yet play a consistently vital role within it." (Fiduccia 2015, 14-15)

criss-cross" (Capelli 2009, 158) and the site specificity of Pope.L's gesture inhabited the position of the homeless but granted them mobility. Locomotion unfroze, unstuck, and granted agency to the homeless in contrast to the invisibility of stillness. By "giving up verticality," Pope.L engaged in a "critique of the smooth kinetic functioning of the modern city, based on ideals of efficient flow of bodies and commodities." (Lepecki 2006, 97) His "slow crawling," to cite Andre Lepecki's reading of *Times Square Crawl* through the lens of Franz Fanon's notion of the stumble, "reveal those many unmarked presumptions of citizenship in its relationship to velocities and proper stances of inclusion." (Lepecki 2006, 97)

Figure 29. *Times Square Crawl*. William Pope.L, 1978.

Pace is a critical element when considering the effectiveness of locomotion in shifting the regular flow of bodies through Times Square's heavy foot and automobile traffic in 1978.[47] The art historian Chris Thompson makes a similar point to Lepecki about the velocity of the crawl when he describes it in a 2004 issue of Women & Performance: "In the way it resists speed, decelerates and de-verticalizes the body's

[47] After *Times Square Crawl*, the artist moved away from the four-legged crawl and into a military style crawl, which he now teaches to those who join him in performance (Fiduccia 2015, 9). This shift is important since it indicates how Pope.L literally developed his 'tactic' of crawling, adapting it to the needs of his body and making it into a transferable "technique of the body" that is practiced and acquires "increasing influence over corporeal and also individual identity." (Foster 2003, 408) When Pope.L then teaches this technique to others (see Lepecki 2006, 98-100) he offers the kinesthetic tools for creating political—and one could argue spatial—interference that, "everywhere along the way, deciphers the social and then choreographs an imagined alternative." (Leigh Foster 2003, 412).

movement through space, the crawl—approaching stillness and yet still moving, even if imperceptibly—serves as a more appropriate mode of imagining resistance than either fall or flight." (Thompson 2004, 81). Pope.L "wrestles the speed of spectacle into a state of slowness" (Thompson 2004, 82) in an architectural landscape governed by an incessant drive and energy of bodies and moving, honking cars. With this "productively unsettled and unsettlable condition that the crawl produces" (Thompson 2004, 85), Pope.L assumes a locomotion resembling Papo Colo and Kim Jones that asserts physical, kinesthetic presence in an urban infrastructure that otherwise erases his black and homeless body: "I get down on my belly and crawl till I'm reality." (Pope.L 1997, 66) Times Square, a "river of human traffic, congealed sidewalks" (Powers 1977) with cars and buses "blaring horns and spewing exhaust" (Oelsner 1978), slated to be transformed into a pedestrian mall with trees, walkways and outdoor dining in 1978, came to a deceleration as a different type of movement-based-performance and locomotion intervened in the flow of vehicles, commuters, and tourists.

In a 1997 text in Art Journal entitled "Notes on Crawling: a.k.a How Much Is That Nigger in The Window?", Pope.L articulated the desire to incite reflection in his audience with locomotion through a "recursive dynamic between the privileged/subordinate—to test us/our negotiation of the social. To crawl: to SUFFER: provocation to action." (Pope.L 1997, 65) More specifically, he highlighted the contextual nature of *Times Square Crawl* when he stated the geographic locations of the bodies he was in direct dialogue with:

> See'em laid out like Jewry on the Bowery
> Like at the Port Authority Bus Station Terminal
> deep in New York City. (Pope.L 1997, 65)

When the artist then described these acts of locomotion as "social events not just idiosyncratic actions", suggesting that the "significance of place and outreach into the community extends the

event beyond its physical or temporal boundaries" (Chase 2006, 22), it is important to consider the extent and nature of bodies, vehicular and pedestrian, and spaces, private and public, his initial crawl looked to confront.[48]

Times Square, leading up to Pope.L's performance in 1978, was in many ways the epicenter of New York City's urban regeneration project and a space of continuously evolving security and policing forces. In the early 1970s the area at the junction between Broadway and Seventh Avenue, stretching from West 42nd to West 47th Streets, was mostly known for its illegal activities. Crime, prostitution, pornography theatres, and other illicit sex commerce made headlines as mayors, city officials, and police chiefs engaged in attempts at renewing the "heart of the city." The headline "Times Square Slaying" ("Time Square Slaying," New York Times 1971) became redundant leading up to the 1970s. In 1971, Mayor John Lindsay ordered a cleanup of the area (Berke 1971), which lead to intensified police presence with "30 per cent increase in arrests for crimes of violence" (Kihss 1971) and the creation of a public morals task force.[49] While some felt that Times Square could be easily changed if the responsible city departments and officials "would enforce the local laws already on the books regarding littering, loitering and all other minor infractions" (Berke 1972), many others felt that the "perennial"

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[48] The idea of *confrontation* is a reoccurring one throughout Pope.L's oeuvre, a sentiment echoed in his description of the emotional and visceral effectiveness of the march in Selma (Kennicott 2002, G1). In reading his crawls as kinesthetic acts of protest, it is relevant to focus on how confrontation—an argumentative encounter between opposing forces—highlights the inherent resistance he poses to the regular flow of bodies in cities. This is a confrontation he even locates within himself: "Crawls grew out of a situation in 1979 that many folks, myself included, did not want to confront. Crawling reminds us of human fragilities." (Chase 2006, 23)

[49] In 1973, a new concerted effort to "clean up" Times Square resulted in a 20.6% increase in arrests for serious crimes and the apprehension of "400 "John's" for patronizing prostitutes" according to Mayor Lindsay (New York Times 1973) In 1975, Mayor Abraham D. Beame launched his own initiative to "clean up" Times Square and was met with similar skepticism as his predecessors: "Every city administration for the last 40 years—since Fiorello H. Laguardia was mayor—has conducted at least one major drive to clean up Times Square, and the results have been less than startling." (Clairborne 1975)

cleanup campaigns (Kramer 1973) were simply part of New York City's urban landscape. All seemed to agree that "The Great White Way" had "become one of New York's most embarrassing blemishes, a sleazy shanty of sex-kick businesses and shadowy creatures that belong to neither the past nor the future." (Bird 1972; Lamb 1972) The kinesthetic language used to describe the area vilified those who frequented Times Square with any regularity: "Sleepless, restless, seemingly homeless, the people here are forever in aimless movement, pausing briefly near discount record shops that pipe upbeat sounds into the night, then wandering on beneath the bright marquees, their destination and purpose obscured." (Lamb 1972)

That same year, Times Square began to see important changes as the city hoped to "convince private developers to replace the square's rundown buildings with sleek glass and steel towers", (Burns 1973), moving the urban regeneration process of the area forward. Joining the regular "anti-loitering streets "sweeps" by police, tighter inspections by the health, fire and building departments, and heightened efforts to collect delinquent sales taxes by City Finance Administration" (Burns 1973) were now serious "renovation plans" that looked "suspiciously like other parts of Manhattan, where activity after dark [had] diminished in proportion to a steady increase in new office towers." (Burns 1973) The proposal in 1974 for a "vastly expanded tourist-information center in Times Square and a series of pedestrian malls" as ways to "upgrade the area" (Fried 1974) clearly intended to shift the architectural and infrastructural makeup of the area in order to alter its demographics and movement economies. This project came in contrast to a 1972 description of the pre-existing Information Center as a site "surrounded by an air of undefined menace, of optimistic construction, of real and surrogate flesh for sale." (Charlton 1972) In 1975, a year after the Conservative party candidate for the United States Senator Barbara Keating declared "Times Square is now Slime Square" (Ronan 1974), new zoning

amendments were brought to start the reclamation of the area ("Heart of the City," New York Times 1975). Unanimously approved, these changes paved the way for a "revitalization" in 1977 ("Another Plan Is Offered to Revitalize Times Square," New York Times 1977) through a $500,000 grant from the Federal Government to create the experimental pedestrian mall first discussed in 1974 (Kaiser 1977). The Times Square that was kinesthetically anthropomorphized in a 1977 Los Angeles Times article as a landmark that "pulls itself out of the gutter slowly in the morning, coughing and spitting, patting itself down for a crumpled smoke, slurry eyes blinking for a belt to get the blood flowing" (Powers 1977) was on its way to becoming a symbol of New York City's urban renewal, public policing measures, and a tourism epicenter.

With this context in mind, art critic Joana Fiduccia's description of Pope.L's original performance gains new weight: "Dressed in a brown suit and a yellow safety vest, Pope.L maneuvered through the crowds on his hands and knees, trailed at some distance by a photographer. The photographer's lens caught the scene: tourists look on disconcertedly; unflappable locals continue their commute; a cop puts a paternalistic hand on the artist's shoulder to urge him back to his feet." (Fiduccia 2015, 6) Pope.L's audience, made up of unknowing bystanders except for his cameraman, is asked to "reconsider their socially ingrained presumptions about class, race, and by extension privilege" (Chase 2006, 21) as they experience the artist's unusually oriented laboring body invariably becoming "participants in its social mechanism."

Figure 30. *Times Square Crawl*. William Pope.L, 1978.

(Fiduccia 2015, 11) Their own kinesthetic presence—standing upright, moving fluidly, eyes pointed forward or upward observing skyscrapers—comes into tension with Pope.L's locomotion.

The mention of the policeman trying to bring the artist to his feet, out of his horizontal crawl, is also significant.[50] In video documentation from this moment, it is not only the white policeman's physical language which is striking, placing a "paternalistic hand on the artist's shoulder to urge him back to his feet," but also the mostly white incidental audience who stare at the spectacle with distrust, distance, and unsettled gazes. Literally looking down at Pope.L, they all remain distant from the interaction with characteristic ease at observing law enforcement interpolate a Black body in defiance of the city's movement codes. Investigative reporter Selwyn Raab describes in the New York Times how New York City officials in 1978 tripled the number of uniformed foot patrolmen in the neighborhood to rid the "theatre district of street prostitutes and others labeled "undesirables" through increased police patrols rather than by mass arrests." (Raab 1978) Called "Operation Crossroads," the tactics employed by the police specifically focused on "harassing" to "keep people moving" but not necessarily make arrests (Raab 1978). Pope.L's "slow crawling" makes policing by forcing circulation impossible. The laborious movement-based-performance of his marked body, Black and confrontational in its posture, unsettled New York City's attempts at reversing an "ongoing resurgence of the tawdry, blighted and sometimes frightening blocks in and around Times Square". (Oelsner 1978) Here, the

[50] Writing about an incident during one of Pope.L's crawls when an African American man called the police, confronted, and threatened the artist because he felt he was "making fun of street people" and of "black people," Philip Kennicott remarks that there "is no law, however, against the act of crawling in the streets." (Kennicott 2002, G1) The arrival of the cop during *Times Square Crawl* reveals that even without the presence of an actual law forbidding Pope.L's act of locomotion, for "the marked body" any form of "*acting out*—acting unexpectedly or wrongly in public space—exposes the fact that such a body should not really be acting there *at all*." (Fiduccia 2015, 7)

policeman captured in the documentation of the work seeks to enforce what Andre Lepecki describes as *choreopolicing*, guaranteeing that "as long as everyone moves and circulates in accord with a general conformity of being-in-circulation, this movement will produce nothing other than a mere spectacle of its own consensual mobility." (Lepecki 2013, 19) Pope.L's crawl, in response to this most recent "clean up proposal," poses what Lepecki terms a *choreopolitics*, "a planned, dissensual, and nonpoliced disposition of motions and bodies" that become "the condition of possibility for the political to emerge."[51] (Lepecki 2013, 22) In locomotion, Pope.L intervenes in the enforcement of 'law and order' by police as urban renewal depended upon the securing, cleanliness, and unobstructed ease of public spaces.

Times Square is also socio-politically significant in 1978 when considering it as a rallying space for events celebrating the city, broader American democratic ideals, and other notable spectacles of consumer capitalism. On November 24, 1975, a "New York rally" was held in Times Square, since it was considered symbolically the city's heart as well as the "crossroads of the world" (Fowler 1975). Enticed to "take to the streets" in a "show of solidarity in the face of fiscal adversity", Times Square was the ideal place for locals to demonstrate their "love for the city" and their "determination to make it healthy and prosperous" again (Fowler 1975). Three years later, 1978 was marked by a $15 million application by the city to the federal government for the Urban Development Action Grant, and the start of a $6.2 million Times Square pedestrian mall with funds from several different federal programs (Kaiser 1978). It was also the beginning

[51] It is important to note that since this initial crawl in 1978, Pope.L has engaged in many "group crawls" around the globe that "bring to the surface and make more obvious the origins of this sort of action, for example in ritual, religion, and protest movements." (Chase 2006, 22) Describing the group crawl as one that "should have an aura that extends beyond itself—an openness […]" (Chase 2006, 23), Pope.L points to the ways in which the crawl can be read as choreography as it is "learned, sustained, and experimented with." (Lepecki 2013, 22)

of privately funded "mammoth complexes" advanced by "some of the most formidable developers on the continent", focused on bringing a mix of "entertainment, retail, exhibition, office and cultural uses." (Horsley 1979) Sociologist Sharon Zukin describes this as an era in which "financial firms and the real estate industry playing leading roles in reshaping the local economy, especially in global cities like New York, cultural districts, ethnic tourist zones, and artists' lofts presented a clean image of diversity for mass consumption" (Zukin 2010, 5) Most importantly, it lead to the creation of spaces, like Times Square, where a "timeless ideal of authentic public space that is free, democratic, and open to all is reinterpreted by different modes of private stewardship." (Zukin 2010, 30)

Figure 31. ***Times Square Crawl*****. William Pope.L, 1978.**

Times Square Crawl was a preemptive event for *The Great White Way* (2001-2009), a series of movement-based-performances during which Pope.L continued crawling along sections of Broadway in Midtown nicknamed "The Great White Way." First designated in the 1890s to describe an area in Manhattan that encompasses Times Square because of its luminescent advertising billboards, Pope.L's 1978 action challenged the 'greatness,' 'whiteness,' and 'wayness' of the area. It literally opposed these quintessential post-war American ideals—*greatness* contrasted by horizontality and lack,[52] *whiteness* contrasted by Blackness, and the

[52] The emphasis on "lack" is a reoccurring theme in Pope.L's work. The lack of "food as a kid growing up in New Jersey and New York. Lack of possibilities surrounding him." (Edgers 2002, L1) Lack is also often equated with issues surrounding race in this regard: "The viscerality of Pope.L's work posits a

wayness of automobiles or pedestrians contrasted by crawling. Joanna Fiduccia writes about the significance of the commercial space of Times Square as it related to the act of crawling:

> His choice of Times Square carries particular significance because of the Square's failure, now as then, to provide adequate space for democratic assembly. Times Square is a place, in the French sense of place or public square, only nominally; although groups can gather there, their activities are subsumed by the experience of commerce, in the steady bustle of bodies moving through the Square, and the supra-human sensory demands made by advertisements. (Fiduccia 2015, 16)

For Fiduccia, the "corporatization of the putatively public space of Times Square thus occurs in concert with the hollowing out of the democratic space of assembly and contestation, assuaging the potential for conflict that Pope.L's mild crawling threatens to reintroduce." (Fidducia 2015, 16) This emphasis on commerce and the loss of democratic spaces of assembly is relevant since 1978 was the beginning of monumental urban renewal projects in Times Square that had been de-emphasized in the 1970s because of an "increased resistance from those who would be displaced and also because of the costs." (Horsley 1979) Pope.L's locomotion resisted the urban renewal pushed by developers who intended to "displace long-time residents and disturb the lives of those remaining." (Chase 2006, 21)

In its use of movement-based-performance, *Times Square Crawl* revealed how the title of "rabble-rousing performance artist" (Banai 2009, 242) neglects to account for Pope.L's profound engagement with the undercurrents of New York City's political economy and built environment in the late 1970s. His statement that the crawls allowed him to "see New York from a very odd vantage point" (Duray 2015) highlight the importance of the altered embodied perspective of locomotion in an everyday setting as a means of temporarily shifting the performer's spatial-

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politics of collision among racial rigidities to reveal the radical fluidity behind bogus racial categories. More importantly, he casts racial problematic as the engine which drive his work, believing that our lacks are a form of knowledge and power." (Bessire 2002, 96)

subjectivity. The painful calcium deposits that have accumulated in his spine as a result of these prolonged acts of locomotion (Edgers 2002), which started in 1978, confirm how the "return to verticality is always marked by the trace of the crawl's physical and psychical challenges." (Thompson 2004, 86) Even as Pope.L regained his feet after *Times Square Crawl*, occupying a vertical position in the world once again, his moving gesture continued to linger in the fabric of his body and the streets he crawled on: challenging the regular and unobstructed flow of bodies engaged in commuting or tourism; the enforcement of 'law and order' by police and security forces targeting Black and homeless populations; and urban renewal projects aimed at sanitizing Midtown and the iconic Times Square in the late 1970s.

Notes on a Walk, Run, and Crawl

The three artists in this chapter demonstrate how locomotion was a kinesthetic tactic of protest used to intervene in the city in movement-based-performance in Los Angeles and New York City during the 1970s and 1980s. Their actions outlined critical developments in urbanism, products of economic, cultural, as well as broader political economies at play during this time period. In all three case studies, locomotion was employed to fulfill the goal of intervening in the city's unobstructed flow of pedestrian bodies and automotive vehicles; the enforcement of 'law and order' by police and security forces; and processes of urban renewal. Each shared a commitment to producing performance works for a broader audience outside of traditional art spaces, choosing the street, the telephone pole, the highway, the river, and the sidewalk as staging grounds for acts of unusual propulsion. Forms of masculinity were explored through uses and references to the military, athletics, superheroes, and feats of physical endurance, manifesting themselves differently across racial and ethno-national lines. These moving bodies, struggling to complete the task because of duration, posture, or resistance, reminded their

audiences of the concealed spatial and kinesthetic forces that govern our lives in the built environment. They made visible the "thicks and things of an urban "text"" (de Certeau 1984, 93) by their moving bodies. Not only were the political economies and urban undercurrents shaping these cities revealed through their gestures and choices in architectural and infrastructural landmarks, but they themselves transformed the spatial composition of these environments by temporarily altering habitus through locomotion.

Similarly, in *Five Dollar Crawl After William Pope.L*, the shift in my kinesthetic relationship to the city, my necessary slowing down and focusing on new details, textures, and cadences, is one that was shared by the audience of colleagues. In their own participation in the movement-based-performance, they broke with the regular flow of the city by having to side-and-stutter-step their way through spaces they otherwise walked through rapidly: "As we drew closer to the Drama Centre, Morelli's previously upright, horizontal body collapsed in on itself. His head dropped toward the ground, his entire body falling into an unremitting gravitational pull. His elbows bled through his jersey. For the final distance to the steps, Morelli had become our collective focal point and together, without speaking, we formed a protective block around him." (Cesare Schotzko 2015, 196) Cesare Schotzko's description of this moment in my crawl reveals the performative force of locomotion in the city as a catalyst for a critical experiential challenge to the ways we regularly inhabit urban spaces. The arc of my crawl, a belabored act that required unusual and strenuous demonstrations of physicality on an everyday stage, transformed

Figure 32. ***Five Dollar Crawl After William Pope.L*****, Photo: Kyle Turner. Didier Morelli, 2011.**

Toronto's sidewalk into another space. Making the *form* of College Street's sidewalk *follow* my crawling action and not its intended *function* (sidewalk—i.e. on the side, *away*; for walking, moving *regularly*), I flew both under the radar—below regular eyesight—and above it—unusually visible. Returning to the importance of Pope.L's crawl in my action, I ate his image mid-performance as a means to evoke his presence and acknowledge my ghosting or following of his gesture, my carrying the archive with, on, and in me: "Morelli was (re)visioning his own body through the specter he enacted of William Pope.L's as he carried Pope.L with him, we too (re)visioned ourselves, our role in this (re)performance, through our mutual concern for and care of Morelli." (Cesare Schotzko 2015: 196) In (re)creating this movement-based-experience, the crawl, as an act of locomotion, performed a slowing down or distorting of movement, time, and architectural space—a "corporeally based interruption of modes of imposing flow." (Lepecki 2006, 15)

CHAPTER 2

Acts of Interruption:
Falling after Trisha Brown and Bas Jan Ader

> "The relation between action and space is hence crucial. It is not simply that we act in space; spatial relations between subjects and others are produced through actions, which make some things available to be reached […] The question of action is a question then of how we inhabit space."
>
> —Sarah Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (2006)

It is a late 2013 summer night in the small northern fishing village of Skagaströnd, Iceland where I am living for two months at the *NES Artist Residency*. Following dinner at a nearby home where other members of the residency are housed, I walk across town throwing a fist-sized stone into the air and catching it as it falls back to me. With the midnight sun season passed, I can still make out a distant glow of daylight on the horizon. The street lights flicker, adding to the already surreal and magical qualities of an Icelandic evening. Up until this point in my residency, the overall creative project for my stay remains unclear. Throwing the stone up into the air for the –*nth* time, I am surprised as it comes back to me more rapidly than anticipated and collides with my face. Stunned, and now carrying a small wound at the point of impact, I make the rest of my way back home, no longer engaged in the activity. Instead I puzzle over the incident, wondering what might have caused for such a lapse in judgment on my part.

Throughout my residency I documented a series of short unrehearsed and impromptu public actions on video in which I attempted to unscientifically explore the impacts of the Iceland plume on my body. *Gravitational Pull of My Head* used my own midair and momentarily suspended bodily mass as means of perceiving and embodying the act of falling. In doing so, I looked to determine whether anomalies of the gravity field and geoid shape of the

earth could be felt kinesthetically.[53] By jumping, falling, and rolling off of various man-built structures, I evoked the works of previous performing artists—Bas Jan Ader, Trisha Brown, Tehching Hsieh, Yves Klein—who tested the limits of their corporeality and the surrounding environment by launching themselves into the invisible forces of gravity. In all of these previous performative falls, the kinesthetic presence of a temporarily floating body against the backdrop of a building evoked the potential of the human form to distort the regularity of everyday spatial life. Falling acted as its own aesthetic, but it also worked to physically and conceptually disrupt modes of predictable motion, halt economic, socio-political, and urban models of progression, and challenge expected norms of productivity. *Gravitational Pull of My Head* bridged my own dropping, headlong form with historical ones, delving deeper into the dynamics caused by plummeting to the ground. Intrigued by what free, controlled, and fabricated falls could teach me as an analytical and experiential framework about my own body and the built environment it inhabits daily, I fell repeatedly to understand the deliberate movement-based-performance as a kinesthetic tactic capable of interrupting a city's (or fishing village's) urban composition.

Figure 33. *Gravitational Pull of My Head*. Didier Morelli, 2013.

[53] A 2013 article in *Space Daily*, a popular science website, bearing the headline "New map reveals Earth's gravity not the same around the globe," exposed this notion. It related visual satellite topographic data from an Australian research team that provided an accurate map of the variations in the earth's gravity at different locations around the globe (*Space Daily* 2013).

Invisible forces of gravity naturally and continuously attract our bodies towards the center of the earth, thus giving shape to our spatial lives. While we often forget it, becoming accustomed to its push and pull, we are rapidly reminded of gravity when our bodies are unsettled and fall. The moment I began to experiment with falling, the surrounding world became unmoored, shifting both spatially and temporally as my routinely upright perspective and stability changed. Assuming the uncomfortable position of freefall in Iceland, wearing no padding but my everyday outdoor clothing, I was repeatedly placed in physical and psychological discomfort as my body awkwardly floundered through the sky. Avoiding landing on my head, my body tensed as it looked to orient itself midway between stable footings. Used to negotiating the intricacies of space through various maneuvers learned since infancy, my physical mass felt unmanageable and clumsy. As dance scholar Ann Cooper Albright describes it in *Engaging Bodies: The Politics and Poetics of Corporeality* (2013), the corporeal experience of falling is predicated on a certain form of disorientation, "To be disoriented is to be undone; thrown off-balance. But it also hints at a deeper knowledge. We rarely think about where we are until we have been lost." (Albright 2013, 372) In her analysis, Albright points to the intrinsic correlation between the kinesthetic act of falling and the resulting spatial, socio-political, and cultural interruption it produces. Falling quite literally interrupts regular motion, it physically propels us into other ways of experiencing and being in spaces. It throws off balance, the body "skews our sense of direction in ways that may reframe our politics of location or the cultural organization of space. Falling offers a new slant, so to speak, on the binary of up and down." (Albright 2013, 372) Albright suggests a path to acquired knowledge as a result of the fall, a new set of senses that arises from the distinct physical experience of disorientation. By interrupting the flow of everyday spatial life, shifting simple points of reference like a proper "up and down,"

falling opens up unexplored perspectives. It is in this change in kinesthetic perception, in the movement of falling between rooftops and the ground in Iceland, that the act of falling as an interruptive force capable of temporarily subverting the built environment and political economies of movement became apparent.

In Skagaströnd, I physically learned the corporeal intricacies of falling off of the buildings of a small fishing village in Iceland. Initially rigidly falling with hesitation and doubt from various heights, the impact with the ground quickly caused my body to ache afterwards and my head to buzz. Feeling increasingly exhausted and physically bruised, I adapted to the act of falling by loosening my body and better anticipating my landing. No longer resisting the complete relinquishment felt in freefall, unable to go back on my decision to launch or drop myself into thin air, I let my body take on the shape(s) it wished, embracing the ground as it came to me with new dexterity and flexibility. Orienting myself midway between roof and pavement, I learned how to move, see, and think differently about my body in relationship to its built environment, the interruption between the two stable points of my fall becoming an opportunity to sense, know, and reflect on my newfound horizontal orientation. Falling repeatedly off of abandoned man-made structures in a fishing village where the disappearance of herring in the late 1940s caused the population to unexpectedly shrink, my suspended body evoked the interrupted growth and economic productivity of Skagaströnd. My kinesthetic presence, an artist in residency in an abandoned fish factory routinely falling off of roofs, walls, benches, and boats, contrasted with the movement economy of local seasonal fisherman waiting on the next opportunity to earn a living at sea. I began to know in my "bones that every movement is, in fact, a dance with gravity." (Albright 2013, 371) The slowness of the fall, the kinesthetic interruption it provided, forced me to pay particular attention to the detail of each

gesture, thought, event, and location. Falling became an intentional practice (Albright 2013, 270), Skagaströnd no longer measured by my still or walking body but by my midair presence.

In Freefall:
Tactics of Urban Subversion

> Treated heterotopically, postmodern dance, hip hop, and boarding culture point toward a trivium of abandoned space turned to ground for distributed sovereignty.
> —Randy Martin, *A Precarious Dance, a Derivative Sociality* (2012)

This chapter considers the work of the New York-based dancer choreographer Trisha Brown (1936–2017) and the Dutch born, Los Angeles-based artist Bas Jan Ader (1942-1975). It argues that these two artists and their performative works not only shed light on the emergence of falling as a kinesthetic tactic of protest capable of interrupting movement economies in Los Angeles and New York City during the 1970s, but that their actions resulted from, responded to, and outlined critical urban, economic, and aesthetic developments as well as the broader political realities of each particular city. Distinct yet intimately linked, Ader and Brown's falls offer new analytical and perspectival entry points into the given environments and structures they inhabited. Embracing the vertical planes of the suburb and city and generating unusual movement-based-performances that seemed to defy and embrace gravity simultaneously, both artists intervened in their respective urban contexts by drawing attention to the flow of everyday industrial activities and household rituals, the aesthetics of previously dominant art movements, and indexing processes of urban renewal at the hands of the cultural class and the mostly white suburbanization of American cities underway in the early 1970s.

Trisha Brown is of primary interest because of her "equipment pieces" which looked to defy gravity using ropes and harnesses to allow dancers to walk on or down walls while experimenting with the weight of their body and the dynamics of everyday spaces. First

developed and conducted in New York City's SoHo neighborhood, these works highlighted the area's cast iron facades, cobblestone streets, intimate backyards, rooftop water towers, and the city's overall organizing grid. Brown's early performances, with dancers being lowered off of buildings and exchanging movement sequences across roofs, marked SoHo's shifting political economy of industrially driven constructions shifting into loft culture. As a precursor to postmodern dance, Brown's choreographic and aesthetic gestures were significant as New York City and SoHo became the epicenter of urban renewal through cultural mechanisms. In Los Angeles, Bas Jan Ader's video performances as alumni of the Claremont Graduate School are of particular importance. Ader's 1970s explorations of outdoor environments, more specifically the rooftop of his Claremont bungalow, are part of a critical moment in California as it became an epicenter of performance art. Adopting the space of his roof as a site for action, Ader explored the metaphysical and corporeal will of gravity on his body in a period of urban growth in a small city on the eastern edge of Los Angeles County. Shown falling repeatedly in a short video entitled *Fall 1, Los Angeles* (1970), Ader interrupted the bucolic and innocuous image of the quintessential American bungalow by transforming it into a site for movement-based-performance. Ader and Brown's distinct falling practices reveal how structurally different Los Angeles and New York City were in the 1970s. Considering both artists allows us to juxtapose the architectural features of the South-Western bungalow and the North-Eastern cast iron façade, the Buster Keaton stuntman like fall and the vertiginous slow drop from incredible heights as well as the isolation and alienation of the California suburb and the tightly knit community of the SoHo arts scene. Their kinesthetic interruptions also intersect as they express similar concerns for the physical and conceptual disruption of predictable modes of motion, economic and urban models of progression, and expected norms of productivity. Both artists fall in order to shift

domestic structures and boundaries between private and public spaces, question preconceived dance and art historical canons and movement-based-performance traditions, and adopt the freefall as a conceptual and kinesthetic opportunity to disorient their audiences vis-à-vis the normative functioning of built environments.

Interruption in the city—the act of falling from one built surface to another and/or the ground—is in itself an outstanding and spectacular act. In Michel de Certeau's "Walking in the City," which largely considers acts of locomotion, the French philosopher opens the chapter with an allusion to the verticality of New York City:

> Seeing Manhattan from the 110th floor of the World Trade Center. Beneath the haze stirred up by the winds, the urban island, a sea in the middle of the sea, lifts up the skyscrapers over Wall Street, sinks down at Greenwich, then rises again to the crests of Midtown quietly passes over Central Park and finally undulates off into the distance beyond Harlem. A wave of verticals. (de Certeau 1984, 91)

While de Certeau goes on to discuss walking through the city as tactic, it is overlooked that the preeminence of New York City as a "city composed of paroxysmal places in monumental reliefs" is granted to its skyscrapers, this "stage of concrete, steel and glass" (de Certeau 1984, 91). In fact, de Certeau's visions of a "planned and readable city" (de Certeau 1984, 93) is dependent on the vertiginous height he reaches atop the World Trade Center, on the tension between viewing from the 110th floor and the act of "finally [falling] back into the dark space where crowds move back and forth […]." (de Certeau 1984, 92) Describing the perceptive motion between the very top of New York City and its street level as an *Icarian fall*, de Certeau offers a way to envision the act of falling as interruption, an arresting tactic in itself that moves the body of the performer precipitously between perspectives. By applying the notion of spatial interruption as tactic to the performing arts, this chapter outlines how artists' use of falling in

particular urban contexts emerged as a deliberate means to subvert architectural and urban functionalism with their moving bodies.

In *Engaging Bodies,* Albright looks to classical and contemporary phenomenology in order to articulate how the corporeal is a key element in the constitution of subjectivity—arguing "that how we move in the world can make a difference." (Albright 2013, 5) In line with de Certeau's granting agency to the moving body in the city as a vector for tangible tactical intervention, Albright writes more specifically about falling. She offers a compelling way to envision how the fall functions as a kinesthetic act capable of shifting spatial and temporal realities: "Falling is predicated on a slippage through time and space. Marked by the trajectory between up and down as well as before and after, falling refers to what was while moving toward what will be. […] Crossing over literal and metaphoric states of being in the world, falling opens a threshold between the past and the future." (Albright 2013, 370) This is a crucial analytical framework for understanding interruption as a mode of spatial dissent, be it social, political, and/or aesthetic. It permits us to think of both Ader and Brown's simultaneous use of falling in the early 1970s as effectively related site-specific explorations of outdoor environments and non-traditional movement vocabularies towards aesthetic ends as well as direct responses (knowingly or unknowingly) to the urban economies of both New York City and Los Angeles. In their interruptions, both artists 'open a threshold between the past and the future' by participating in and shaping pivotal shifts within their own disciplines and simultaneously announcing performance's emerging relationship to challenging everyday outdoor architectural sites.

While both artists discussed in this chapter were not explicitly political in their creative approach, their use of interruption as a kinesthetic tactic of urban intervention carried with it its own spatial politics. It also paralleled a series of social, political, and cultural events in which the

kinesthetic experience of a *falling body* was central. Their choice of action echoed images of collapsing bodies in political protests during the 1960s and 1970s. These include but are not limited to the Birmingham Campaign in the Spring of 1963, and the Kent State massacre on May 4, 1970. In the 1980s, the performative gesture of falling bodies would be employed deliberately as a tactic of political protest by ACT UP activists in the form of "die-ins," and the "tree sitting" activities of the Earth First! movement. Falling was also reiterated in the demolition of the Pruitt-Igoe housing complex in Saint Louis, Missouri in 1972, which architecture theorist Charles Jencks declared as the moment of modern architecture's death (Jencks 1977, 9). The literal *fall* of Pruitt-Igoe captured on video signaled the end of the era of American post-war utopian optimism for the urban poor as well as the demise of a spatial philosophy that rested on promoting better living conditions via design. Pruitt-Igoe's spectacular demolition marked the start of a new precarious postmodern reality. In arguing for the prevalence of movement-based-performances that employ falling as a form of interruption in the 1970s, these events add context and credence to Ader and Brown's simultaneous play with gravitational forces, the verticality of the built environment, and the horizontality of a falling body.

Figure 34. *Pruitt-Igoe Housing Complex*. Implosion, March 16, 1972.

This idea that interruption in urban spaces during the 1970s provided a spatial and temporal break that looked both backwards at the past and forwards to the future is central to this chapter. In "A Precarious Dance, a Derivative Sociality," (2012) Randy Martin reads postmodern movement practices in the 1970s that proposed a "social kinesthetic" that broke from the past with "a shift from the vertical to the horizontal, a promissory decolonization of the body that

suddenly brings to notice troves movement riches that were once consigned to the periphery." (Martin 2012, 70) Martin signals how the postmodern dance, of Trisha Brown for example, enables us to grasp political potentialities that inhere in the social logic of practices that share kinesthetic attributes and principles of mobilization (Martin 2012, 71). The urban space of New York City in the 1970s is for Martin a primary example of performers (dancers, hip hop artists, and skateboarders) placing their bodies in situations of "generative risk" through "horizontal propulsion" (Martin 2012, 74) across vertical surfaces—securing spaces of their own while adapting "derivative forms of pedestrian movement" to lay claim to the city. In Martin's words, we find the tools to think of movement-based-performances of interruption by Trisha Brown and Bas Jan Ader in New York City and Los Angeles as intentional and socially grounded disorienting gestures in relationship to their urban spaces. These kinesthetic falling actions responded to and subverted otherwise uncharted architectural and infrastructural planes and surfaces.

Trisha Brown:
Down Walls and Across Rooftops

> Soon accustomed to the perilousness and the paraphernalia, the viewer comes to focus on the walking itself, altered radically by the new relationship to gravity. [Trisha] Brown continues this radical interrogation of physicality and location a year later by advertising and holding a rummage sale over which a net suspends and supports dancers.
>
> —Susan Leigh Foster, *Walking and Other Choreographic Tactics: Danced Inventions of Theatricality and Performativity*.

Starting in the late 1960s, the dancer choreographer Trisha Brown began a series of movement-based-performances that explored the potential of interior and exterior architectural structures—walls, ceilings, roofs, streets, and ladders—to be used as sites for performance. Residing in New York City's SoHo neighborhood, amongst a colony of artists who contributed to the

transformation of the industrial area in the 1960s, Brown experimented with the outdoor surfaces of buildings in newfound and unprecedented ways. In some of her most iconic pieces, dancers moved fluidly across and down walls; relayed movement sequences between rooftops; or walked in pairs supporting each other along the streets to the everyday sounds of the city. These performances, which showed "a simple concern with tracing a straight line by unusual methods," (Macaulay 2011) played on the regularity of pedestrian movements placed under close scrutiny and physical pressure through their uncanny relationship to the rules of gravity as well as everyday spaces. Often moving slowly and with clear intention, dressed in ordinary clothing, Brown's performers made their ways up, down, and across SoHo's iconic post-Civil War cast iron architecture (Sutton 1977). In doing so, they announced a transition in American dance's formal, aesthetic, and spatial concerns as well as a definitive shift in the political economy of the neighborhood they took shape in. The spectacle of a dancer casually walking down the backside of 80 Wooster Street, an "unnatural movement" in an otherwise ordinary context (Brown 1978, 82), highlighted the public arrival of artists in SoHo and the significance of the urban change engendered by loft and studio culture. Throughout a roughly nine-year-period, between 1968 and 1977, Brown actively repurposed SoHo's architecture and infrastructure directly. Generating dances that subverted the logic of urban space with common plays on gravity as guiding mechanisms, the choreographer employed various acts of falling as kinesthetic tactics of interruption to experiment with the relationship of the performing body to architectural space. This section will argue that these performative falls, in their aesthetic and physical execution, disrupted economic flows by intervening in a neighborhood defined by the regularity of the work week; challenged the norms of motion set by upright pedestrian bodies; as well as gestured to the

past while moving forward as shifting identities of loft culture and public art events drove post-industrial New York City.

In order to fully comprehend Trisha Brown's arrival at staging kinesthetic acts of interruption in and against SoHo's architectural fabric, it is important to consider her arrival at performance in the 1970s. Born in Aberdeen, Washington in 1936, Brown received an undergraduate degree in dance from Mills College in 1958. From an early age, she experimented with different modes of bodily flight through sports. Her brother, an athlete in his own right, trained his younger sister to be an Olympian when she was ten. He coached Brown, who already played basketball, football, practiced tackling drills as well as pole vaulting and running (Sommer 1972, 135). This early athletic experience offers a way to think of her later choreographic work with gravity through the lens of the pole vault, a discipline in which the flight, hovering, and fall of a horizontally moving body are central. The kinesthetic interruption of the pole vault—of a body seemingly gliding above a bar meters off the ground—is one she would revisit in the summer of 1960 at Anna Halprin's home just north of San Francisco, California. Here, oral records verify Brown's "levitation on Halprin's deck" (Rosenberg 2017, 23) during her first summer workshop with the preeminent dancer. While a *controlled* "interest in dropped weight and falls was significant in the early modern dance techniques of Isadora Duncan, José Limón, and even Martha Graham," (Goldman 2004, 47) Brown and her contemporaries, dancer Steve Paxton included, innovated by eliminating recovery time and challenging verticality with their horizontal motion. As dance scholar Danielle Goldman argues,[54] Paxton and Brown "inverted modernism's dancing body and began to challenge the

[54] In her article Goldman compares both Paxton and Brown's unprecedented experimentation with weight, improvisation, and falling with Jackson Pollock's drip paintings: "exploring what it meant to be matter falling

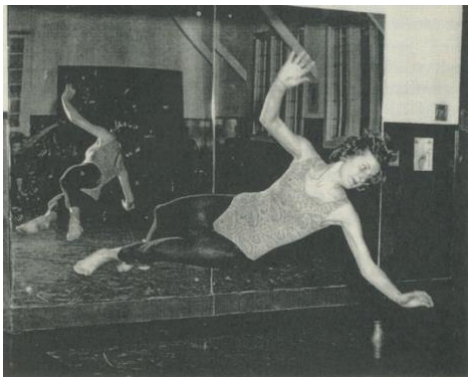
supremacy of vision," (Goldman 2004, 55) developing an entirely new relationship to gravity based on their horizontal kinesthetic interruption of space.

Early signs of these experimental dance movements appear in Trisha Brown's choreographic debut, *Trillium* (1962), which she premiered in an interdisciplinary Poet's Festival at New York's Maidman Playhouse on Forty-Second Street and repeated again four months later at the American Dance Festival (ADF) at Connecticut College in New London (Rosenberg 2017, 12). Executed according to three simple instructions "stand, sit and lie down," the piece repeatedly placed Brown up in the air, above the ground in a horizontal position, echoing her earlier bodily and spatial experimentation on Halprin's deck. Duration was particularly critical in *Trillium* as the brevity of falling was intentionally slowed to reveal the series of movements required to complete the kinesthetic action. In a subsequent three-part solo, *A string: Homemade, Motor, Outside* (1964), Brown extended beyond *Trillium*'s "elusive, metaphorical contrast of improvisation's time-bound evanescence to choreography's fixed, durable structure and context-based meanings." (Rosenberg 2017, 36) Juxtaposing projected film with live performance in *Homemade,* combining movement sequences with technology in *Motor,* and focusing in on the architecture of a building in *Outside*, Brown developed new models for creating choreography.

Figure 35. *Trillium*. Photo: Al Giese. Trisha Brown, 1962.

through space." (Goldman 2004, 45) The connection to Pollock confirms a challenge across disciplines in the arts to traditional modes of verticality.

Beyond expanding her movement vocabulary, Anna Halprin's deck in the early 1960s served other functions for Brown.[55] It also shaped her relationship to the immediate space of performance. For Halprin, drawing upon one's environment in the development of a dance practice was paramount. In her workshops, she shared improvisational exercises in which the resistance of surrounding materials determined the activity that participants devised (McDonagh 1972, 50). Unique in its time, the contextually driven energy of Halprin's improvisations became a pivotal part of Brown's work. While the influences of the visual arts are visible in Brown's use of found outdoor spaces for performance,[56] it is in the "plane of Halprin's dance deck" that makes the surface of an architectural space its choreographic frame that we find Brown's more direct inspirations (Rosenberg 2012, 30). As art historian Susan Rosenberg argues in *Trisha Brown: Choreography as Visual Art* (2017), Halprin's technique allowed Brown to take "inspiration from incidental aspects on a wall surface" in a way that underscored the "wall's importance as an external impersonal touchstone" that directly influenced and determined the works trajectory (Rosenberg 2017, 60). By "applying a method for improvising outdoors and in nature (California) to New York," (Rosenberg 2017, 60) Brown not only transposed



[55] Anna's husband, Lawrence Halprin, conceived the outdoor dance deck on which she and her students workshopped. A former student of Bauhaus founder Walter Gropius at Harvard University's School of Design in the 1950s, Halprin's design of the outdoor open dance deck echoes the Bauhaus frequent use of the rooftop as a space of activity. Images of the Bauhaus Dessau rooftop show Oskar Schlemmer's mechanical cabaret stage class posing in full costume as well as women exercising. The use of a studio/living space roof as site for performance is reiterated in Trisha Brown's *Roof Piece* (1971).

[56] Allan Kaprow's *Yard* (1961) at the Sculpture Garden at Martha Jackson in New York City comes to mind here. A 1973 performance of *Roof Piece* was described as "a mysteriously beautiful happening" by critic Don McDonagh, reinforcing the idea of Brown's proximity to the visual arts and the Fluxus art movement (McDonagh 1973).

Halprin's improvisational model to New York City, but she also developed a choreographic style that collaborated with the architectural specificity of each site she chose. She highlights this when describing how concretely each environment's architectural parts determined movement sequences: "I remember being surprised when my right foot would be activated by a valve sticking out of the wall. I would not have selected the distribution of movement across my body on my own." (Rosenberg 2017, 60) These words confirm the interdependence between her work and the spaces of New York City in the early 1970s, including the importance of reading each piece through the lens of architectural space and urban development as well as performance and art history.

Like many of the performing artists discussed in this dissertation, Brown's approach to performing in the outdoors was in part driven by necessity. In a 1974 interview with Effie Stephano, Brown discusses how her move towards untraditional dance sites had more to do with a lack of access than disinterest (Stephano 1974, 19). Speaking specifically about her use of the Judson Church, Brown articulates how its availability made it attractive while the theatre avoided any association with her. Turned down by auditions at the 92nd Street Y (the Young Men and Women's Hebrew Association), which would have given her space to rehearse, she "eventually learned to make use of less normatively legitimate performance spaces." (Graham 2013, 64)

Figure 36. Mills College Dance Studio. Trisha Brown, 1964.

Identifying with unexplored architectural movement planes since they too were overlooked because of their everydayness (Graham 2013, 64), Brown felt sorry for ceilings and walls since they were perfectly good planes to be used in performance (Stephano 1974, 19). In these explorations, Brown demonstrates how her love of "dancing that leaves the ground" (Perron 2002, 53) was tied to the surfaces she moved on in New York City, to a desire to challenge

"preconceptions about the nature of dance" (Burt 2005, 12) through the use of pedestrian movement vocabularies and unusual spaces. As dance historian Ramsay Burt notes, "the New York dance world of the early 1970s—or at least those involved in programming theaters in New York and those writing about dance for dance magazines and for academic publications—were largely unable to appreciate the significance of Brown's work at that time." (Burt 2005, 23) Without access to dance's traditional spaces—rehearsal, presentation, and/or critical—Brown found herself entirely enmeshed in the industrial landscape and burgeoning interdisciplinary cultural environment of her SoHo neighborhood.

Following *Trillium* and *A string: Homemade, Motor, Outside*, Brown's interest in New York City's outdoor landscape manifested itself in *Planes* (1968). The first of her "equipment dances," Brown shifted the audience's perspective to the studio wall where three performers used foot and hand holds, like rock climbers, to scale the vertical surface. On the wall, Brown cast a film projection of aerial footage of New York City by Jud Yalkut. Mixing found and original video, Yalkut created "views overhead and below, mico- and macroscopic images, giving the illusion that the performers are free-falling and changing scale." (Yee 2011, 20) Unlike the works considered earlier in this dissertation, who prioritized the "real," concrete spaces of the city for their kinesthetic interventions, Brown *Planes* used a multimedia installation to generate the city as a moving architectural backdrop to juxtapose with performing bodies. This projection speaks to the choreographer's broader

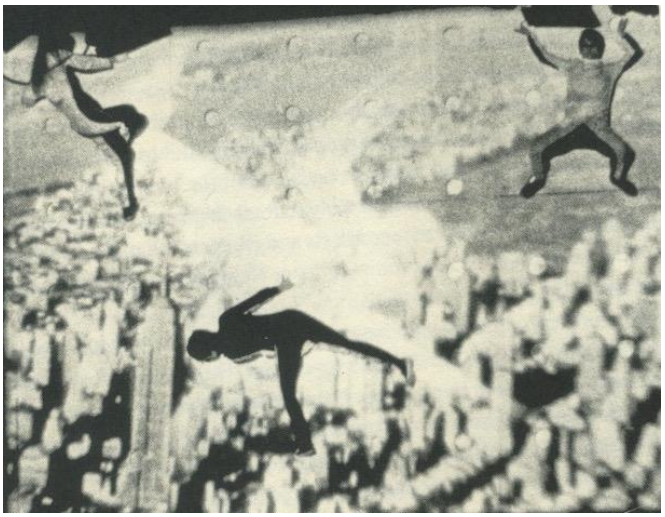


Figure 37. *Planes*. Trisha Brown, 1968.

interdisciplinary ambitions, but it also rejoins some of the score-based collage, Fluxus, and conceptual aesthetics identified in the book by Dick Higgins and Wolf Vostell, *Fantastic Architecture* (1969). Unlike Vostell or Buckminster Fuller, whose proposals for new urban configurations juxtaposed preexisting landscapes with Gothic churches, ancient Egyptian pyramids or enlarged kitchen appliances, Brown inserted live, moving, kinesthetically activated bodies in her performative collage of New York City's skyline from the same time period. Still working indoors, but now beginning to articulate the visual, kinesthetic, and spatial vocabulary found in a group of choreographies including *Man Walking Down the Side of a Building* (1970), *Walking on the Wall* (1971), *Rummage Sale and Floor of the Forest* (1970), and *Leaning Duets* (1970), Brown further expanded her interest of architectural structures and gravity's pull.

The departure from traditional dance vocabulary and the appropriation of the city as a stage for performance in Brown's work must also be understood within the broader context of the SoHo arts scene in the 1970s. New York City's streets were already beginning to experience the rituals of outdoor performance in various forms.[57] The Performance Group, an experimental theatre collective situated on lower Wooster Street, typically concluded their production of *Dionysus in 69'* (1968) with actors leading the audience out of the front garage doors into the neighborhood, concluding at a bar on the southeast corner of Broome Street and West Broadway (Kostelanetz 2003, 20). More specific to experimental dance,[58] at the 1972 SoHo Arts Festival

[57] Visual artists also took part in appropriating outdoor spaces for performances in Manhattan. The American artist Gordon Matta-Clark followed Brown's gravity defying exploits and use of the city in his solo performance *Clockshower* (1973).

[58] Dancers like Twyla Tharp, Elizabeth Keen, Rudy Perez, Meredith Monk, Lucinda Childs, and Marilyn Wood worked in outdoor spaces during this time period, performing in parks and parking lots as well as in the windows of skyscrapers (Siegel 1971; 2007, 115). Most notably, Yvonne Rainer performed a slow-stepping line of moving bodies in solidarity with the Kent State Massacre in SoHo during the first SoHo Artist Festival at 16 Greene Street in May 1970 (Glueck 1970; Stratton 1977, 35). The coalescence of these works alongside Brown's own are central in arguing that performers looked to subvert architectural and urban functionalism with their moving bodies in outdoor spaces during the 1970s.

Marilyn Wood used "fire escapes fronting the street for her "stage" in her *SoHo Fire Escape Dance*." (Kostelanetz 2003, 80) The concentration of these works in SoHo was in large part made possible by the Lithuanian-American artist and cofounder of the Fluxus art movement, George Maciunas.[59] Infamous for planting trees to cover his illegal tap into the Con Edison electricity lines buried under the ground at 80 Wooster Street (Kostelanetz 2003, 49), Maciunas embodied the "do it yourself" spirit of the SoHo arts movement starting in the 1960s. Owning multiple properties in the area and transforming them into loft spaces,[60] Maciunas drew artists to take part in the flourishing SoHo arts phenomenon. This community of interdisciplinary artists is one Brown would come to participate in and shape, with her use of 80 Wooster Street, extending a legacy of Fluxus "street events" presented in the mid-1960s (Rosenberg 2012, 32). The physical space of this community, the literal buildings they inhabited and performed on/in, would become central in the development of her practice. In a 2011 conversation she states this clearly: "I moved to 80 Wooster Street, and George Maciunas and Robert Watts were in my building and everyone went to the Cinematheque on the ground floor. The Fluxus artists would go up and down the elevator, showing me things they had in their little boxes, like crawdads and things like that." (Yee 2011, 71) This urban environment where artists renegotiated every day and artistic uses of space, coupled with her dance training and rejections from more traditional dance scenes, created the conditions for Brown to choreograph performances that kinesthetically

[59] Brown participated in events organized by Fluxus artists in New York City before her breakout solo pieces in the 1970s. She first performed in March 1961 in Robert Whitman's *Mouth* at the Reuben Gallery (Rosenberg 2017, 18). In the same year, she presented at the AG Gallery in an exhibition curated by George Maciunas and La Monte Young (Banes 1993, 60). In 1963, she was featured at the month-long Yam Festival, organized by Fluxus artists George Brecht and Robert Watts (Banes 1993, 59).

[60] Bought in 1967, 80 Wooster Street was one of Maciunas's first Fluxhouse Cooperatives (Gray 1992).

interrupted pre-established movement economies through various acts of falling in her SoHo backyard.[61]

It is in this backyard on a weekend in April of 1970 that Trisha Brown premiered four self-produced, site-specific works under the heading of "Dances in and Around 80 Wooster Street." These were *Man Walking Down the Side of a Building*, *Leaning Duets*, *Rummage Sale*, and *Floor of the Forest*. All of them engaged gravity differently, with the tension of the falling body interrupting the kinesthetic rituals and governing physical principles of the immediate presentation space in both interior and exterior contexts. The poster promoting the performance, produced from an image taken by Carol Goodden, showed Brown in striped t-shirt and patterned culottes executing a shoulder stand on a car roof. The image, a test still from a previously unrealized project titled *Autobiography* (1969), recalled her levitation on Halprin's deck while predicting the "astonishingly inverted everyday behavior seen in *Man Walking* and in other works' sitting in a relation to the totality of the environment surrounding Brown's residence." (Rosenberg 2017, 75) It also exposed the "intellectual rigor" of her movement compositions (Anderson 1978), as the

[61] In an interview with the artist Daryl Chin and photographer Larry Qualls, SoHo residents and neighbors of Trisha Brown in the 1970s, they articulated how important Fluxus artist Charlotte Moorman had been in forming outdoor performance festivals in New York City starting in 1963. (Interview: December 6, 2016).

symbolism of the vehicle in its relation to her body could not be overlooked. Extending her torso up and above the car with the use of her legs and arms in what appeared as a gravity defying gesture, Brown drew attention to the automobile's dependence on a predetermined, grid-like, horizontal path of motion. Borrowing from Randy Martin's notion of a social kinesthetic, "the orientation, sensibility, or predisposition that informs approaches to movement" (Martin 2012, 68), we can read Brown as mobilizing her body against the roof of the car in a gesture that kinesthetically interrupts the "historically specific microphysics that generates and governs motional force fields." (Martin 2012, 68) Her rising body interjects in the quintessential motional image of American industrial progress and supremacy, the automobile. As the French philosopher Jean Baudrillard would write in his travel record *America* (1988), "when your driver's licence goes, so does your identity." (Baudrillard 1988, 108) Irreverent of the grounded vehicle, performing atop modern America's spatially organizing system, Brown's body gestures towards the sky as if about to take off in flight.[62]

Figure 38. Poster for "Dances in and Around 80 Wooster Street." Photo: Carol Goodden. Trisha Brown, 1970.

[62] Brown unbinds herself from the vehicle with her motion in contrast to Chris Burden's *Trans-Fixed* (1974) in which the California performance artist was nailed through the palms of his hands to a Volkswagen Beetle.

In *Leaning Duets* Brown choreographed ten dancers walking along Wooster Street to hold pieces of rope in pairs in order to support each other while walking. Performing down the very center of the street, with the audience on the sidewalk looking on, performers negotiated the difficulties of the balancing act and the uneven cobblestone pathway. Dance critic Marcia Siegel

Figure 39. *Leaning Duets*. Photo: Barbara Moore. Trisha Brown, 1970.

describes video documentation of the performance as indicative of Brown's overall body of work for *Dances in and Around 80 Wooster Street*, a "disconcerting mixture of real and unreal, ordinary and extraordinary—and the amused, interested, or blasé reactions of New York pedestrians." (Siegel 2007, 114) Siegel's description of the performance draws out the tension created by the kinesthetic interruption, the presence of falling and walking bodies casually along the street acting as a "disconcerting" event that teeters on the "real" and "unreal." These are key terms when considering the overall analytical and aesthetic efficacy of Brown's acts of interruption, as they gesture towards her ability to distort social kinesthetic and spatial relationships in New York City's SoHo neighborhood by placing bodies in precarious, yet recognizable, everyday situations: "Their effect is to make us believe that we are watching people very much like ourselves, not machine-like performers, but enthusiasts doing their workmanlike best in the face of their very human limitations." (Harris 1979) Siegel's reading of the video documentation of *Leaning Duets* allows us to think of the representation of falling, an uncanny "state of being suspended between earth and air, the finite and infinite," as a "gap" that

can be theorized (Albright 2013, 360). The constant threat of falling, the conscious play with gravity, makes visible the relation between "action" and "space," specifically how "spatial relations between subjects and others are produced through actions, which make some things available to be reached." (Ahmed 2006, 52) By drawing on the phenomenology of Sarah Ahmed, *Falling Duets* can be read as bodies breaking with the physical repetitions that shapes quotidian space, becoming unstuck from certain alignments that effect performing everyday work like walking (Ahmed 2006, 57). In fact, the performance specifically *disorients* both performer and audience by gesturing towards the precarity of walking, thus allowing present bodies to acquire new shapes through the act of falling (Ahmed 2006, 62).

On Wooster Street, these new shapes and perspectives were significant since they coincided with the perpendicular positioning of delivery trucks on the street during the workweek by factory workers in order to restrict the flow of traffic—a choreography in its own right. On a weekend in April 1970, when trucks no longer blocked vehicles and/or bodies during the day, Brown renegotiated the space of the street as a site for her performance. The action marked the absence of more than 27,000 blue-collar workers employed in warehousing and wholesale businesses, apparel, textile, and electronic equipment (Burks "City Planning Board," 1971).[63] A 1971 article for The Sun by the art critic Barbara Gold echoed this shifting identity of the SoHo's streets: "By 6 P.M., however, the area was weirdly quiet. Most workers had gone home. Truck noises and general city clatter were muted." (Gold 1971) *Leaning Duets* challenged quotidian forms of productive and progressive urban motion like walking and driving while also

[63] In an interview with Yukie Ohta, founder of *The SoHo Memory Project* and the longtime SoHo resident, she articulated how weekends in SoHo in the 1970s were different because the "trucks that blocked traffic" during the week no longer populated the streets making it possible for those living in lofts to organize outdoor events and festivals. December 4, 2016.

indicating a gap in the industrial workweeks' economic productivity and social kinesthetic, a moment when artists could perform outdoors. The double identity of SoHo, as both site of manufacturing and aesthetic urban explorations by avant-garde artists is a critical juxtaposition when considering Brown's falls as kinesthetic interruptions.

Over the same weekend, on April 18, 1970, Trisha Brown premiered *Man Walking Down the Side of a Building* on the façade of the seven-story courtyard-facing wall, the backside of 80 Wooster Street. Choreographing the gradual lowering of her then partner Joseph Schlichter, Brown further engaged in opening up unexplored movement perspectives and generating interruptions of New York City's social kinesthetic. Her description of the performance encapsulates the simplicity and directness with which she envisioned the work:

> *Man Walking Down the Side of a Building* was exactly like the title – seven stories. A natural activity under the stress of an unnatural setting. Gravity reneged. Vast scale. Clear order. You start at the top, walk straight down, stop at the bottom. All those soupy questions that arise in the process of selecting abstract movement according to the modern dance tradition – what, when, where and how – are solved in collaboration between choreographer and place. (Brown 1978, 45)

Brown's careful consideration for the architectural space of the performance is of particular importance, i.e. the overall choreography determined by the seven-story cast-iron building façade at 80 Wooster Street. Intentionally outlining how she selects movement sequences in relationship to modern dance tradition, she emphasizes the collaborative nature of the work as both choreographer *and place* defined the piece's outcome. The "vast scale" of the "unnatural setting"

of the performance is equally considered along with Brown's conceptual intentions as choreographer. As dance scholar Melanie Kloetzel states, Brown moves "beyond the entrenched Cartesian frame and into a phenomenological one by focusing on the lived bodily experience of place." (Kloetzel 2010, 134) This early work adopted SoHo's architectural particularities consciously, and the aesthetic and kinesthetic act of falling as framing device further revealed the critical relationship between the choreographer and her deliberate performance context.[64] Brown "used the physical properties and details of a site to delineate the structure of her pieces," making sure in *Man Walking* that the "length of the piece would be determined purely by the height of the building and the length of time it took for [Joseph Schlichter], rigged in climbing gear, to walk from roof to ground." (Kloetzel 2010, 134) Showing against the exterior surface of the domestic space where for fifteen years she lived, rehearsed, taught, and now performed (Brown 2009), Brown expanded the space of the artist studio into the street.[65] This gesture interrupted the city's kinesthetic logic by subverting Manhattan's uniform grid, defined by a North-South / East-West axis, displacing the habitual act

Figure 40. *Man Walking Down the Side of a Building*. Trisha Brown, 1970.

[64] Working with a variety of rigged apparatuses made from mountain climbing equipment and the specificity of the built environment, Brown described her performances in the early 1970s as *dance machine*s which dealt with issues of gravity, space, and audience perspective (Sommer 1972, 136)

[65] In *Failing to Levitate in the Studio* (1966), the American conceptual artist Bruce Nauman explored the kinesthetic properties of gravity within the inner confines of his artist studio. In *Walking on the Wall* (1971), Brown similarly explored what it meant to perform a simple activity against the principles of gravity indoors (Brown 1976, 82). Like others in this dissertation, she moved beyond interior explorations of space and body by expanding into the urban environment.

of walking from the horizontal plane of the street onto the vertical surface of a seven-story building. Shifting the interior locale of the dance studio onto the exterior wall of her residence, Brown also transformed the productive and progressive flow of economic and social industrial life in SoHo, gesturing towards its post-industrial identity as a community of artists onlookers, and not the everyday workweek laborers, stood captivated by the spectacle of the event. Playing on the boundaries between art and real life, *Man Walking* literally suspended the walking body—an otherwise mundane and unexciting city action—in space, announcing a continuing change in SoHo's organizing system and spatial hierarchy.

It is crucial to recognize the performative experience of *Man Walking* as it related to SoHo specifically. Dance historian Sally Sommer highlights the audience's perspective of the piece in a 1972 article written for *Theatre Drama Review* (TDR):[66]

> The spectators were led through a fire tunnel into a back courtyard. They waited there until all the audience members had come into the yard. The piece began when a man, dressed in street clothes, was seen slowly falling, face forward, form the top of a seven story building. When he was perpendicular to the wall of the building, he began to slowly walk down to the courtyard. When he reached the ground, he was unhitched from his mountain climbing equipment. (Sommer 1972, 137)

By leading spectators through the fire tunnel at 80 Wooster Street into the back courtyard before the performance began, Brown already challenged the audience's spatial experience of viewing dance. As art historian Amanda Graham describes it, the "onlookers in their street clothes, and Schlichter in his, all look prepared for a neighborhood stroll," but the verticality of the action changed the ordinary scene of a man walking and people watching (Graham 2013, 62).[67] By

[66] Sommer's article miss-dates the event, stating it was first performed on April 18, 1969 when it in reality occurred on April 18, 1970.

[67] Graham further points to the importance of Peter Muller's film documentation which intentionally recorded the reactions of the audience to the piece, estimating that what was occurring in their experience was as important as Schlichter's walk. This corroborates the piece's impact on those who witnessed it, as their own kinesthetic relationship to the falling body was recorded within the framework of the overall performance.

interweaving both the social kinesthetic rituals and spatial codes of the dance recital hall with those of a SoHo courtyard, the performative act of falling "forecloses safe, known, predictable aesthetic experiences and pushes the spectator to find and appreciate new, previously unknown qualities" of both the gesture and the chosen site (Burt 2005, 11). Falling produced a change in perspective, allowing audience members to become aware of their own embodied relationship to gravity as well as becoming more intimate with the spatial qualities of 80 Wooster Street's backside. The presence of the winding fire escape, the large windows and their open and closed shutters, and the narrowness of the overall space all came into sharp focus. Their qualities as structures in and of a performance space acted similarly to the way art historian Michael Fried argued the "objectlike qualities of minimalist sculptures made the spectator aware of their embodied relations to the sculptural object." (Burt 2005, 15) Brown, who described herself as "a bricklayer with a sense of humor," (Anderson 1979) subverted architectural functionalism by transforming the space of the wall into a surface for walking and coincidently manipulating norms of human activity and motion. Interrupting the regular flow of 80 Wooster Street's architecture, occupied until 1967 by the Miller Paper Company (Gray 1992), the kinesthetic act of falling breached with the corporeal language of small manufacturing: sitting, assembling, packing, and shipping.

Figure 41. ***Man Walking Down the Side of a Building*****. Trisha Brown, 1970.**

Not so much a bricklayer as a brick-appropriator, Brown worked "*with the wall* but not by building one," (Graham 2013, 64) an important distinction considering how she found movements, including walking and falling, in everyday actions. By existing between found, appropriated, illegal, and unchartered and/or impossible spaces, *Man Walking* negotiated the critical urban realities of artists living in SoHo in the 1960s and 1970s. While the SoHo Artists coalition had been pressing for zoning changes since 1968 (Burks "City Planning Board," 1971), the City Planning Commission did not legally approve of the loft living conversions made in industrial cast-iron buildings until 1971. This did not stop rents from raising threefold their original prices in the late 1960s, making the area amongst the most sought after in New York City (Panagakos 1970). "Sadly dilapidated" (Glueck 1970) according to some but inarguably on the rise because of the increase in rents (Gourse 1970), SoHo's artist colony received public approval from Mayor John Lindsay[68] before zoning changes came into effect (Burks 1970). Brown's performative rise and fall, a precarious game of catch and release with gravity, parallels the ambiguity surrounding the presentations of public works of art by those living in SoHo in the early 1970s. Gradually falling off the side of the building, Schlichter is both there and not there, the apparent physical impossibility of the act directly competing with the visual spectacle of his descending body producing an interruption of the social kinesthetic. Placing her outdoor dance in a semi-protected enclave effectively shielded it from the eyes of city workers,[69] similar to the way Maciunas planted trees at the front of the building to cover the illegal Con Edison line

[68] Brown recalls how Mayor Lindsay had initially wanted to redevelop and raze SoHo to build the Lower Manhattan Expressway. Artists who she described as "quite visible and viable in those days" (Yee 2011, 70) halted the project. Visibility is relevant since artists were becoming a habitual presence in SoHo, interrupting industrial production and replacing it with their own cultural, economic, and social structures.

[69] Graham describes *Man Walking* as "more like a secret told in confidence than a performance," (Graham 2013, 63) highlighting its private nature. This secrecy should not take away its boldness and hypervisibility as both recollections of the live event and its documentation have become emblematic of artists colonizing SoHo in the 1960s and 1970s.

tapping. *Man Walking* physically recalls the electrical interruption of the city's power grid at 80 Wooster Street, paralleling the unusual presence of planted trees at the front of the building. No other functioning industrial building in SoHo had equivalent landscaping since trees would have blocked the flow of goods and delivery vehicles for which the area was conceived. The excess rope from which Schlichter was lowered, clearly visible from the front of his mountain climbing harness (Yee 2011, 20), ran along the backside of the building much like the electrical cords ran along the front of it. With the presence of two belayers situated atop the roof of the building, and the equipment purchased at Tent and Trailer's on Chamber Street, (Rosenberg 2012, 21) the performance followed along in the repurposing, rejigging, and reworking ethos of loft living. Adapting the equipment and techniques of rock climbing in a choreography staged on an everyday surface (Kisselgoff 1971), Schlichter embodied the role of an explorer in an unchartered territory. The three-minute performance, which occurred less than one year after Neil Armstrong's historic televised walk across the moon on July 11, 1969, resonated with a popular "interest in the imaginary of anti-gravity situations revealing the human body's experience of its weight, spatial coordinates, and physical capabilities as contingent, as *un*-natural." (Rosenberg 2012, 30) Intervening in SoHo's outdoor architecture, *Man Walking* interrupted the historically specific social kinesthetic of the neighborhood as the falling body of the dancer laid claim and ownership to the industrial space. Literally suspended above the neighborhood streets, the space of the "everyday," Schlichter's gradually descending, gravity-defying figure announced the impeding public spectacle of loft-living conversions and real estate speculation.

Brown's outdoor feats of kinesthetic interruption, spectacular and novel as they were, need to be placed in relation to low-wage laborers who lost their employment as a result of New

York City's changing political economy and the arrival of artists in SoHo in the 1960s and 1970s. With post-industrial economic forces already forcing factory spaces out of Manhattan to the outer boroughs and neighboring cities, small-scale manufacturers who did not own their buildings in SoHo felt the pressure of rising rents forcing them to let go their "unskilled workers" as spaces grew scarce (Panagakos 1970). While it may have at one time been called "Hell's Hundred Acres" because of the frequency of fires in the area's sweatshop-like factories (Muschamp 1998), the "invasion of SoHo, the grubby artists' neighborhood downtown" by uptown gallery owners and socialites, marked an irreversible shift in New York City's urban fabric (Glueck 1971). In this period, SoHo had no "garbage pick up, no stores to speak of, and no schools," but artists moved in droves and they turned the "spacious, often handsome old buildings into lofts and galleries." ("New York City," Boston Globe 1970) Pre-zoning change cultural events[70]—like the first Artist Festival organized by the SoHo Artist Association and sponsored by the city's Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Administration in 1970 ("Planners Approve," New York Times 1970)—solidified artists visibility in the area beyond the initiatives lead in the mid-1960s to cancel plans to bulldoze the neighborhood to build a highway ("The Manhattan Roots," Washington Post 1983). Bringing overt public attention to their plight by actively seeking to shape urban policy and carve out living spaces for themselves in SoHo, artists participated in transforming the architectural topography to fit their needs, wants, and values. In doing so, they were also at odds with other long-time residents of Lower Manhattan who saw particular urban development projects as beneficiary. In 1972, elderly residents of adjacent neighborhoods; largely Italian, local churches, and New York University supported the

[70] Official changes in zoning laws only came about in 1971 (New York Times "City Drafts Plan," 1971), an entire year after Brown premiered her performances.

construction of an $11-million 21-story public sports center (Siegel 1972). Artists argued against it, stating that the proposed building would create an eyesore, spoiling "the character of the neighborhood" and draw up real-estate speculators and heavy traffic to the area (Asbury 1972). These tensions demonstrate how artists like Trisha Brown acted as urban buffers in SoHo, interrupting previous movement economies with their physical labor of loft conversion and aesthetic appreciation of the cast-iron district and subsequently accelerating investments by professionals and then entrepreneurs who would ultimately displace most of them by the 1980s (Bengis 1978). Emblematic of this historic period, *Man Walking* parallels the physical interruption of industrial labor approximately 600 artists living illegally in SoHo created with their daily activities (Burks "Estimate Board Votes," 1971). Schlichter's fall indexed both the neighborhood's architectural history and manufacturing roots while announcing its loft-living, high-rent commercial and tourism future.

Two months after "Dances in and Around 80 Wooster Street," renowned architecture critic Ada Louise Huxtable outlined SoHo's impeding real estate crisis in the New York Times:

> There is only one thing wrong. The lofts are in demand and the prices are rising. The area is beginning to be chic. […] At present, there is an edgy equilibrium, with the city not breathing too hard, in order to keep the status quo. The artists desperately need the space if New York is not to lose them. The small industries desperately need the space if New York is not to lose them. And as values rise, the area is starting to look very good to the speculators. Here we go again. (Huxtable 1970)

Huxtable's prescient statement references *rising* economic forces as well as the edgy *equilibrium* of real estate, presenting a kinesthetic language of interruption familiar in Brown's performances.[71] The aesthetic and physical motifs of repeatedly rising and falling bodies

[71] Urban sociologist Sharon Zukin referred to this concern in a 1977 article for the New York Times where she warned that the "legalization of loft living in certain areas of the city will create a monopoly on "legal lofts" that will enable owners of these buildings to charge unrestrictedly high rents." (Zukin 1977) Zukin highlighted that in all modern cities the "most profitable use of space tends to drive out alternative uses," and that the irony is that the

precariously taunting gravity's invisible forces in *Man Walking Down*, *Leaning Duets*, and *Floor of the Forest* aligned with the economic precarity of SoHo's increasing real estate value pitted against its limited spatial resources. Brown's dancers quite literally embodied the flux and wane of real estate speculation, the tug of war between past, present, and future building owners. Huxtable also acknowledges the areas aesthetic appeal as it "contains one of the few concentrated, homogeneous groups of a particularly important and handsome development of proto-modern building – the cast-iron-fronted commercial construction of the 19th century that is recognized as singularly significant, stylistics and structural contribution of urban America and the industrial age." (Huxtable 1970) Describing the buildings as "a giant step towards skyscraper construction" and a "Renaissance palace," Huxtable encapsulates the architectural essence of the neighborhood. Inside these buildings, artists developed and embodied a particular visual and conceptual aesthetic by employing the huge freight elevators, large windows, and immense open spaces to live, rehearse, and build in ("Loft Living," New York Times 1972). On the streets, they also found industrial materials for sculptures, paintings, and performances: scrap paper, cardboard, metal, glass, and wood (Franks 1975). This overlap between exterior and interior spaces is considerable as artists transformed loft spaces with materials taken from the street. In *Man Walking* "Schlichter traversed the urban exterior of [his and Brown's] domestic interior" (Graham 2013, 63) effectively blurring the lines between the outdoors of the city and the indoors of their loft. In this choreography, Brown distorted the "barriers between art and life" (Burt 2005, 32) by not only presenting an artwork in an everyday context but by also performing within a domestic space. The "play between architectural frame and suspended volume" (Rosenberg

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former, mixed-users of loft space who previously took them out of economic necessity would now be pushed out because of new tenant's esthetic consideration. (Zukin 1977)

2012, 30) in the performance outlined their interdependency. As Schlichter hung above head, suspended between earth and air in an 'edgy equilibrium' of his own, he embodied SoHo's rapidly rising and falling economic value as trending home real estate.[72]

Just over one year later, on May 11, 1971, Brown extended her plays on gravity, falling, and the interruption of New York City's social kinesthetic by engaging SoHo's rooftops. *Roof Piece* (1971) consisted of twelve performers outfitted in red suits placed atop roofs within a 10-block area spanning from Brown's new residence at 53 Wooster Street to the American painter Robert Rauschenberg's studio at 381 Lafayette Street. Improvised gestures were relayed across SoHo from one dancer to the next, as though playing a game of choreographic telephone. Halfway through the 30-minute performance, the movements were stopped and reversed in the opposite direction. Brown described the piece as one where "the emphasis was on immediate and exact duplication of the observed dance and the silent passing of this dance to a series of performers on down the line." (Brown 1975, 27) Recounting how the "intuitive and kinesthetic systems were impaired by the distance between buildings," (Brown 1975, 27) she brings attention to the "real distance" the performance occupies and the

Figure 42. *Roof Piece*. Photo: Babette Mangolte. Trisha Brown, 1973.

[72] In a 1971 letter to the Foundation for Contemporary Performance Brown reportedly requested money after a few bounced rent checks (sixty dollars per month) and a failure to pay heat, telephone, and electricity bills (Rosenberg 2017, 107). Already living on the edge, Brown's letter encapsulates the precarity of loft living as an artist working outside traditional spaces.

"boundaries transcended" in the viewer's eyes as their gaze is not halted by the walls of a room or the curtains of a stage (Brown 1975, 26; Copeland 1976). The self-described "transcendence" of the performance carries considerable spatial ramifications. Unlike the events of "Dances in and Around 80 Wooster Street," which existed within the relative privacy of 80 Wooster Street's front and back yards, *Roof Piece* demanded widespread community engagement.[73] Brown contacted friends, knocked on stranger's doors, and visited rooftops with binoculars while negotiating with loft-dwellers about accessing their roofs (Rosenberg 2017, 102). Drawing from a community of loft-dwellers and artists, the performance expanded Brown's initial explorations of SoHo's industrial space by engaging a broader network of bodies similarly participating in shifting the neighborhood's real estate value.

As previously seen in Kim Jones's work, the roof was a compelling architectural space for artists to explore as a site for performance.[74] In SoHo, the space of the roof carried with it a particular set of spatial, economic, and social characteristics. Lamenting the lack of substantive scholarly engagement with *Roof Piece*'s relationship to its context, Amanda Graham points to the ways in which it "physically and metaphorically laid claim to an actual geographic area and its architecture." (Graham 2013, 60) This reading is significant when considering Brown's performances in this period as kinesthetic interruptions, engaged in the appropriation and critical use of outdoor architectural sites. While not an act of overt falling in itself, *Roof Piece* plays on SoHo's nickname at the time "The Valley," because of its low-level, uniform, cast-iron buildings

[73] The notion of a community is an important one when considering Brown's ability to develop these performances in public spaces. While SoHo regularly dealt with overnight car vandalism on the streets because of industrial parking hours, there seems to have been a sense of safety for those living in the neighborhood. In his memoir on the period the critic Richard Kostelanetz recalls how women friends told him that the street harassment they felt in midtown rarely occurred in SoHo (Kostelanetz 2003). Critic and curator Roselee Goldberg also emphasized this notion of community particular to SoHo in a 2011 interview with Lydia Yee (Yee 2011, 91).

[74] In New York City the roof was also a significant site in the film *West Side Story* (1961) which placed fire escapes, the facades of tenement buildings, and rooftops on display with Jerome Robbin's choreography.

amongst taller skyscrapers (Glueck, 1970). The neighborhood's iconic scale and geography are integral to the performance, recalling the site-specificity and "stubborn integrity regardless of the audience's desire to hurry things up," (Copeland 1976) which comes as a result of letting architecture determine the duration and shape of the work. Brown lays claim to an urban area spanning multiple addresses in SoHo, her sequences of gestures flying and falling above the neighborhood's grid regardless of streets, traffic lights, and/or intersections. *Roof Piece* re-appropriates SoHo and puts it to use in an alternate way (Burt 2005, 24) by placing multiple rooftops to use in a way that exceeded their alienation as private industrial properties (Burt 2005, 25). As spectators atop various roofs in SoHo watched six dancers performing on rooftops of their own, [75] they experienced a reorganizing of Lower Manhattan's spatial hierarchy (Graham 2013, 65). Knowing full well that once the dance ended, they would "descend the stairs and go out onto the street to become parts of its life again," (Graham 2013, 69) audience members and dancers alike shared in a skewed sense of direction and orientation proper to the interruption produced by the kinesthetic act of falling. [76] Creating a connective grid of her own based on the transference of gestures, Brown once again lifted bodies above street level before letting them return to their daily activities, thus

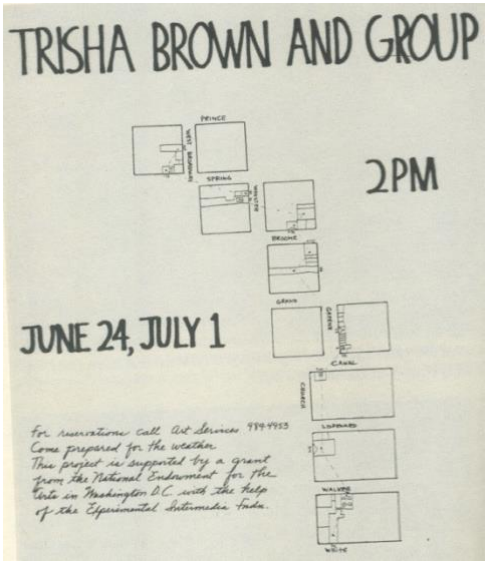

Figure 43. Poster for *Roof Piece*. Trisha Brown, 1973.

[75] While *Man Walking*'s site made is less likely for an unsuspecting audience to stumble upon the work, Ramsay Burt highlights how "others who lived or worked near the line discovered the events by chance" in *Roof Piece* (Burt 2005, 23).

[76] In 1973, Brown reperformed *Roof Piece* with the support of the National Endowment of the Arts (Graham 2013, 61).

temporarily unsettling the habitual social kinesthetic of the neighborhood. *Roof Piece* reframed politics of location and the cultural organization of space through the falling and rising body.

In a short period of time in the early 1970s—falling on, in, and around her 80 Wooster Street studio-loft—Brown's movement-based-performances drew upon and shifted SoHo's particular movement economy which was historically structured by the kinesthetic workings and architectural framings of small industrial manufacturing and the everyday ongoing of laborers. Choreographing a slow walk down the side of 80 Wooster Street, walking in the street at a forty-five-degree angle or transmitting movement sequences across roofs, she physically, conceptually, and kinesthetically engaged SoHo's city-space. Defying dance's preordained aesthetics in outdoor environments, these falls transformed movement vocabularies while shaping real estate identities in SoHo's loft culture and public art events.

Bas Jan Ader:
Off of Bungalows

> "[…] I would like to propose that in the works of Beckett and Bas Jan Ader we momentarily fall out of life, over and over again. We suspend our experience of reality, give ourselves over to the forces of gravity and the fall. Most importantly, there are the kinds of fallings that engender a new beginning, create a fresh start and lead to further creativity."
>
> —Judith Wilkinson, *After the Fall* (2007)

During the 1970s, the Dutch-born conceptual artist Bas Jan Ader performed a series of falls captured on video.[77] Subjecting his own body to the inevitable forces of gravity in various outdoor contexts, Ader recorded and exhibited documentation of "ordinary occurrences that abruptly become highly unusual experiences." (Dumbadze 2013, 22) In one of the more well-

[77] While it could be argued that Ader's actions were not performance art events since he meant them to be for the camera, edited and subsequently presented in a formal exhibition space, those who filmed him constituted an important audience. For the purposes of this analysis, Ader's falls and will be viewed as both live and documented events.

known pieces from this period entitled *Fall 1, Los Angeles* (1970), the artist is seen slowly tumbling down the side of his home in Claremont, California. Running just twenty-four seconds (six of them devoted to the title), the final version of Ader's video performance is representative of his career as he places his domestic and household life in a dialectical relationship with his artistic practice. Employing the absurd to play on the boundaries between art and real life, the relationship between the tragic fall and failure, and questions of free will, Ader's falls were both symbolic in their philosophical reflections and concrete in their performative execution. Placing his own moving body at the center of his work, Ader attempted to extract the act of falling from political, theological, and symbolic order by intentionally refocusing his work on the conceptual parameters and metaphysical construction of each piece and detaching it from its political economy and context (Lobo 2013, 71). In this romantic pursuit for the sublime—a quality of reaching a state of greatness that transcends all possibilities of calculation, measurement or imitation—little critical attention has been given to the social, geographic, and urban contexts of these movement-based-performances and the kinesthetic interruptions they generated. This section will also explicitly consider often overlooked, yet critically relevant issues of race and gender in the 1970s, arguing that by adopting the quintessential symbol of American real estate growth, the bungalow, as a staging ground for a brief yet dynamic performance in *Fall 1, Los Angeles,* Ader drew critical attention to the housing structure that dominated post-war US urban development and its intricate socio-political status. Analogous to Trisha Brown, for whom the verticality of her loft turned studio in an industrial cast-iron building in SoHo represented an iconic performance surface to dance on and determined the arc and trajectory of her choreography, Ader's creative use of his own bungalow corresponded to the architectural potential it provided with its relatively low elevation—allowing him to freefall without harness

and/or obvious external safety mechanisms. His plain clothed and white falling figure, unmoored from the stability of his home, highlighted his fascination for the Southern Californian architecture in addition to the intrinsic infrastructural realities that gave place to his distinctive kinesthetic interruptions.

Born in 1942 in Drieborg, a small village in the Dutch province of Groningen, Ader visited the United States as an adolescent during an exchange program. He moved permanently to California where he studied at the Otis College of Art and Design in 1965.[78] In the same year, he married the American Mary Sue Andersen in Las Vegas.[79] After earning his BFA from Otis, he studied philosophy and the visual arts at Claremont Graduate University (1967-1969).[80] Following his graduation with an MFA, Ader taught at various art schools around Los Angeles.[81] It is in this period that the young Dutch artist came into contact with Southern California's burgeoning conceptual art scene. Befriended by the American artist Allen Ruppersberg, Ader became part of a closely-knit community of makers including William Leavitt and the younger Jack Goldstein.[82] All were adamant about not turning into what they called "Venice artists,"

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[78] Ader's move to California in 1963 occurred aboard a 40-foot ketch named Felicidad. Captain Neil Tucker Birkhead and a 20-year old Bas Jan Ader completed the 11-month voyage from Europe. Appearing in a short article in the Los Angeles Times, Ader's first mention on American soil is of a voyage barely completed because of food and water shortages as well as auxiliary engine failure (Los Angeles Times "Storm-Beaten Ketch," 1963). The story of being rescued by the Navy destroyer Braine off the coast of Baja California foreshadowed Ader's untimely death in the North Atlantic Ocean in 1975.

[79] Ader is said to have showed up to this wedding on crutches because he had "fallen in love" literally with Mary Sue Andersen. Using the civil and domestic scene of his own wedding to stage a play on falling, the anecdote highlights the continuous tension between art and real life during his career.

[80] During his graduate studies Ader took a particular interest in the philosophy of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel and Ludwig Josef Johann Wittgenstein (Feslere 2013, 44). Both thinkers considerably shaped his work as he became known for his quest for the sublime in Los Angeles and "attempted to insert himself—to fall—into the unknown" of the city. (Phillips-Amos 2016) Readings of Ader's work as reaching for the *sublime* evoke notions of disembodiment, formlessness, and aesthetic awe.

[81] These schools included Mt. San Antonio College, Immaculate Heart College, and the University of California, Irvine.

[82] William Leavitt's work showed similar concerns for the architectural features of domestic Californian spaces. See for example *California Patio* (1972), a gallery installation composed of artificial plants, Malibu lights, flagstone, slider curtains, and a wooden wall recreating the impression of a typical portal between interior Californian home and backyard.

rejecting a previous generation of makers who they saw as decorative in their presentation of finely finished objects (Perchuk et al. 2012, 9) Driven by the emerging rebellious aesthetic of Southern Californian conceptual art, they shuttled between art college and university campuses creating a strong network of exhibitions and events (Perchuk et al. 2012, 16). This was made possible by a convergence of factors, including the arrival of Hal Glicksman as chief curator of the museum at the socially conservative Pomona College in 1969 (Lehrer-Graiwer 2012, 227). Instituting an experimental studio-residency program dubbed the Artist's Gallery during his yearlong term, Glicksman facilitated environmental installations that took on new scales (Lehrer-Graiwer 2012, 227). This experimental network of Californian art was critical since "there was no real market for the art emerging from late sixties Los Angeles—appropriately, perhaps, since so much of the work seemed to pride itself on its defiance of the market." (Hackman 2015, 215) Like Brown, who moved away from the traditions of dance and the confines of presenting finished works in established dance venues, Ader's distance from the economic pressures of the art market helped determine the composition of his cohort, the spaces he frequented, and the nature of the work he generated. Still in touch with Europe, but isolated from the rest of the American art world, Ader developed within a tightly knit community in the 1970s focused in and around Los Angeles.

Thirty miles east of the metropolis on land that was once home to Tongva and Serrano Native American communities until they were displaced by settlers in the 19th century who used it mostly for lemon groves, the small community of Claremont was a bastion for artists much like SoHo in Manhattan. In the 1930s and 1940s, the American painter Millard Sheets began creating the art department at Scripps College and the Claremont Graduate School (CGS).

Following the Second World War,[83] the community of artists grew around the established local art schools and the presence of Sheets ("(Re)generation", Claremont Museum of Art 2016). With their training and degrees from CGS, many artists bought homes nearby and began to work locally. By the time a later generation of artist came to the area in the 1960s, Claremont was already a well-known flourishing arts community ("(Re)generation," Claremont Museum of Art 2016). In the 1970s, CGS is credited, alongside arts education gurus like Allan Kaprow and John Baldessari, in connecting local artists and "pushing them to focus on a more direct, less object-oriented sort of art." (Fallon 2014, 95) While SoHo organized itself around seminal cultural figures like George Maciunas who offered alternative spaces for artists to live and create in, the educator and sculptor Mowry Baden and gallery owner Helene Winer gave Claremont avant-garde artists opportunities to show and experiment with their work publicly when no other local art venues would (Fallon 2014, 95). Joining a long list of artists who came before him Ader purchased his first home with Mary Sue Anderson off of South Indian Hill Boulevard, a short distance away from downtown Claremont. Built in the craftsman style, the house exhibited all of the basic qualities of a bungalow in this genre with a return to simplicity, rejection of ostentatious design, unadorned surfaces and natural materials. Like the American pop artist Edward Ruscha who in the 1960s captured in his paintings "a city defined by signs, a repeating loop of signifiers that seemed to lead only to one another," (Hackman 2015, 180) Ader found in his bungalow a quintessential Los Angeles structure that would become central in developing his practice.

[83] Demands for housing and post-war economic prosperity coincided with the G.I. Bill of Rights (1944) which "allowed large numbers of returning veterans unprecedented access to higher education, including art instruction" during this period ("(Re)generation", Claremont Museum of Art 2017) This set the conditions for an explosion in craft production in Southern California and for Claremont's emergence as a center for modern design.

One of Ader's first use of his home was during his MFA exhibition at Claremont College in 1967. Entitled "Implosion," the show included a promotional poster Ader later called "The Artist Contemplating the Forces of Nature." (Thompson 2007, 14) In the poster, the artist can be seen comfortably sitting atop a roof on a lawn chair smoking a cigar. His figure casts a shadow against two fake clouds positioned behind him, creating the illusion of a set. A large brick chimney rises to the left of the photograph, and the front of the house appears in the bottom of the image. Much like Brown whose visual composition in the promotional poster for *Dances in and Around 80 Wooster Street* drew attention to Manhattan's social kinesthetic through automobile's dependence on predetermined, grid-like, horizontal paths of motion, Ader's poster captures the bungalow's highly symbolic architectural iconography, with the slanted shingled roof, red brick chimney, white drip edge, and blue sky prominently referring to the bucolic imagery of the American suburb. This was the home he and Mary Sue Andersen resided in, and the same roof he would fall off of in April 1970. Documentation of the exhibition itself shows large graphic canvases depicting grass, a roof-like tiled surface, blue skies, clouds, and a man riding a bicycle slightly off kilter (Steffen et al. 2012, 75). In the space, Ader included a sculpture made of bicycle parts in a puddle shape decal mimicking the tiled roof pattern. The image is relevant as it points to the different structures the artist engaged with while falling in the 1970s. These include the tiled roof of a bungalow (*Fall 1,*

Figure 44. ***Implosion-The Artist Contemplating the Forces of Nature*****. Bas Jan Ader, 1967.**

Los Angeles), the saddle of a bicycle (*Fall 2, Amsterdam*), and the branch of a tree (*Broken Fall (Organic)*). Already in 1967, before any of his movement-based-performances, Ader adopted the architectural space of his roof and challenged it by denaturalizing it in the exhibition.[84]

In April 1970, with the help of Mary Sue and William Leavitt, Ader prepared for *Fall 1, Los Angeles*. Art historian Alexandre Dumbadze describes the scene thoroughly from black-and-white film footage documenting the making of the work in his biography of the artist:

> [The video] shows Ader, tall and slender, his hair somewhat long, walking out of the house that he and his wife had bought several years earlier in Claremont, a picturesque college town some thirty miles east of downtown Los Angeles. Typical for the area, the wood-frame structure, which no longer stands, sat fairly far back from a main thoroughfare. It faced the distant city; to the north loomed the San Gabriel Mountains, and directly south were flat vistas similar to the landscape Ader knew from his childhood in Holland. (Dumbadze 2013, 3)

The importance of the architecture of the home, the urban and natural environments surrounding it, and the relationship to Ader's childhood landscapes are critical. Dumbadze highlights contextual elements of the piece that dispute any notion that the performative falls were not narrative and that the context of their causality bears no importance (Brezavscek 2013, 59). While Ader may have been staunchly conceptual, *Fall 1, Los Angeles* was not devoid of context nor were all acts of falling universally "present in that man that falls from the rooftop." (Lobo 2013, 71) For one, the piece's title contains the specific county where the work was created: Los

[84] Other works created in and around the house include a version of *I'm Too Sad to Tell You* (1971), recorded in front of his bungalow; and a photograph of *Please Don't Leave Me* (1969), which showed the wall, ceiling joints, concrete floor and part of the two sidewalls of his low-ceiling garage studio (Saunders 2004, 60).

Angeles.[85] The Californian metropolis, its architectural oddities, and the resulting social kinesthetic were important for Ader. He was enthralled with how small "in relation to the surrounding environment, how the possibility of natural disasters was ambrosia to him, and how the beautiful solitude of a nocturnal drive on the freeway elicited romantic feeling." (Dumbadze 2013, 74) Of particular interest for Ader was the Bradbury Building in the downtown core, which was at the time falling into ruin (Dumbadze 2013, 9). Documenting its exterior in photographs, the young Dutch artist felt that the ambiguities and inconsistencies of Los Angeles' architecture strengthened its appeal (Dumbadze 2013, 74).[86] Mentioning how enwrapped he was with his environment he wrote: "I really love this wild romantic metropolis of extremes." (Dumbadze 2013, 74) Ader could not have leapt from tall buildings (Loehr 2000), or more importantly lower himself off of the side of one as Trisha Brown did, since Claremont's architectural vernacular and topography determined the shape of his falls. While "reaching a sublime state *through* falling" (Phillips-Amos 2016, 104) may have been at the core of his project, the landscapes he looked to be absorbed into were significantly, and above all,

Figure 45. *Fall 1, Los Angeles*. Still from video. Bas Jan Ader, 1970.

[85] Ader's second performance work in which he uses interruption as a kinesthetic tactic is *Fall 2, Amsterdam* (1970). Unused footage from the event suggests the piece "was initially more about an Amsterdam street scene than a stirring event." (Dumbadze 2013, 19) Much like his first exploration of the impacts of gravity on his body from the top of his roof, *Fall 2, Amsterdam* carries in its title the particular geographic location where it was enacted. The video (19 seconds in length) focuses around the space of a canal and bridge, a defining urban feature of the city.

[86] In letters to artists and architects in the Netherlands, Ader mentioned how much he enjoyed Southern California weather (Dumbadze 2013, 74).

Californian. It is noteworthy that Ader's performance coincided with the American New Wave, also called the Hollywood Renaissance, a movement in American film history (1960-1980) when a new generation of filmmakers came to prominence in the United States. In many of the films from this period, the Los Angeles suburb became a quintessential symbol of a mostly white, American identity and set of values. In *The Graduate* (1967), the main character Benjamin Braddock (Dustin Hoffman) returns to Pasadena, California—a stone throw away from Claremont—where he has an affair with the older Mrs. Robinson (Anne Bancroft) before falling for her daughter Elaine (Katharine Ross). Many of the most iconic scenes from the movie revolve around Californian architectural vernacular: the patio, the outdoor pool, the perfectly green and manicured backyard, the two-story bungalow, the suburban enclave. As art critic Charlie Fox describes Ader's pursuits, "falling events construct another philosophical argument out of the matter of falling, a third dimension." (Fox 2013, 65) This third dimension, split in 1970 between *Fall 1, Los Angeles* and *Fall 2 Amsterdam*, recreated Ader's hyphenated identity as a Dutch-born US national (Morgan 2016). Anchoring himself in the architectures of both sites where he lived—the Californian bungalow and the Dutch canal—Ader's kinesthetic actions physically and conceptually interrupted the movement economies of both cities with distinctive yet interconnected falling performances.

In the final edited version of *Fall 1, Los Angeles* Ader appears on his home in Claremont sitting on a chair. In slow motion,[87] he leans forward and begins to tumble down the side of the banked roof. Once horizontal, he rolls over twice building momentum but not enough to clear the veranda. Scrambling to leave its surface, he intentionally propels himself over the edge coming

[87] It could be argued that the film draws particular attention to the movement of the fall and its kinesthetic qualities as the artist had intentionally slowed it down (Fox 2013, 65).

off of the house entirely. In the air, he loses his shoe as he hurls towards the bushes below. The chair, which comes off of the roof, lands on the veranda. The video ends with Ader's body engulfed by the vegetation in front and the bungalow standing unchanged.[88] With what was described as the "aplomb of Buster Keaton," (Wilson 1972) Ader performed his first fall for the camera.[89] Lasting only a few seconds, which like Trisha Brown was determined by the height of the repurposed architectural structure and the velocity of a falling body, the performance exposes the intrinsic relationship between Ader's action and the suburban Californian context it took place in. In addition, the documentation captures the physical energy generated by the momentary flight in Ader's fall and the interruption this produced in Claremont's social kinesthetic.[90] As art critic Barbara Feslere describes it, "it is almost like falling into a space where the laws of gravity have been cancelled, where the human being glides over the water or in the wide open spaces." (Feslere 2013, 51) Ader's concern was with the singularity of a fall, which he embodied to experience another temporality (Brezavscek 2013, 60). Breaking with the monotony and plainness of the suburban Californian image and distorting modes of productive motion, Ader seemed to slip through time and space. By "falling into and out of" his own time and place (Fox 2013, 67), Ader accepts "the opportunity that disorientation provides." (Albright 2013, 373) Engaging with a "self that is determined by instability and incompletion, a kind of subject that is determined in movement, rather than through patterns of continuity and stability"

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[88] A mattress hidden in the bushes softened Ader's fall, and outtakes show Leavitt running into the bushes to check on the artist (Dumbadze 2013, 3)

[89] The likening of Ader's falls to Buster Keaton's exploit by many critics is worth noting. In *Steamboat Bill, Jr.* (1928), which was filmed in Sacramento, California, on constructed sets, Keaton is infamously captured surviving the fall of a house façade by aligning his body with the structure's only window portal. While most roughly liken Ader's falls to Keaton's physical stunts, the overt use of iconic architectural spaces like the American bungalow for physical acts in films like *One Week* (1920) is equally significant.

[90] It is important to recognize that *Fall 1, Los Angeles* is exhibited as a continuous loop. This creates the artificial impression that Ader falls continuously in the piece, adding to the overall effect of kinesthetic interruption in the edited video.

(Rodney 2012, 29) Ader's continuously falling body outlines Los Angele's "repeating loop of signifiers that seemed to lead only to one another." (Hackman 2015, 180) Kinesthetically interrupting the architectural symbol that is the American bungalow, Ader distinguished himself from previous Los Angeles artists who attempted to stand firmly and be situated "between suburbia and the sublime," (Hackman 2015, 181) choosing instead to fall.

While it is easy to interpret *Fall 1, Los Angeles* through the lens of the sublime as an existential pursuit, "simultaneously as a *leap* of faith and of deflation – as a paradoxical leap of generative 'failure'," (Fox 2013, 63) it is equally important to read it within the context of its execution. As Anne Cooper Albright states about the fall: "All suspensions come to an end, of course, and what matters then is how we hit the ground." (Albright 2013, 375) The actual ground, trajectory, and political economy of Ader's *Fall 1, Los Angeles* is highly relevant. In *Building Suburbia: Green Fields and Urban Growth 1820-2000* (2004), the urban historian Dolores Hayden outlines the spirit of the American suburb: "[…] suburbia is the site of promises, dreams, and fantasies. It is a landscape of the imagination where Americans situate ambitions for upward mobility and economic security, ideals about freedom and private property, and longings for social harmony and spiritual uplift." (Hayden 2004, 3) According to Hayden, 1970 marked an important turn in America as the populations of suburbs surpassed that of central cities or rural areas (Hayden 2004, 10). Ader's deliberate use of his bungalow in Claremont, a suburb of Los Angeles, coincided with these important urban shifts as the city's infrastructural growth was central to its identity in the 1970s. After a drop in building permit valuations in the 1960s ("Totals for November," Los Angeles Times 1970), Claremont saw an increase in urban development at the start of the 1970s. Plans for a 20,000-square-foot library in the civic center, a police headquarters, a new post office, and the extension of Claremont Boulevard ("Growth of

Air," Los Angeles Times 1970; Frank "Claremont Passes," 1970), as well as development at local college and university campuses (Frank "Work Started," 1970) made for important infrastructural growth. As a result of public spending on construction projects, City Manager Keith Mulroney informed City Council in 1970 that it would need to increase taxes to meet the next year's budget (Frank "Claremont Faces," 1970). Like many suburbs, mostly white affluent citizens who owned property and vehicles received the benefit of federal subsidies and growth (Hayden 2004, 167), yet these incentives were not always enough to appease the threat of rising taxes and changes to a historic arts community.

The optimistic "development, growth, and expansion of services" in store for Claremont ("Development and Growth," Los Angeles Times 1971) were met by strong opposition campaigns to defeat capital improvement programs. As Dolores Hayden describes it, "contestation—between residents who wish to enjoy suburbia and developers who seek to profit from it—lies at the heart of suburban history." (Hayden 2004, 9). Those fighting the city of Claremont on its vision for the future cited their fear of a rapidly changing city and growing property taxes (Frank "Claremont Officials," 1969). Worries were partly placated by changes in residential zoning laws as the city Planning Commission forced developers seeking to convert properties to multiple dwelling uses to "preserve the character" of Claremont through various building restrictions (Frank "Compromise Brings," 1970). In certain zones, the constructing of hotels, parking lots, educational institutions, or the right to transform dwellings for the purposes of dentistry, accounting, or any other similar business was strictly prohibited to control character of neighborhoods (Frank "Compromise Brings," 1970). Along with these public policies, the city of Claremont showed environmental concerns by establishing a task force to study local pollution and its possible solutions (Frank "Claremont to Form," 1970). One of the first

municipally-led experimental recycling programs was established as a result of the initiative (Frank "Claremont to Assess," 1970). What the City Council and the residents of Claremont were looking to maintain in this period was the city's iconic architecture and infrastructure, a particular mix of Victorian, Craftsman, Colonial Revival, and Classical Revival style homes and buildings. As a community, the city was defined by these buildings which it took great pride in.[91] All of these elements made Claremont a particularly rich and white suburb outside of Los Angeles in the 1970s, an enclave that extended the "fountainhead of imaginative fantasy, emitting a mesmerizing force that obscures reality by eroding the difference between the real and the imagined, fact and fiction." (Soja 2014, 1) As Claremont questioned the desirability of having the Foothill Freeway run through its community attaching it to Los Angeles and other suburbs (Hall 1970), it struggled with its own identity in the shadow of the major metropolis.[92]

In Los Angeles, in the aftermath of the Watts Rebellion (1965), Ader's play on the privacy and exclusivity of domestic spaces in the suburbs also carried with it a particular racial resonance. As Mike Davis describes it, following the riots the Los Angeles Police Department's 'Astro' program placed helicopters in the air over the city. To facilitate "ground-air synchronization, thousands of residential rooftops" were painted with identifying street numbers, transforming the aerial view of Los Angeles into a huge police grid (Davis 1992, 252). Surveilling largely African American neighborhoods through the air, the LAPD transformed Los Angele's roofs into a segregated system stripping its residents of their anonymity, security, and

[91] Conservation efforts were also important in the 1970s in Claremont. The Bridges Hall of Music, a "landmark on the Pomona College campus in Claremont" built in 1931, became a point of debate when it was established that its foundation would need to be reinforced to meet earthquake regulation codes (Frank "Future in Doubt," 1970).
[92] Objections came from the newly implement Environmental Resources Task Force who cited smog, noise, unwanted accelerated growth, and the bisecting of the community by the freeway as undesirable consequences of its construction (Hall 1970). Its proposed trajectory bisected South Indian Hill Boulevard, just a few hundred meters from the Ader household.

domestic space. Ader's hypervisibility on his Claremont roof, his choice to relinquish his right to privacy by performing the vulnerable act of falling or presenting his personal belongings, illustrates the privilege of the suburbs in Los Angeles, away from the racially discriminating eye of the LAPD. Like Brown whose use of falling gestured towards SoHo's shifting social kinesthetic, which up until then had largely been driven by the physical labor of working class and immigrant small industry workers, Ader's actions and exposure highlighted the kinesthetic disparity between Los Angeles' heavily racially segregated neighborhoods and suburbs. With all of its 'progressive' policy vis-à-vis urban growth, pollution, and conservation, Claremont policed many of its public spaces seeking the "tranquil setting of yesteryear." (Frank "Claremont To," 1969) Only beginning to discuss in 1970 the suspension of a curfew law enacted in 1947 for youth which looked to "enforce a certain social-moral standard and to allow the police to detain suspicious persons," (Frank "Curfew Law," 1970) Claremont participated in its own suburban policing.[93] While Ader looked to deemphasize his own will in determining the outcome of *Fall 1, Los Angeles* deciding instead to state simply that when he "fell off of the roof of [his] house," it was because gravity made itself master over him, (Dumbadze 2013, 5) he nonetheless chose what particular roof he would fall off of and its significance as an architectural symbol and suburban landmark. By selecting a typical Claremont bungalow, transforming his own roof into a performance space, Ader brought into focus the onset of regional urbanization processes put in motion by the movement of largely white economically mobile populations to 'safe' affluent suburbs (Soja 2014, 209).

[93] In 1969 nearby Pomona College's Board of Trustees and The Claremont Colleges voted to not establish an autonomous Black Studies Center despite student pressure (Frank "Claremont BSU," 1969), signaling but one form of racial segregation also present in the suburbs of Los Angeles.

Read through Claremont's conflicted narrative of urban expansion and racial inequalities, *Fall 1, Los Angele*s and other similar works revolving around the artist's bungalow take on new significance. While Brown's performative falls directly spoke to the spatial opportunities granted to artists in SoHo's emerging post-industrial landscape, Ader's work indexed economic and social shifts within the American and more specifically Californian suburb during this period. If

Figure 46. *All of My Clothes*. Bas Jan Ader, 1970.

Ader's "preoccupation with the physical act of falling goes back at least to his days at the Otis Art Institute [in Los Angeles], which he attended from 1964 to 1965," (Dumbadze 2013, 8) it materializes itself concretely atop the symbolic space of his Claremont home. In *All of My Clothes* (1970), a 11-by-14-inch black-and-white photograph created around the same time as *Fall 1, Los Angeles,* Ader documented his entire wardrobe spread across the surface of his roof and veranda (Steffen et al. 2012, 76). The image gestures towards the invisible action of Ader spreading his personal belongings across the surface of the roof, using the structure as a canvas to display a series of readymade objects. The piece, which rejoins Brown's repurposing of clothes above ground level in *Floor of the Forest* (1970), challenges the domestic space of the roof much in the way that *Fall 1* looked to do so. Offering an "offhand

inventory of a human being" in an unusual architectural setting (Saunders 2004, 55), Ader played on the boundaries between the privacy of the home and the public space of its rooftop. The bungalow, a symbol of post-war American suburban growth, brought about a reshaping of the definitions of public and private as "loans guaranteed by the federal government poured into private real estate development firms." (Hayden 2004, 129) In appropriating the space of the roof for public performances and displays, Ader brought attention to the phenomena of urban growth in the town. His actions—falling off of and/or spreading his wardrobe in plain sight on his roof—interrupted the movement economy of the bungalow which relied so heavily on assuring secrecy, safety, and shelter from onlookers within the security of the home. A primary real estate object of the mostly white and conservative American dream that drove capital gains, development, and suburban expansion, this private enclave was turned inside out by the artist who moved both the kinesthetic vulnerability of the fall and the intimacy of the wardrobe onto the literal roof.

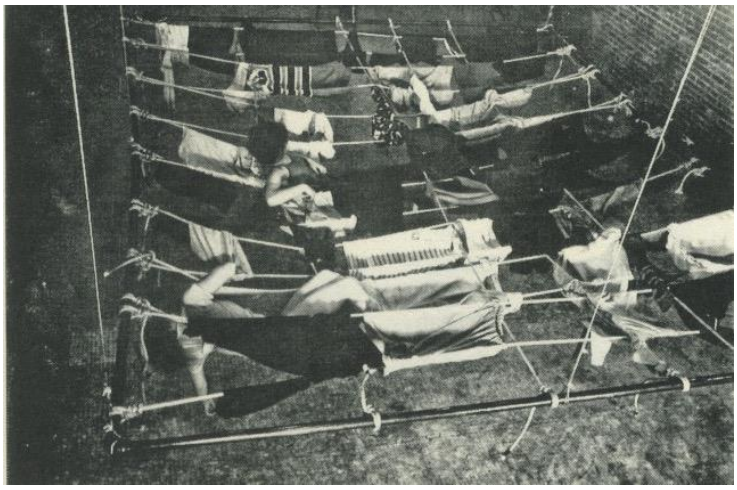

Figure 47. *Floor of the Forest*. Trisha Brown, 1970.

American post-war suburban homes also played an important part in redefining the role of women and the social kinesthetic of the household. At exactly the same time as Ader fell from his roof in 1970, the "Women's Section" of the Los Angeles Times, listed various home tours in Claremont describing them by their iconic architectural features ("Claremont Home Tour," Los Angeles Times 1970). While Ader interrupted the bungalow's visual aesthetic and functional

use, Claremont women engaged in questioning domestic space. Barbara B. Cook, a counselor in the Center for Continuing Education at Claremont College, joined a growing feminist movement by publicly sharing observations that local women felt dissatisfied with their singular roles as housewives (Frank "Some Housewives," 1970). While in no way connected to the political or social agendas of feminist art in this period, *Fall 1, Los Angeles* was articulated specifically around the everyday domestic symbol, ritual, and space of the bungalow. As other male California performance artists of the period approached the home with overt masculinity and spectacle, Ader did so with the "tacky charm of ordinary events" (Wilson 1975) that blurred the boundaries between art and real life. Similarly, unlike other artists in California who were more concerned with an explicit performative struggle with gravity (Hainley 1999),[94] Ader approached the fall with a particular inevitability. As art critic Bruce Hainley recalls, for all of the "postwar effects and residue of macho heroism pervading in LA during Ader's time there, the tonality of his project" was entirely different, taking a gentler though no less agonistic approach to acts of falling (Hainley 1999). Feeling that neighboring Pomona College's Chris Burden's performances were too physical and without a sense of poetics (Dumbadze 2012, 38), Ader created actions "located in spaces between places: between irony and sincerity, between intellectual concept and heartfelt emotion, between the heroic and the pathetic." (Loehr 2000) This oft described conceptual and tangible space *in between* generated by Ader's falls reinforces the argument that his actions interrupted modes of economic, urban, and movement productivity particular to Claremont's social kinesthetic. Through this reading, *Fall 1, Los Angeles* emerges as a pedestrian act laying claim to the city, inverting its conventional coordinates, and rendering space of lost

[94] See Bruce Nauman's *Failing to Levitate in the Studio* (1966); Howard Fried's *All My Dirty Blue Clothes* (1970); Paul McCarthy's *Leap* and *Too Steep, Too Fast* (1969); and Chris Burden's *Through The Night Softly* (1973).

utility subject to other types of speculation (Martin 2012, 73). Embodying human-size fall and expressing a human-size failure (Loehr 2000), his horizontal propulsion unsettles everyday movement logics (Martin 2012, 74). Ader aligned himself with Californian feminist artists who sought to challenge the rituals and forms of the traditional American household by physically and conceptually suspending his own body between the familiarities of domestic life.[95]

Ader's interest in Los Angeles and its suburban architecture and movement economy manifested itself again in 1973 in a series of photographs titled *In Search for the Miraculous (One Night in Los Angeles).* Documented by Mary Sue Anderson, the piece details a nocturnal walk through various parts of the city, "from the hills to the coastline, form urban to residential." (Dumbadze 2013, 94) Driven by Anderson in a single night, Ader looked for ideal locations that spoke directly to Los Angeles' character and his own relationship to it. Images show Ader walking across a freeway, surveying Los Angeles from the hills, and standing on the shore. While this work in particular is closer to Kim Jones' kinesthetic use of locomotion through the Californian metropolis, the images seem less focused around the act of moving through Los Angeles and more about Ader physically contemplating the city. In one photograph, Ader is seen atop a roof, an act that recalls the interruption of *Fall 1, Los Angeles*.

Figure 48. ***In Search for the Miraculous (One Night in Los Angeles).*** **Bas Jan Ader, 1973.**

[95] See for example Martha Rosler's *House Beautiful: Bringing the War Home* (1967-1972), a series of collages where the California-based artist spliced together pictures of maimed Vietnamese citizens published in *Life* magazine with images of the homes of affluent Americans culled from the pages of *House Beautiful*. In *Semiotics of the Kitchen* (1975), a performance recorded during her time in California, Rosler critiqued the commodified version of traditional women's roles in modern society by parodying the popular 'cooking show.'

Like Brown who positioned her dancers up and above the city in *Roof Piece* (1971), distorting the spatiality of the neighborhood and offering new perspectives on Manhattan's verticality, Ader's own height in *In Search for the Miraculous…* removes him from Los Angeles' luminescence by placing him over and at a distance from the city's quotidian motion. While the piece may infer danger in crossing highway 405 or walking into the ocean at night (Steffen et al. 2012, 76), the images suggest these actions without documenting their denouement.[96] Similar to the way that we "do not see Ader climb onto the roof of his house" in *Fall I, Los Angeles* (Morgan 2016),[97] we do not see him move between sites in *In Search for the Miraculous*… Ader, who staged all of these photographs carefully, instead appears in suspension. Finding the "sublime enclosed in pre-existing structures" (Lobo 2013, 71), the artist looks like a "pedestrian in a city designed for cars." (Saunders 2004, 54) Appearing "vulnerable, dwarfed by the proportion of the freeways" (Rodney 2012, 29), the Dutch artist interrupts Los Angele's social kinesthetic by inhabiting the liminal spaces of suburbia, not quite physically falling but evoking the altered perspective and sensation of it with his body hovering in relation to the cityscape.

Figure 49. *In Search for the Miraculous (One Night in Los Angeles*). Bas Jan Ader, 1973.

[96] Inaccurately *In Search of the Miraculous (One Night in Los Angeles)* is often described as a "midnight travers of LA on foot." (Butler 2012, 53) Mary Sue Anderson's presence as the driver, moving Ader from one scouted location to the next to pose for photographs, is overlooked as it contradicts the romantic notion of pedestrian motion in the piece.

[97] Footage from the making of *Fall 1, Los Angeles* shows Ader "ambling down the front steps, then turning to his right to climb a ladder that leans against the front porch roof" to position himself atop the house (Dumbadze 2013, 3). The final edited version does not include this segment of the preparation, choosing instead to start *in media res*, which has contributed to the lack of critical attention paid to the spatial context of the piece.

On July 9th, 1975, Ader set sail off the coast of Cape Cod in a one-man yacht named *Ocean Wave* with the intention of crossing the Atlantic Ocean to his home country. Having lived in California for almost twelve years, Ader conceived of the crossing as an extension of *In Search of the Miraculous (One Night in Los Angeles)*, thus extending the physical space of his Los Angeles pieces towards the Netherlands. Three weeks after setting off from the coast of the United States, the artist was lost at sea. The wreckage of the *Ocean Wave* was found submerged but upright near the coast of Ireland on April 18, 1976 with little information regarding the fate of its captain (Walsh 2013, 13). In structuring his biography on Ader, Alexander Dumbadze divides his book into five sections: Falling, Representing, Trading, Sailing, and Dying. Including "Dying" as a performative action, Dumbadze highlights how it is impossible to not read Ader's death as part of *In Search of the Miraculous…* (Dumbadze 2013, 133) Like his previous works, Ader's disappearance can be read as an interruption with the presumption of his overboard body echoing previous falls that reached for the sublime. Leaving Los Angeles by boat as he had first arrived, Ader once again positioned himself *in between* with the interruption of the kinesthetic trajectory of his planned trip across the Atlantic, "falling into another space." (Fox 2013, 68) With no recovered body and the ambiguity presented by Ader's death occurring in the completion of an artwork, the fall takes on a continuous and endless "slippage through time and space" (Albright 2013, 371) that has make his work and life

Figure 50. ***In Search for the Miraculous (One Night in Los Angeles).*** **Bas Jan Ader, 1975.**

particularly elusive.[98] As Francisco Sousa Lobo describes it, "fall and rise fold on themselves," (Lobo 2013, 70) and in doing so Ader's uncertain movement casts his body "into a state of vulnerability and risk that may prove depleting or sustaining." (Martin 2012, 62) Whether it be seated comfortably atop his roof in Claremont before tumbling down its angled façade, assembling his entire wardrobe atop that same roof as though it had fallen from the sky, or watching Los Angeles from afar in a nocturnal journey, Ader recurrently fell as a performance tactic in the early 1970s to intervene in the exterior built environments of his adoptive home. Unsettling the racialized and gendered space of the bungalow as a quintessentially American architectural and economic symbol, challenging expected norms of productivity associated with domestic life, and playing on the aesthetics and predictable movement economies of California's urban expansion, the young Dutch artist repeatedly interrupted Claremont's suburban rational.

Notes on a Fall

The two artists in this chapter revoked the use of traditional interior dance and art spaces for creation and/or presentation purposes, choosing the roofs and sides of their own homes and neighboring buildings as the staging grounds for acts of unsettling gravitational exploration. Dance's traditional use of environments and movement sequences was challenged by Brown's adoption of SoHo's iconic architecture while Ader's brand of Californian conceptual art revealed itself to be highly contextual and dependent on Los Angeles' sprawling suburban landscape. These moving bodies, drawing attention to the inevitability of earth's gravitational pull while simultaneously defying its regular force, remind their audience of the push and pull of natural

[98] Newspaper clippings Ader collected around 1972 and 1973, after he completed the majority of his fall pieces, show dramatic scenes of individuals threatening to leap to their death (Dumbadze 2013, 16). Ader seems to have been interested in the way these images confronted the decision of life and death, with the tension of the act in each story echoing the ambiguity of his own falls where the opportunity to see whether Ader has been harmed is not granted. Instead, the viewer is left to speculate on the outcome of each kinesthetic act.

and unnatural phenomena that shape our lives—shedding light on *the fall* as central component of all movement and performance practice. In their various forms of interruption, different as they be geographically and conceptually, Ader and Brown reveal that "every movement is, in fact, a dance with gravity." (Albright 2013, 371) Not only are the urban structures and social kinesthetic shaping Los Angeles and New York City highlighted and contested through their actions and choices in architectural landmarks, but they themselves transform the spatial composition, experience, and perspective of these environments.

Similarly, in *Gravitational Pull of My Head*, the shift in my kinesthetic relationship to the town—my embrace of the disorientation of falling between two points of anchor—is one that carried its own precarious sociality. Using the architectural surface of my residence and adjacent structures in Skagaströnd as a stage to propel myself off of, I blurred the lines between the domestic space of the home and the artistic pursuit of 'testing' gravity by making little to no distinctions between quotidian rituals and my various falls. While my actions were radically different than Brown's and Ader's—separated by space, time, and body—my falling figure produced a similar interruption of the movement economy in the town, drawing attention to the largely unused building spaces left behind by the disappeared fishing industry.[99] Becoming "the man who falls from things" to locals, I engaged in various conversations about the shifting architectural landscape of the town and its relevance to the sociality of moving bodies.

Addressing the state of the falling body post-September 11, 2001, Nikki Cesare Schotzko grapples with Richard Drew's *Falling Man* (2001) photograph from the North Tower of New York's World Trade Center. Stating that it "might not be falling that marks the new millennium

[99] The disappearance of herring in nearby waters in the 1960s halted the growth of many northern Icelandic towns, cutting populations in half and leaving multiple abandoned and/or unused factory and residential buildings.

but *falling-through*," (Cesare Schotzko 2015, 57) Cesare Schotzko draws attention to the contemporary fall as an endless one, without a particular bottom and/or end. Like the demolition of the Pruitt-Igoe housing complex, which allegedly marked modern architecture's death in 1972, the collapse of New York's World Trade Center in 2001 similarly altered theoretical and embodied perspectives on the act of falling. It also announced a new era of urbanism in major Western metropolitan centers, governed by enhanced principles of surveillance, policing, and control. As I look back on my falls in Iceland I see myself *falling-through* the negative space left after September 11 (Cesare Schotzko 2015, 57) as a result of having "witnessed a series of spectacular and horrible falls that have had both global and local repercussions." (Albright 2013, 370) I vividly remember the embodied experience of watching bodies leap hopelessly from the two towers on television in my high school library in 2001—repeatedly, on loop, falling from two architectural structures I had watched dissipate in the distance as we drove away from New York City on a recent visit. It is perhaps since then that the fall has haunted me, manifesting itself in Iceland in 2013 in the form of multiple small actions repeated over the period of a few months. In seeking to embody firsthand the gravitational pull of the earth, I looked to cross over literal and metaphoric states of being in the world to open a threshold between the past and the future (Albright 2013, 370). Within the security of my artist residency, the fall, as an act of interruption, performed a distortion of movement, time, and architectural space—an uncertain gesture that cast my body into a state of vulnerability (Martin 2012, 62) informed by my environmental context but reaching beyond it as well.

CHAPTER 3

Acts of Occupation:
Living In / Standing On after Tehching Hsieh, Suzanne Lacy, and Leslie Labowitz

> On a micro-historical level, dance may perform protest, a direct and local way of upsetting a power balance. What the body itself, when given pride of place, can be thought to oppose also lends definition to how dance makes the political flare up. […] dance can absorb and retain the effects of political power as well as resist the very effects it appears to incorporate within the same gesture. This is what makes dance a potent political form of expression: it can encode norms as well as deviation from the norms in structures of parody, irony, and pastiche that appear and disappear quickly, often leaving no trace.
>
> —Mark Franko, *Dance and the Political: States of Exception* (2006)

It is a bright fall Monday morning and I am locked in *Sightings*, a 10' x 10' x 10' transparent cube, being watched by dozens of university students.[100] At 11:20 AM, they are navigating their way between two classes, with little to no time to spare. The semester is young, and many of them are still adjusting to find a classroom, adapting to the new academic schedule. As they make their way to the ground floor of the Henry F. Hall building at Concordia University in Montreal, fighting their way down the cramped escalators, they find me performing a handstand in my own little world.[101] Dressed in a yellow shirt, mouth full of legal pad paper, helium balloons tied to my toes, and surrounded by archival detritus from the last few days I must come across as slightly unusual in their daily routine. Many take out their phones to photograph me, others whisper to each other and point, one person calls over a friend who has managed to walk away and miss the spectacle. Some seem confounded, others smile, and at least one person is clearly vexed by my presence. From the inside of my case, I hear very little, but I know I am

[100] The *Sightings* cube belongs to the Leonard & Bina Ellen Art Gallery at Concordia University. It acts as a satellite of the main gallery located across the street and has been the site of numerous installations and exhibitions, with live performances occurring on rare occasions.

[101] From 2007-2011 I was an undergraduate student at Concordia University studying at the Liberal Arts College. Many of my classes occurred inside the Hall building itself, so I was familiar with the physical routines of these students.

being watched. For a brief moment, between routine activities, the atrium stops, and my audience and I hold the space.

Ceci est un □ à compléter chez soi : This is a □ to be completed at home (2017) was a performance created in collaboration with curator Maude Johnson based on the work of the French Fluxus artist and economist Robert Filliou. Focusing on a book (1970) and a performance (1979) by Filliou entitled *Teaching and Learning as Performance Arts*, I staged a five-day durational action from September 12 – 17, between the hours of 10am and 6pm. During these timeslots, I continuously occupied the *Sightings* space of the Leonard & Bina Ellen Art Gallery. Interacting with passers-by, generating objects, drawings, and an evolving installation, I transformed the dynamic and transient space of Concordia's atrium into one of deliberately grounded aesthetic performance. Questioning the current state of pedagogy by inviting students to verbally reflect on the increasingly result-driven, customer-service oriented, quantitative nature of their coursework, evaluations, and curriculum, I processed elements of Filliou's performance archive now housed in the Concordia Library.[102] *Teaching and Learning as Performance Arts* specifically addressed the critical importance of hybrid, interdisciplinary, and practice-oriented teaching models in at all levels of education. My exhibition built from this premise and included

Figure 51. ***Ceci est un □ à compléter chez soi : This is a □ to be completed at home*****. Didier Morelli, 2017.**

[102] In the fall of 1980 at Véhicule Art Inc. (1970-1983), an artist-run-center in Montreal, Filliou presented a video version of *Teaching and Learning as Performance Arts*. After the dissolution of the center in 1983, its archive was acquired by Concordia University.

multiple actions and events, and my kinesthetic occupation of Concordia's downtown campus, facilitated by the architecture of the cube, became a central tenet of the work.

The moment one intentionally stops moving in an environment built with the purpose of circulating bodies efficiently, the spatiotemporal composition of everyday life changes. As I provisionally took hold of real estate within the university commons, immobilizing myself against the transactional nature of the area, I sensed the interjection my kinesthetic activity imposed on the social logic of the Hall building. As movement scholar Mark Franko argues in 'Dance and the Political: States of Exception' (2006), "[politics] are not located directly "in" dance, but in the way dance manages to occupy (cultural) space." (Franko 2006, 5) In his analysis, Franko points to the dancer as a "rhetorical, persuasive, and deconstructive force in the social field of the audience." (Franko 2006, 6) Grounded in this conception of performance as capable of inserting itself into the public sphere and *occupying* it, the effectiveness of becoming a fixed roadblock as a tactic to subvert the functionalism of the Hall building became apparent. As my cube accumulated objects from passersby and other forms of detritus, and as I became worn and layered with the exhaustion of duration and overexposure, a palpable shift occurred in the patterns of motion surrounding me. What had originally taken the form of an anomalous obstruction became a gathering spot, a new cartographic landmark in the atrium. Persistently *there*, having come to an intentional halt in the middle of an atrium dedicated to moving bodies efficiently between classrooms, other campus buildings, the street, and the subway system, my hovering body shifted the well-trodden choreographic trajectories of the space.

Occupation, the act of entering, living, using, and/or taking control of a particular place is not necessarily defined by a singular kinesthetic logic (i.e. immobility, standing, lying down) but by the opposition it creates vis-à-vis other ritualized and ingrained patterns of dynamic motion.

Unlike locomotion and interruption, both which are defined more or less by the coherence of their trajectories within a context, occupations move in a multitude of ways but become coherent because of the sites they descend and take hold upon. Often equated with power, authority, and colonialism—as in the concept of military occupation where armed forces take effective control of a certain territory which is not under the formal sovereignty of that entity—occupation can also be inverted by minoritarian populations or other marginalized groups as a way of subverting dominant forces—as in the occupation of Zucccotti Park in New York City during the Occupy Wallstreet protest movement. My own performance in the Hall building involved a variety of movements performed within the limits of an atrium, an architectural structure conceived to enforce certain codes of conduct. In the contemporary university, atriums mostly function as transitional spaces, enforcing an impermanence imposed by administrators, university hours, private security, and class schedules. Collective and individual bodies are not meant to coalesce for extended periods of time, instead architectural features intentionally drive them away (lack of benches and tables, loud classical music, locked entrances). My occupation framed and made visible this environment, its geographic scale, and its habitual choreographic forces by *being* constantly in this space, my body intervening in the patterns of motion (walking through, moving between, transitioning to) that govern the atrium otherwise.

Not only was my own embodied sense of place altered, but members of my audience also confessed to having new perspectives on the organization of their bodies vis-à-vis the built environment. For them, the simple fact of my unusual occupation provided a productive space to project onto. As Franko describes it, the way "in which dance alters public space by occupying it is full of political innuendoes, [it] can exert ideological power without emblematizing it." (Franko 2006, 6) While my presence in the Hall building may have been planned and sanctioned,

the power struggle it created in relation predetermined economies of movement was tangible. As I performed in front of everyone, overexposed and vulnerable, I also considered my own privilege. Specifically, I reflected on the works of previous performing artists—Asco, David Hammons, Adrian Piper, William Pope.L—who starting in the 1970s pushed back against the policing of bodies in public spaces by claiming and transforming urban sites with the prolonged presence of their bodies. All of these performative occupations tactically deployed combinations of mobility and immobility within a predetermined geographic space, specifically entering, living, using, and taking control of particular places where their racialized and/or gendered bodies confronted and obstructed ingrained patriarchal and racist movement economies.[103] In these instances, occupation can quickly become negatively framed as *trespassing* since the political forces and vectors of power of government, capital, and other private or public entities often dictate what constitutes obstructions of normative behavior and social boundaries. Occupation is often tied up to delineations of property, visible and invisible. As previously discussed in the works of Pope.L, and Kim Jones, unwanted or unwarranted movement-based-performances in public spaces can quickly be turned into unacceptable transgressions and sanctionable actions in the eyes of law enforcement. As the geographer Neil Smith might describe it, occupation promises "not just the production of space in the abstract, but the concrete *production and reproduction of geographical scale* as a political strategy of resistance." (Smith 1992, 60) Protected by the privilege of my white masculinity, my own occupation resonated

[103] C. Ondine Chavoya addresses how kinesthetic occupation lays claim to the architecture of targeted Los Angeles landmarks in Asco's work, describing how the Chicano collective used the normative landscape of the city as aesthetic and political material to intervene in with their bodies: "[…] the geographic and social space of Los Angeles became much more than the site of production; it became the very material for Asco's conceptual art." (Chavoya 2000, 190)

differently than that of performance artists who opposed the *habitus* of outdoor spaces with their prolonged, uninvited presence in particular sites that were otherwise hostile to their existence.

Throughout my five-day intervention, I physically learned the corporeal complexities of occupying the busy urban built environment of Montreal's downtown core. Accustomed to a relative sense of privacy in certain daily activities and performative tasks, I was initially hesitant to fully expose myself and remained gentle and minimal in my gestures. The transparency of my situation quickly caused my body to change, adopting more assertive positions. As my spectacle became common to those who had already witnessed my presence, I grew more emboldened to take on more space and risk—challenging the safety of the parameters I had previously set for myself. Leaving the cube to perform on escalators, benches and tables, until finally exiting the building to be on the street, I extended the scale of my occupation so as to not be flattened into another mundane architectural feature. Well aware that "[power] cannot function outside of the representational field, and representation, along with its crises, is an aesthetic matter," (Franko 2006, 14) I employed my performative body in the urban built environment as an aesthetic and geographic obstacle not to be overlooked or walked over. Occupying became a kinesthetic tactic, the Hall building no longer defined by the dynamic efficiency and fluidity of movement between two classes but by the arresting quality of my prolonged unusual actions within a location I had effectively taken control of.

At a Standstill:
Tactics of Urban Subversion

> For the illegal [sic] immigrant, even standing still is a form of movement, his actions often inconsequential and almost invisible, but transgressive all the same.
>
> —Ray Langenbach, *Moving Pictures: The persistence of locomotion* (2007)

This chapter focuses on the work of the Taiwanese-born, New York-based performance artist Tehching Hsieh (b. 1950) and the Los Angeles-based feminist collaborative duo of Suzanne Lacy (b. 1945) and Leslie Labowitz Starus (b. 1946). It argues that these three artists and their performative works not only highlight the development of occupation as a kinesthetic tactic of protest capable of disrupting normative movement economies in Los Angeles and New York City during the 1970s and 1980s, but that their interventions resulted from, responded to, and outlined critical urban, economic, cultural, and aesthetic developments as well as the broader political realities of each particular coastal city. Geographically divided and politically different, their occupations speak to each other in the oppositions they created to the habitual choreographies of efficiently moving and transient bodies in Manhattan and downtown Los Angeles' dynamic urban grid. Combining kinesthetic acts of entering, living, using, and/or taking control of delineated and highly symbolic sites, Hsieh and Lacy & Labowitz's occupations exposed the restrictions of geographic scales and the powerful logics of movement imposed on marginalized and vulnerable bodies therein. This chapter argues that although their performances moved in a multitude of ways, they became coherent because of the sites they descended and took hold upon, transforming them by being physically present for different periods of time. As such, Hsieh, Lacy, and Labowitz's occupations offer new theoretical and experiential entry points into given built environments, with their performances challenging the city's regular movement economies of motor vehicles, pedestrian bodies, and homeless communities; household rituals and gender dynamics; and public policy as it relates to sexual violence, immigration, and security.

Tehching Hsieh is of interest because of a series of one-year performances executed in and around his 111 Hudson Street loft in Tribeca during the early 1980s. While most of his work

in this period highlighted changing New York real estate, *One Year Performance 1981-1982 (Outdoor Piece)* is primarily relevant since the artist lived outdoors for an entire year, not entering buildings or shelter of any sort. Occupying the space of Manhattan with a backpack and sleeping bag, the work took place on streets, park benches, riverfront docks, storefronts, and other stoops and steps to sit, crouch, and lay on. Centering on Hsieh's daily activities, which distorted architectural functionalism by transforming public spaces to accommodate the rhythms of bodily needs and rituals—washing, eating, sleeping, defecating—*Outdoor Piece* took place in deindustrialized and deurbanized vacant city landscapes. His durational choreography, living and using urban infrastructure as his own, contended with the rise of homelessness and the policing of undocumented immigrants, two phenomena intimately linked to discourses of urban regeneration in the early 1980s.

In Los Angeles, Suzanne Lacy and Leslie Labowitz's collaborative performances pertaining to women's rights and security are of particular importance. The duo's late 1970s public events, specifically situated at the Civic Center and City Hall of Los Angeles, are part of a critical moment in California as feminist aesthetics and tactics took form in performance and conceptual art. Entering the public sphere and using the outdoor steps of highly symbolic downtown civic buildings as a stage to share, discuss, and shape discourse surrounding the prevalence of sexual violence and rape, Lacy & Labowitz took control of the sanitized neo-classical structures to challenge the urban alienation of women. In *Seven Weeks in May* (1977) and *In Mourning and In Rage* (1978), the artists unsettled the orderly image of Los Angeles's public policy epicenter by entering the space with performance art. Comparing Hsieh and Lacy & Labowitz's distinct uses of space reveals how structurally different Los Angeles and New York City were in the late 1970s and early 1980s. However, their kinesthetic occupations,

entering, living, using, and/or taking control of particular places, share a concern for the tactical and conceptual disruption of city space by racialized, gendered, and other marginalized bodies.

Occupation of public spaces in the city—the ability to enter, live in, use, and/or take control of an outdoor site for a prolonged period of time—might not seem like an outstanding act for some. Many individuals perform these daily actions without worry, standing in a lobby waiting for someone, sitting on a bench drinking coffee, or laying down in a park to take a nap. However, depending on context and identity, the very presence of an individual in a public space can be seen as a radical act. Until the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 in the United States, the mere presence or occupation of public or private spaces like schools, movie theatres, restaurants or hotels by Black Americans was considered illegal and an act of trespassing. Although the legality of these restrictions was challenged following the Civil Rights movement, continued racial segregation in the urban layout of American cities makes the occupation of certain sites, like gated communities and white suburbs, for Black individuals a symbolic and sometimes dangerous act of trespassing. In *Space, Place and Gender* (1994), the feminist geographer Doreen Massey outlines the way women's physical access to particular spaces was also historically constricted:

> "One of the most evident aspects of this joint control of spatiality and identity has been in the West related to the culturally specific distinction between public and private. The attempt to confine women to the domestic sphere was both a specifically spatial control and, through that, a social control on identity." (Massey 1994, 179)

Arguing that in "certain cultural quarters, the mobility of women does indeed seem to pose a threat to a settled patriarchal order," (Massey 1994, 11) she demonstrates how the simple act of entering and occupying a space deemed 'unnatural' for women might constitute an act of protest. Encouraging women to "keep moving," to affirm their "locatedness and

embeddedness/embodiedness," (Massey 1994, 11) in spaces that might otherwise feel hostile, Massey advocates for kinesthetic acts of occupation to disrupt habitual choreographies. Applying these notions of *locatedness* and *embeddedness*/*embodiedness* to performative gestures in the arts, this chapter outlines how performers entered, lived, used, and/or took control of symbolic sites as a deliberate means to subvert architectural functionalism with their bodies and transgress political economies of movement that otherwise oppressed them.

Although Hsieh and Lacy & Labowitz engage with different social issues, their performative occupation of urban sites shares a spatial politics that transgresses and trespasses on the reinscription of geographic scale, stretching the urban space of productive and reproductive activity, fracturing previous boundaries of daily intercourse and establishing new ones. (Smith 1992, 60) Their actions parallel a series of social, political, and cultural events in the United States from the 1950s onwards in which the kinesthetic presence of a body entering, living, using, and/or taking control by standing, sitting or laying down in a symbolic space was central. Prominent in this history is the Civil Rights movement during which sit-ins against racial discrimination became a principal tactic of mobilization: the Read's Drug Store sit-in in Baltimore, Maryland (1955), the Royal Ice Cream sit-in in Durham, North Carolina (1957), and the University of Chicago sit-ins in Chicago, Illinois (1966). Susan Leigh Foster describes one such example in 'Choreographies of Protest' (2003) when addressing the social power of stilled Black bodies during the 1960 Greensboro, North Carolina lunch counter sit-ins: "Not only did their sitting convey a double significance, as quotidian event and as protest, but it reverberated with the tension created among all the bodies who, in contrast, circulated through the space." (Foster 2003, 399) Reading the protestor's racialized bodies Foster outlines how entering, sitting down, and refusing to be moved in a particular architectural space took root as a "powerful

position from which to exert a sense of agency." (Foster 2003, 402) In addition, she grants importance to the "informal training program" (Foster 2003, 399) protestors underwent in preparation for their occupations. This designates these acts as intentional and embodied tactics, shared through performance and passed on through rehearsal. As such, similar occupation tactics were employed by the Disability Rights Movement in San Francisco (1977), the Feminist Movement, and the LGBT Rights Movements in Philadelphia (1965) and New York City (1966).

Performance artists were quick to employ occupation in New York City and Los Angeles with their own aesthetics throughout the 1970s. This includes the works of Asco (*First Supper (after a Major Riot*, 1974; *Decoy Gang War Victim*, 1974), David Hammons (*Bliz-aard Ball Sale*, 1983), Adrian Piper (*Catalysis IV*, 1974; *The Mythic Being: Cruising White Women*, 1975), and Stephen Varble (*Gutter Art*, 1975) among others. Like Hsieh and Lacy & Labowitz, these individuals entered, lived, used, and/or took control of public parks, sidewalks, and street gutters for prolonged periods of time as means of unsettling the coming and going of pedestrian bodies. Entering predominantly white, heteronormative, and patriarchal spaces policed by the choreographic norms of Los Angeles and New York City's infrastructure, their bodies challenged the habitual kinesthetic rhythms of unsuspecting audiences, their architectural environment, and the power structures that lied therein. The conceptual and physical shift in spatial consciousness they engendered, political in nature as they entered environments otherwise hostile to their very being, can be read through Marxist geographer David Harvey's notion of *geographical imagination*. Coined in 1973, Harvey defined this awareness as a lens that "enables the individual to recognize the role of space and place in his own biography, to relate to the spaces he sees around him, and to recognize how transactions between individuals and between organizations are affected by the space that separates them." (Harvey 2009, 24) Harvey's

geographical imagination emphasizes the agency of the individual artist to decodify distinct structures of power as they manifest themselves in architectural functionalism, thus granting them the ability to intervene kinesthetically with various embodied forms of occupation in outdoor public spaces.

The argument that the tactical occupation of outdoor, public urban spaces during the 1970s provided a kinesthetic break with normal *habitus* that shifted fixed notions of identity and placemaking is central to this chapter. In 'Towards a Kinesthetics of Protest' (2006), movement scholar Randy Martin describes how kinesthetic occupation, in his case sitting *still* during a lunch counter sit-in protest, transforms the spatial experiences of both the performer and the immediate audience:

> To still life freezes one of its principles and privileges one possibility over others. To protest the fixating effects of dominating powers aims to halt them in their tracks, but also to show what could emerge in the newly occupied space. There is always an audience lurking beyond the site that has been stilled. But there is also an audience within. Those who have gathered are witness to what they can make possible. Theirs is a spectacle that in giving others pause also deepens a view of what can be done. (Martin 2006, 800)

Martin allows us to consider how the kinesthetic occupation of a building, public highway or other architectural landmark might disrupt its use so that its "function in relation to larger principles of operation might be exposed." (Martin 2006, 798) This is to say that entering, living, using, and/or taking control of a particular place can block dominant racial, ethnic, and gendered logics; capitalistic and industrial motivations; as well as pedestrian and automotive rationalities where the dominant flow of movement is above all else primordial to the functioning of *habitus*. In this, we find the tools to approach performances by Tehching Hsieh, Suzanne Lacy & Leslie Labowitz in New York City and Los Angeles in the 1970s and 1980s as intentionally, socially

grounded inversions of polite society (Martin 2006, 798)—occupying otherwise undisturbed architectural sites and subverting their political economies of movement.

Tehching Hsieh:
Outdoor Piece

> The reason I chose to do it in the city is because the city mirrors people's circumstances and a highly cultivated social relationship. Most of my works have been done in the city. New York is the place that my life is closely associated with, so naturally, I chose New York.
>
> —Tehching Hsieh, *Out of Now: The Lifeworks of Tehching Hsieh* (2008)

From 1978 to 1986, the Taiwanese-born artist Tehching Hsieh completed five yearlong performances in and around New York City. Pushing the limits of endurance by subjecting his body and mind to overwhelming tasks and situations, Hsieh's public performances on and off of the streets of Manhattan garnered mythical status. In *One Year Performance 1981-1982 (Outdoor Piece)*, the third piece following two yearlong actions that had bound him to his studio in Tribeca,[104] Hsieh spent one year outside, not entering buildings or shelter of any sort. In a statement signed by a notary on September 26, 1981, the artist vouched to: complete a yearlong work; stay "OUTDOORS" for this period of time and never go inside; be in possession of a sleeping bag; and continue his performance until September 26, 1982 at 2 P.M. Moving through the city with a backpack containing basics items for living, he proceeded to physically join New York City's prominent homeless population as an individual living on and off of the street. The only visual marker that distinguished him from others was a placard tethered to his pack that

Figure 52. *One Year Performance 1981-1982 (Outdoor Piece)*. Teching Hsieh, 1981-1982.

[104] *Outdoor Piece* was preceded by *One Year Performance 1978-1979 (Cage Piece)* and *One Year Performance 1980-1981 (Time Clock Piece)*.

repeated the conditions of his work: “I shall stay outdoors for a year, never go inside. I shall not go into a building, subway, train, car, airplane, ship, or tent. I shall have a sleeping bag.” (Hughes 1982) In documentation of the work, Hsieh appears at multiple sites around New York City performing daily bodily tasks and rituals: drinking water out of a firehose, sleeping on a city bench, reading a map on a boardwalk, maintaining fire for heat under the Brooklyn Bridge, defecating off of a dock. Basic acts of eating, sleeping, washing, warming up, evacuating bodily waste, and passing time reading a book or listening to the radio became a central part of the work as Hsieh framed all of the year as within the bounds of the durational performance. This conceptual framework was made all the more stringent as he executed these activities under duress by imposing the task of remaining outdoors at all costs, foregoing the comforts and infrastructure of his, or any, interior spaces.

As time progressed, his physical demeanor changed—hair slowly growing after initially being shaved and clothes becoming more tattered—which in itself became a means of marking time with the passing of each season. Using a black and white printed map of the city and a red marker, Hsieh traced his trajectories through Manhattan, creating clear outlines of his occupation of large swaths of the island’s geography. The maps also included the times and locations of each meal, defecation, and sleep, as well as daily weather ranges and the amount of money spent on food. These objects reflect the actual economic framework of Hsieh’s work, his ability to sustain himself and survive off of purchased meals, which in turn affected

Figure 53. ***One Year Performance 1981-1982 (Outdoor Piece).*** **Detail of Maps. Teching Hsieh, 1981-1982.**

the trajectory of his movements throughout the city. Despite Hsieh's material wealth which distinguished him form the homeless bodies he joined in his errantry, in most of the documentation the artist seems to belong in his built environment by adapting to its changing conditions. If he stands out, it is because the landscapes he inhabits are empty of human activity.[105] An alien in his own right, he portrays the double-blind of his American status as an undocumented immigrant by being entirely visible and vulnerable to the state while also hiding in its infrastructure. At a time of increased policing of undocumented immigrants, and at a critical moment in U.S.-Taiwan relations, Hsieh's entering, living, and use of public space was consequential. Ingraining himself outdoors at the height of the 1980s homelessness crisis in New York City, his actions highlight the shifting housing market's effects on vulnerable populations by transforming the city into an extended homescape. Squatting, sitting, trespassing, and lying down, Hsieh employed tactics of kinesthetic occupation to oppose daily political economies of dynamic, ritualized movement rooted in the displacement of low-income populations, the erasure of racialized bodies in urban environments, and the growing investment of foreign money and trade into the U.S. housing and business markets.

Before outlining the ways in which *Outdoor Piece* entered New York City's urban infrastructure by repurposing it as an extended homescape, it is important to consider Tehching Hsieh's arrival to both the practice of performance art and the United States in the 1970s. Born to a middle-class family in southern Taiwan in 1950, Hsieh dropped out of high school at age

[105] *Outdoor Piece* was shown as a fifty-minute film in 1983 in California at the Pasadena Filmforum and in New York at the Franklin Furnace (Los Angeles Times "Pasadena Filmforum Event," 1983; New York Times "Art," 1983). In addition to showing the film, the Franklin Furnace exhibition included a "display of gear and clothing" Hsieh lived with during the performance (Glueck 1983). Hsieh is said to have negotiated the details of the exhibition while still performing *Outdoor Piece*, on the stoop of the Furnace since he could not enter the space (Carr 2015, 19). Exit Art's Jeanette Ingberman also created a catalog for the work in 1983 composed of a folder containing four seasonal portfolios. Consisting of 11" x 17" black and white photographs, it sold for $10 plus $1.50 in shipping from the gallery's location at 336 Canal Street, just blocks away from Hsieh's studio. (Burnham 1983, 3)

seventeen in order to focus on art making (Ang 2014). While completing a mandatory three-year service in the Taiwanese military starting in 1969, he primarily focused on painting. After exhibiting his work in 1973, Hsieh abandoned painting, and borrowing a Super-8 camera began developing more performative and conceptual work (Langenbach 2002, 47). In *Jump Piece* (1973), an early yet iconic work, Hsieh leapt from a second-story window and broke both of his ankles upon landing on the ground (Brezavscek 2013, 61). While the original film documenting the action was destroyed by the artist, a set of photographs capture the sequence in which his focus is placed on "the weight of the body and [his] willingness to actively hand it over to the unavoidable consequence" of falling (Brezavscek 2013, 61). As the art critic Pia Brezavscek describes it, "*Jump Piece* is an artwork suspending its limited temporality, full of potentiality, continuing to make an effect, triggering virtuality. Even if it is a failure, it is a promising one." (Brezavscek 2013, 62) Like Trisha Brown and Bas Jan Ader in the previous chapter, Hsieh's falling figure against the background of a two-story apartment building distorted architectural and spatial order.

In 1974, at age twenty-four, Hsieh sailed from Taiwan to America in order to make a new life (Heathfield 2009, 11). About this transition, the artist clearly states a desire to relocate to New York City because of its status as an art capital: "In 1974 I knew New York was the best place to learn art as it was the center of the art world … I wanted to leave [Taiwan] because I knew art there was limited [and I] wanted to learn more about art in New York." (Langenbach 2002, 46) Taking employment on an oil tanker, and jumping ship once it had docked on the Delaware River near Philadelphia, Hsieh entered the United States without a visa. Hiring a taxi for $150 to travel directly to New York and presenting himself at his half-sister's home (Sontag 2009), he found work cleaning floors at a Chinese restaurant (Langenbach 2002, 47). Avoiding

periodic raids by immigrant officials, he adopted the name "Sam Hsieh" (Ang 2014).[106] It is during this initial period in Manhattan that Hsieh took a critical step towards inscribing himself in the city's rapidly changing real estate market, renting a loft at 111 Hudson Street. With financial support from his family in Taiwan (Langenbach 2002, 47), the performance artist lay claim to a symbolic and increasingly sought-after living quarter. With a bare "compact loft space" in Tribeca that had "a ceiling over three meters high and a small kitchen with a coffee table towards one side," (Langenbach 2002, 47) Hsieh situated himself in lower Manhattan at the height of its irreversible shift towards loft living culture.

Overlooked in art criticism as a geographic landmark, 111 Hudson Street became an iconic address in and around where Hsieh organized his yearlong actions.[107] Most importantly, the loft allowed the artist to have stability in articulating different examples of entering, living, using, and/or taking control of a particular place as a kinesthetic tactic. Both *One Year Performance 1978-1979 (Cage Piece)* and *One Year Performance 1979-1980 (Time Clock Piece)* were made possible by readily available real estate in Tribeca in the late 1970s.[108] These works were themselves kinesthetic precursors to *Outdoor Piece*, acts of occupation that took place within the confines of Hsieh's abode. In *Cage Piece*, the artist locked himself in an 11.5-

[106] Much has been written about the many misspelling of Tehching Hsieh's name throughout the decades as it relates to his fugitive state and his ethnic identity in America. Misnamed in the pages of *High Performance* (Siskin 1981, 37), the *Los Angeles Times* (Eastham 1982), the *Boston Globe* (Engstrom 1984), and in the compendium DVD-ROM, *Tehching Hsieh: One Year Performance: Art Documents 1978-1999*, these slippages remind the viewer that Hsieh's life work is "partially predicated upon the fact of something being missed." (Cesare-Schotzko 2010, 176) During *Outdoor Piece*, the artist changed his name back to Tehching Hsieh (from Sam Hsieh) because he no longer feared his illegality (Heathfield 2009, 332).

[107] At the end of *Rope Piece* Jill Johnston wrote: "On July 4, 1983, Tehching Hsieh (formerly Sam) launched his fourth consecutive one-year performance at 111 Hudson Street, in the loft where he had lived for seven years." (Johnston 1984, 177) Her focus on the starting point of these yearlong performances is telling, elevating the loft space in Hsieh's overall oeuvre.

[108] All of Hsieh's one-year performances were pre-empted by a legal contract / performance statement outlining the parameters of the work (Cohen 2001). Officialised by a notary, the artist then signed these documents on which his studio address appeared centered at the bottom of the page.

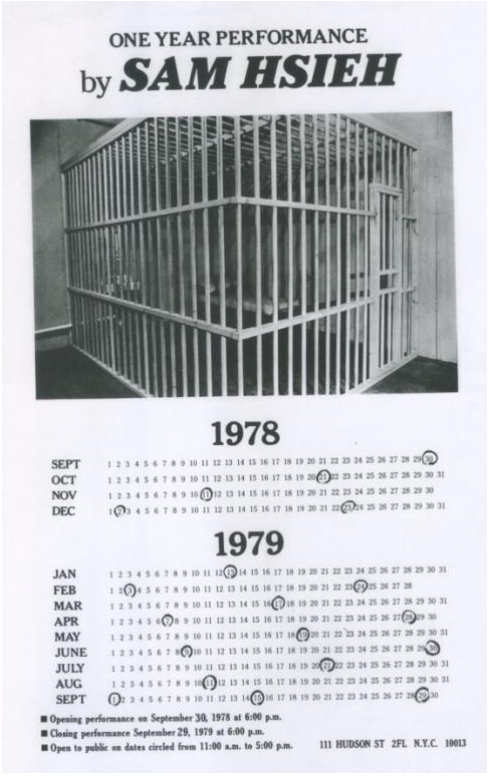

Figure 54. ***One Year Performance 1978-1979 (Cage Piece)*****. Tehching Hsieh, 1978-1979.**

by-9-by-8-foot wooden cage, furnished only with a wash basin, lights, a pail, and a single bed.[109] Not allowing himself to talk, read, write, or to listen to the radio or television, Hsieh depended on his loft mate who came daily to deliver food, remove waste, and take a photograph to document the project. Once or twice a month, the loft was open to an audience to view the work from 11am to 5pm. While some saw *Cage Piece* as a suspension of the artist's life (Smith 2009), Hsieh considered it as the start of his practice—a departure from his struggles "on the bottom line as an illegal immigrant, confronting culture shocks and [having] no idea how to start doing artworks." (De Jongh 2010, 4) Hsieh's prolonged occupation of his loft reconfigured his relationship to the interiority of the domestic sphere and the exteriority of public space, in addition to drawing attention to the geographic scales of his existence as an undocumented immigrant. This embodied change manifested itself most obviously upon completion of the work. Freed from the conceptual and physical constraints of the cage, the change in his bodily and spatial habits was so extreme that he stayed indoors most of the time and had difficulties maintaining balance while walking: "I went back to bed inside the cage to sleep at night. I felt peaceful in the cage." (O'Donnell 2014, 83) Geographically and kinaesthetically, *Cage Piece* marked a beginning for Hsieh as he anchored his durational

[109] As performance art became part of the mainstream, especially in New York City and California, media outlets began reporting on the otherwise obscure artform. Hsieh was even thought of as a "media doll" in 1984 by the art world (Johnston 1984).

performance practice in and around movement patterns and daily bodily activities related to his real estate at 111 Hudson Street.

Like all of the artists in this dissertation, Hsieh's use of his own living quarters as performance space and exhibition venue was driven by both necessity and conscious aesthetics. As such, the occupation of his loft during *Cage Piece* was extended the following spring in *One Year Performance 1979-1980 (Time Clock Piece)*. The artist punched a time clock installed in his apartment every hour on the hour, everyday day for an entire year. Each punch-in was catalogued with a photograph, which Hsieh then turned into a short animation bringing to life his yearlong work. In the documentation, Hsieh can be seen standing in the same location of his apartment, 8,760 times, dressed in a prison uniform. Relentlessly enacting the repetitive kinesthetic logic of capitalist labor (Bickers 2017), *Time Clock Piece* further geographically anchored Hsieh to 111 Hudson Street. Missing only 133 clock-ins (Ang 2014), the artist could never travel more than one hour's distance from his loft. Writing for *High Performance* in 1981, Jonathan Siskin recalls how it altered Hsieh's embodied relationship to daily activities: "I remember having dinner with Sam in the neighborhood and watching him interrupt his meal in order to race home and punch in. In a matter of minutes he had returned and was finishing his meal." (Siskin 1981, 37) In the same article, Siskin recounts how at the end of *Time Clock Piece*, on April 11, 1981, a crowd of about

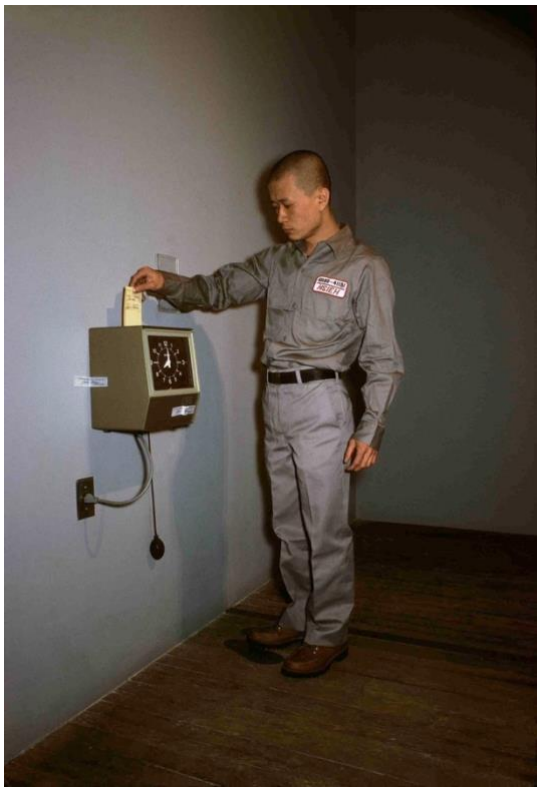

Figure 55. ***One Year Performance 1979-1980 (Time Clock Piece)*****. Teching Hsieh, 1979-1980.**

100 gathered "in the bare grey room" inside Hsieh's loft to witness the final punch-in.[110] Commenting on how the wooden enclosure from *Cage Piece* had been reconstructed and was on view in another room (Siskin 1981, 37), Siskin draws attention to Hsieh's use of 111 Hudson Street as a blurred site for exhibition, performance, and living. Hsieh's embodied and spatial relationship to his living quarters heavily determined the aesthetic outcomes of his performances, distorting the boundaries between art and real life like other artists in this dissertation. Hsieh reframed the geographic scales and movement economies of his loft through performances of occupation, his daily activities of living, using, and taking control of a particular place reconfiguring typical domestic and private infrastructure to reflect the spatial and kinesthetic restraints set upon his existence.

One Year Performance 1981-1982 (Outdoor Piece) permanently moved Hsieh outside of the relative security of his loft onto New York City's streets, extending the geographic scale of his domestic abode to the entirety of the metropolis. Performing the "stupefying feat of staying outdoors for the entire year, not even entering a store for food, far exceeding known movements of the normally homeless," (Johnston 2001, 141) he transposed his occupation of the interior space of 111 Hudson Street into the unprotected exterior public sphere. Declaring that he would not take shelter for an entire year during one of the coldest winters on record (Jeppesen 2017, 27), Hsieh packed a sleeping bag and knapsack to the which he affixed a sign specifying the rules of the performance. Described in the Chicago Tribune as spending "a year on the streets of

[110] In 1981, Kathleen A. Hughes wrote for The Wall Street Journal describing a final event for *Time Clock Piece* focusing on both the scene of people milling "around the loft, sipping wine and examining the time clock" and the thoughts of Leo Castelli on Hsieh's worth as an avant-garde artist (Hughes 1981). Writing for the Washington Post in 1986, Hilel Schwartz described *Cage Piece* as "hardship art", a genre rooted in mental toughness (Schwartz 1986).

Figure 56. ***One Year Performance 1981-1982 (Outdoor Piece)*****. Teching Hsieh, 1981-1982.**

New York" ("Artists at end of their rope in ceremony," Chicago Tribune 1984) and in the Wall Street Journal as "Mr. Hsieh's Latest Performance: Keeping Warm Was the Easy Part" (Hughes 1982), the performance reframed the architecture of the city as daily living quarters for many individuals just as "homelessness was entering the national lexicon." (Ziolkowski 1995, 11) Meticulously recorded by daily annotated maps, a set of one hundred photographs taken by the artist himself and Robert Attanasio, and a series of four posters, the volume of documents showing and/or depicting Hsieh imbedded in New York City's landscape is overwhelming.[111]

Reading *Outdoor Piece* through the lens of occupation, as Hsieh entered, lived, and used New York City as an extended homescape, reframes the erasure of his racialized body as an undocumented Taiwanese immigrant in America. While California supplanted New York as the most ethnically diverse state during the 1970s ("California surpasses…," The Atlanta Constitution 1981), an important increase in immigration from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and mainland China grew throughout the country at the start of the 1980s (Coakley 1982). More than one-third new arrived Chinese chose to settle in New York City,[112] as did a majority of investors

[111] Reinforcing this notion of New York City and its streets as a core tenet of the work, Nikki Cesare-Schotzko describes documentation of *Outdoor Piece* as a "picture-postcard narrative of New York City." (Cesare-Schotzko 2010, 176)

[112] The 1980 census showed that the New York metropolitan area was home to more foreign-born people than those "born in other parts of the United States." (Herbers 1982)

leaving Hong Kong or Taiwan because of political and social conditions (Coakley 1982; Cummings 1984). New York City's Chinatown, which once had precise boundaries (Ferretti 1984), was no longer easily defined with a shifting and spreading community. One particular change occurred as new immigrant populations moved out of downtown areas towards the suburbs (Herbers 1983; Kleiman 1982) where "Oriental food shops" were said to be "sprouting" […] like cloud mushrooms after a heavy rain." (Ivins 1981) Described as "ethnic outposts" (Kleiman 1982) in the pages of the New York Times, these concentrations of immigrants from Asia moved away from the high rents in Manhattan and overcrowding in Chinatown into neighborhoods of Brooklyn and Queens (Quindlen 1980). Beset by linguistic and cultural isolation in some cases (Quindlen 1980), but also fueling New York City's economic and real estate growth, these new arrivals contributed to the city's rapidly changing urban fabric with their movements towards new enclaves in the city.

Hsieh's Taiwanese nationality raises additional questions about his participation in the diaspora that shaped American cities in the 1980s.[113] American foreign policy vis-a-vis Taiwan in the early 1980s was particularly relevant in the scheme of global capitalism. As Taiwan and China continued to dispute the official title of the Republic of China,[114] the United States was keen on gaining strategic geopolitical and economic hold on the region. Following a renewed agreement with Peking (now Beijing) in 1980, American attempts at establishing liaisons in Taiwan were stressed (Burks 1980). As Peking started new efforts to recover Taiwan (Butterfield 1980), and as the United States weighed selling arms to the island nation (Gelb 1982), the USA

[113] Hsieh only became an official U.S. citizen in 1994.
[114] The One-China Policy dates back to 1972 when President Nixon and American officials drafted a communiqué committing the United States to a policy of a single China, "with the future of Taiwan to be determined among the Chinese themselves." (Wren 1982) By the early 1980s, Peking often accused Washington of violating this understanding by meddling in the internal affairs of China by selling arms to Taiwan.

became a figurative and literal battleground of ideals. These tensions had real repercussions, including a dispute at the 1980 Winter Olympic Games that erupted as the Taiwanese delegation was denied entry when athletes presented identity cards using the name of "Republic of China." (Basler 1980; Reich 1981) As editorials and articles in the country's top newspapers debated the complexity of issues surrounding the One-China Policy and America's position on it (Chai 1980, 1982, 1984; Farnsworth 1981; Nixon 1982; Oakes 1980; Worthington 1980), Taiwan grew as an economic partner with prospects of tourism and financial partnerships (Kamm 1981; Butterfield 1984; Wren 1983).

In New York City, government officials weighed investing in Taiwan (Radin 1982), as illustrated by Borough President Donald R. Manes who headed a trade mission to attract investors to Queens ("Manes Plans a Trip…," New York Times 1982). As global superpowers engaged in tense diplomatic exchanges, ramifications were felt in the city's development. Part of "New York's new Asians," (Quindlen 1980) Hsieh's occupation of the city materialized around the embodied complexities of his undocumented immigration as well as his investment at 111 Hudson Street as a participant in an important urban regeneration project engendered by artists.

With these foreign investments and changes in urban demographics, New York City continued to be an epicenter of debates on integration and immigration rights.[115] These particular tensions had important effects on the spatial and kinaesthetic lives of undocumented immigrants, many of whom embodied a reality in which the architecture of the city posed both threats and opportunities to their survival. This was especially true of the recent wave of undocumented immigrants, of which there were said to be an estimated 750,000 to one million living in the New

[115] An increase in arrests by Immigration and Naturalization Services in the 1970s led to the introduction of the Simpson-Mazzoli Immigration Reform and Control Bill in 1982 to "close the back door to immigration" by making it a criminal offense to hire an illegal alien (Kee 2016).

York area alone (Crewdson 1980). While some argued that these individuals, regardless of their legal status, helped create new kinds of business opportunities in a fiscally struggling environment (Kleiman 1982; 1983), others felt them to be a strain on the city, "particularly its educational, health and police services." (Goodwin 1981) Advocating for the usefulness of undocumented immigrants in developing real estate in 1981, Mayor Edward Koch declared that he "love[d] them" because they filled up small buildings that had been boarder up for years (Reeves 1981). Public statements like these furthered the notion that individuals like Hsieh were living "relatively normal lives" in the United States (Sciolino 1984).

This was largely inaccurate as the early 1980s spelled the beginning of multiple raids in large metropolitan areas where undocumented individuals were identified by immigration agents and rounded up for deportation and/or imprisonment. This included one instance where 5,500 people were taken into custody across the country, which federal officials framed through economic and labor terms as an "attempt to recapture jobs paying more than the minimum wage for unemployed American citizens." ("Aliens Back at Old Jobs…," The Atlanta Constitution 1982) While Central and South Americans continued to be particularly targeted, Asian restaurant employees working without proper documents were equally at risk (Greer 1984). Avoiding periodic raids by immigration officials at the Chinese restaurants where he worked in 1974, Hsieh was no stranger to the political state of exception his undocumented status cast him as. This embodied state of fugitivity and trespassing, continuously at odds and physically recalcitrant in the space of New York City where he lived

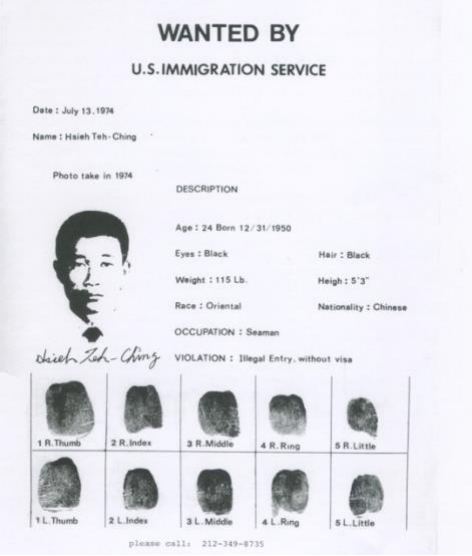

Figure 57. *Wanted*. Tehching Hsieh, 1978.

and worked because it both sheltered him while simultaneously exposing him to deportation, shaped the trajectory of his movements.

With this context in mind *Outdoor Piece* fits within a broader narrative of immigration disputes and displacement in New York City in the early 1980s. As Asian-American communities contributed to shaping the city and shifting real estate markets, many attempted to remain invisible to the state. Hsieh's explicit act of kinesthetic occupation, living on the street where he ultimately could not hide, displayed spatial and kinesthetic protest as he refused to be erased by evading public spaces. Reproducing the aesthetic of a "wanted by US Immigration Service" poster to advertise the work (Heathfield 2009, 326), Hsieh listed four important locations and addresses he inhabited over the year: "Tribeca Park: West Broadway & Beach St, N.Y.C."; "Doorway: 111 Hudson St. N.Y.C. 10013"; "New City Court Park: Franklyn at Center St. NYC"; and "Brooklyn Bridge: South St. Under Bridge." The photos in each poster showed Hsieh using a different site during every season: Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer.[116] Denaturalizing the blankness of traditional mugshots used to identify individuals in wanted posters by replacing it with the city as backdrop, *Outdoor Piece*'s promotional material centered on Hsieh's

Figure 58. ***One Year Performance 1981-1982 (Outdoor Piece)*****. Poster for Performance. Teching Hsieh, 1981-1982.**

[116] Hsieh began using mock wanted posters in 1978, on the occasion of his first yearlong performance. Featured in the exhibition *Illegal America* at Exit Art, these works resonated "with the courts' practice of referring to illegal aliens as "undocumented," or individuals defined by their lack of requisite documentation and permission paperwork." (Kee 2016) *Outdoor Piece* marks the first time Hsieh represented a space other than his own loft in these posters. In addition, Hsieh expanded his regular listing of 111 Hudson Street at the bottom of each poster to other locations.

body as it transformed New York into an extended homescape. Like the many maps outlining his use of Manhattan for cleaning, eating, defecating, and sleeping, this archive of still images slowed the otherwise dynamic and hectic landscape into a domestic environment (La Chance 2017, 17). These moments of stillness and immobility, a result of entering, living, and using particular sites within the city for daily bodily rituals, became a crucial entry point into the work.[117] His stopping *there* to be documented stilled the landscape into a cogent moment, one in which his body stood against varying New York City backdrops. It did so even as he, an undocumented immigrant, continued to exist at the edges of public visibility (Heathfield 2009, 11). These documents revealed Hsieh's fugitive body occupying a space that was legally not his, his embodied political state of exception manifesting itself continually as he refused to seek interior refuge: "outside in order to go nowhere in particular, he lingers in the locale of his chosen but not yet sanctioned "home," disappeared at its margins, trapped once again in a kind of restless internal exile." (Heathfield 2009, 40)[118]

In an altercation on February 25, 1982, while sitting on the corner of a private doorstep in Tribeca drinking tea, Hsieh was attacked by the building owner who accused the artist of trespassing and allegedly threw an iron rod at him (Hughes 1982). Defending himself with a set of nunchucks he carried with him for protection, Hsieh was charged with possession of a criminal weapon and second-degree assault. Once located by the New York City Police Department on May 3, 1982, (Siskin 1982, 76) he was forcefully surrounded, grabbed, and

[117] When asked about people finding him during *Outdoor Piece*, Hsieh responded that only some artists were able to locate him but that he mostly avoided them: "During the work I tended not to have audience getting into my life. The work was isolated." (Heathfield 2009, 327)

[118] Michaël La Chance argues in Inter that these maps allow Hsieh to remain visible to observers through the traces of his activities, his cartography performs its own occupation of the city outlasting the event itself. (La Chance 2017, 17)

brought into the precinct station where he was detained for fifteen hours (Kee 2016). Documentation of him resisting arrest was featured in one of the promotional posters (Summer) as well as in an issue of High Performance magazine (1982). Following this breach in Hsieh's performance contract, and this threat to his status in the United States,[119] the initial hearing for his case was allowed to occur with the artist remaining outside of the courthouse—"an act that acknowledged art as constituting its own semi-autonomous domain." (Kee 2016) This climactic series of events, resisting arrest following an accusation of trespassing and being granted allowance to remain outdoors during his case hearing, underscored how Hsieh's yearlong performance engaged in a "recalcitrant physicality that refuse[d] to comply with the bodies of those in positions of authority." (Foster 2003, 396) Susan Leigh Foster further describes the kinesthetic potency of protesting bodies, "the process of creating political interference calls forth a perceptive and responsive physicality that, everywhere along the way, deciphers the social and then choreographs and imagined alternative." (Foster 2003, 412) In *Outdoor Piece,* Hsieh used the realities of his undocumented body traversing Manhattan as an opportunity to articulate an "imaginative rebuttal" (Foster 412) to movement economies that otherwise restricted his agency, living and using the city in plain sight as a form of kinesthetic occupation.

Figure 59. *One Year Performance 1981-1982 (Outdoor Piece)*. Teching Hsieh, 1981-1982.

[119] Attesting to his active fear of deportation, Hsieh has said about the incident: "I knew that I might not only have to go inside: that I might be deported form the country." (Heathfield 2009, 328)

The arrest was also critical as it outlined how "Hsieh obsessively occupie[d] himself with carving out fragile, temporary homes that [were] distributed across the city, and [that] he never colonize[d]" but instead remained suspended in them in what various authorities could frame as a form of trespassing (Parr 2005, 333). This description by Adrian Parr attests to Hsieh's occupation of New York City, whose yearlong action continuously entered, lived, used, and took temporary control of particular places without holding onto them as individual property (i.e. colonizing them). This spatial and embodied act of carving out places to accomplish daily activities was a fragile one. Climbing out of the 1975 fiscal crisis, New York City's economy was cautiously transitioning with a boom on Wall Street fueling speculative real estate markets and unemployment numbers dropping noticeably. Although Mayor Ed Koch balanced the city's budget in 1981, effectively ending its financial crisis and allowing government to re-enter the bond market and raise cash, the metropolis still retained its reputation for crime and disorder. This conflicted political economy, of growth and purported grime, paved the way for confrontations between the city's projected image for itself and recalcitrant movement-based-performances. In the event surrounding the altercation with a building owner, Hsieh's temporary home placed him at odds with economic and real estate delineations that increasingly distinguished private and public properties in Manhattan. Having crossed an invisible boundary from the public space of the street into the architectural property of an individual, the NYPD was called in to enforce this distribution of power between "homeless man" and "building owner." Hsieh's forceful removal from the street by the police challenged the choreographic parameters of the work, remaining outdoors to exert a yearlong bodily right to a city in rapid economic and real estate expansion.

Recognizing his tenuous position facing the law, Hsieh stated "I hope I can stay outside and finish my work, […] But if they ask me to go inside the court building, I will. I understand reality. It's not a regular building. It's the law." (Hughes 1982) This allusion to the New York City Criminal Court on 100 Center Street (Kee 2016), next to Chinatown, as "not a regular building" but a representation of the law is itself potent. It indicates that according to the artist architectural structures in the city were instilled with different types of authority. Hsieh was aware of New York City's infrastructure as a system of power relations, and of his own body as an agent maneuvering the outdoor gaps between these various interior spaces. The act of living, using, and taking control of particular exterior sites throughout the city as a homescape placed *Outdoor Piece* within the kinesthetic and spatial logics usually reserved for homeless populations, an urban community acutely in tune with the occupation of the public sphere as they carve out fragile, temporary homes for survival.

Figure 60. ***One Year Performance 1981-1982 (Outdoor Piece)*****. Teching Hsieh, 1981-1982.**

Describing *Outdoor Piece* as an exploration of the "indifferent and often violent urban jungle" for High Performance (1982), Jonathan Siskin gestures towards Hsieh's performance as it related to choreographies of the urban homeless (Siskin 1982, 76). Employing descriptive terms like roaming, observing, watching, prowling, and coming into contact, Siskin's animalistic characterizations places the movement-based-performance into a "reality different from most" by

addressing the dehumanization Hsieh and others like him underwent.[120] These action-based verbs characterize kinesthetic occupation in recalcitrant opposition to other normative and ingrained patterns of dynamic motion like walking and/or driving through. They lack the clear intentionality, direction, and dynamism of routine choreographies associated with New York City's inhabitants. Instead, they suggest a kind of lingering and durational presence that goes against the efficient circulation of bodies. Siskin's article, entitled "Still Doing Time: Tehching Hsieh," underscores that with no shelter for a year, with literally "no place to hide," (Siskin 1982, 76) Hsieh's roaming produced an exposure akin to the spatial logic of incarceration which leaves the body in a kind of kinesthetic limbo, going literally nowhere.

Critic Ray Langenbach echoes this by arguing that Hsieh's performances produce a dialectic between motion and stillness, or more precisely they gesture towards "*impossibility* of stillness." (Langenbach 2007, 115) In "Moving Pictures: The persistence of locomotion," Langenbach highlights that for the "illegal immigrant, even standing still is a form of movement." (Langenbach 2007, 121) In *Outdoor Piece,* this impossibility of stillness is traced in Hsieh's embodied routines, the lingering that accompanies his daily rituals of moving through the city to survive and fulfill bodily needs. This "inhabitation of the outside," as Adrian Heathfield describes it (Heathfield 2009, 37), placed him at odds with New York City's habitual dynamic choreographies, increased privatization of public spaces, and the development of

[120] Siskin's likening of Hsieh to an animal seems to have been derived from his conversations with and observations of the artist, as made apparent when he reflects: "As he prowls the city, Tehching says he feels more and more like a wolf, a scorned animal others would just as soon spit upon." (Siskin 1982, 76) Travis Jeppesen also employs an animalistic reading of *Outdoor Piece*: "Surrendering to the natural elements for a prolonged period makes one, in effect, an animal." (Jeppesen 2017, 27) In a 1996 issue of Performance Art Journal recapping an exhibition entitled *Endurance* at Exit Art, *Cage Piece* was misnamed "Cell Piece." ("Endurance Art," Performance Art Journal 1996, 68) The slippage attests to references to the carceral system found within the structure of the performance, something Hsieh remains somewhat ambiguous about in his descriptions of it. Instead, his use of the word "cage" evokes the animalistic—a structure of bars or wires in which *otherwise free to roam* animals are confined.

previously vacant real estate. While it might be tempting to characterize this work as an act of locomotion, since Hsieh spent so much time moving across the city, Heathfield points to occupation as an organizing kinesthetic logic:

> "Hsieh's journey transects the liminal space of the pedestrian jumble, a space that is itself defined by embodied movements and transactions. His course across this space is both symbolically and experientially distinct from the mainstream flow. Hsieh inhabits the street, he is not just moving through it. […] Stripped of housing, and without objective other than survival in the open, Hsieh is suspended, loitering, drifting; uncertain of his destination, his course is determined by organic choices, by physical necessities or by aimless whim." (Heathfield 2009, 37)

Heathfield's analysis demonstrates how Hsieh's overall actions are defined less by the coherence of their trajectories within an overall context, instead taking shape because of the sites they descend and took hold upon.[121] Suspended, loitering, drifting, and lingering, Hsieh's trajectories were organized by bodily needs, with the overall landscape of New York City becoming a homescape for the execution of daily rituals. Constantly present in the fabric of the city, transforming the environment with the yearlong act of *being* there, the occupation of New York City's geographic "frame" (Grey 1984, 24) and scale was a guiding principle of the work.

Reflecting on this transformation the city's kinesthetic and spatial function in *Outdoor Piece*, Hsieh repeatedly described occupying Manhattan. Scaling upwards from previous works, where the space of the cage and loft allowed the artist to explore logics of confinement through embodied acts of occupation, the city now became an expanded organizing structural grid that determined his patterns of motion:

> In this piece, I expanded my activity to treat the whole city as my home. For instance, Chinatown was my kitchen; the Hudson River was my bathroom; those parking lots, empty swimming pools, and small parks were my bedroom. In winter, the Meat Market West of 14th Street was my fireplace: I built a fire there to keep myself warm. I was very

[121] Further in his reflection on *Outdoor Piece*, Heathfield seems to come closer to a description of a kinesthetic occupation of the city: "[Hsieh] marks the streets of Manhattan, not just as a space of counter-productive lingering, but as a contemplative space where walking may decelerate into living low." (Heathfield 2009, 39)

> close to this city, but at the same time, very alienated from the society. (Heathfield 2009, 330)

This transposing of New York City's outdoor spaces into a comprehensive domestic landscape allowed Hsieh's actions in "private, but out in public, [to modify] the rigidity of his environment." (Parr 2005, 334) This yearlong occupation shifted architectural functionalism by denaturalizing public space and its pedestrian choreographies. As capitalization and privatization of public sites forced movement economies to become predetermined, Hsieh actions proposed "stalling, deferral and muses of time as a means to access alternate realities." (Heathfield 2009, 39) These kinesthetic pauses, living *in* instead of passing *through,* were often likened to the embodied realities of the homeless in the 1980s which carried political significance in an increasingly sanitized, privatized, and developed cityscape.

The rising number of homeless individuals in New York City during *Outdoor Piece* was part of an urban crisis that shaped the "fabric of the city." ("N.Y. offering little refuge…," The Atlanta Constitution 1981) Composed in large part of young men in their 20s and 30s, this growing population was described by the regional director of the state's Office of Mental Health as "a new generation of urban nomads." (Brown 1981) Condemned for having a "devastating effect on the way New Yorkers perceive the quality of life," the homeless lived on "sidewalks, doorways and passenger terminals." ("Hysteria and the Homeless," New York Times 1981) Said to be "found in almost every part of the city," seeking "temporary shelter" until they were "chased away by the police," ("New York City's homeless…," The Sun 1981) the media's characterization of the homeless sheds light on their vulnerability and on the instability of their occupancy. Precariously "inhabiting" the city with a "shuffle" and "crouch," (Bird "Help is Urged…," 1981) their movements on the streets made them simultaneously visible, a "unduly"

disturbance to communities (Bird “Help is Urged…,” 1981), and invisible, "out of sight in cardboard boxes and packing cases.” (“New York City’s homeless…,” The Sun 1981) Amongst the many causes listed for their prevalence included the unduly discharge of patients from mental institutions following federal cuts in social service programs (“3,600 Reported Homeless…,” The Atlanta Constitution 1981), a lack of available shelters and of mental health services (“New York City Ships…,” The Atlanta Constitution 1983),[122] and rising unemployment coupled with inadequate housing (Asinof 1982). According to a report by the Community Service Society of New York, an estimated 2.5 million people annually were being involuntarily displaced from their homes “as a result of gentrification—the process by which a poor neighborhood is taken over and renovated by the upwardly mobile—and by economic development and inflated rents.” (Asinof 1982) In *Homelessness in New York City: Policymaking from Koch to de Blasio* (2017), public affairs scholar Thomas J. Main outlines the many ways in which real estate developers and magnates drove up property values in the 1980s, influencing local officials to grant them favorable contracts, who in turn neglected to serve increasingly low-income populations with public programs, financial support or other policy initiatives. The crisis surrounding the homeless was a direct product of New York City’s shifting urban landscape and real estate market.

With the movements of homeless individuals through the city came additional issues of local community resistance to projects seeking to create infrastructure to alleviate the crisis. Feeling that their neighborhoods “were about to be invaded,” (“Hysteria and Homeless,” New

[122] In 1983, hundreds of homeless families were moved from New York City to New Jersey where they were housed in temporary hotels costing thirty-three dollars a night. (“City homeless spilling…,” New York Amsterdam News 1983) A class action suit was subsequently filed in the Superior Court holding the city responsible for negligence in accommodating the homeless. (“New York City Sued,” New York Times 1983)

York Times 1981) borough residents were reticent to offer temporary or permanent refuge in their backyards (Carmody 1981; Dietz 1981).[123] The term "invaded" is especially salient here, suggesting that the homeless might enter a neighborhood and become an occupying, trespassing force that disturbed the normative spatial order. Religious leaders and government authorities pointed fingers at each other for failing to offer proper living conditions (Anderson 1982). Unable to decide between a strategy that prioritized large shelters or smaller residences within communities (Carmody 1981), local officials appeared to be largely at a loss. Mayor Koch, who increased spending on the homeless from $8 million in 1978 to $27 million in 1982 (Cummings 1982), attempted to shift the narrative by claiming that New York City was doing more for the homeless than any other place in the country (Anderson 1982). These new measures largely coincided with a court-approved consent decree signed in 1981 with the Coalition for the Homeless that forced the city to give shelter to any homeless individual who requested it (Daley 1982; "New York OK's…," Boston Globe 1981).[124] The city attempted to bypass this court order by establishing shelters that did not meet minimum living standards (Gruson 1982); converting armories in each borough into temporary refuges (Herman "City Plans…," 1981; "New York Struggling…," 1982); sending people out of the city to the Catskills (Herman "City's Homeless Rejecting…," 1981);[125] and conducting a commission to count the city's vagrants in an apparent maneuver to contest the statistics behind the crisis as a whole (Herman "City to Make a

[123] New York City's program for the homeless involved a lot of transit, as men rode buses to shelters where they slept in the evening but were then brought back to other sites for daily meals and showers ("Hidden Money for the Homeless," New York Times 1982). City officials looked for ways of centralizing to reduce costs, seeking permanent locations where all needs could be addressed.

[124] Specific to homeless men, a later decree in 1981 extended these same rights to women ("Lawyers Terms Shelters for Women Inadequate," New York Times 1982).

[125] Removing the homeless from the city was common practice. Since 1935, Camp La Guardia in Chester, New York, the former site of a women's prison, acted as a "retreat" for homeless men (Bird "Retreat for City's Homeless," 1981).

Count…," 1981).[126] This continuous displacement and dislodging of the homeless created a particularly precarious embodied and physical reality, their occupation and taking control of any one place constantly under threat of removal as an act of trespassing. Largely uncared for, passed on, and relegated to the outskirts, the movement economies of the homeless in New York City followed the pathways set by increased privatization of public space, poor city planning, strained resources, and the real estate ambitions of politicians and developers.

Read through the lens of the homeless crisis, specifically as it relates to the choreographic and embodied reality of living on the streets in New York City during the 1980s, *Outdoor Piece* generates a strong statement about the extreme "geographical and geopolitical circumstances of [Hsieh's] fugitive body." (Garoian 2002, 164) Given the changing landscape of the city, which he experienced while simultaneously juggling the instability of his undocumented reality (Garoian 2002, 164), Hsieh was in continuous defiance of the spatial and movement norms that governed metropolitan spaces. As art historian Joan Kee argues, "the built environment figures as a set of impediments that the individual body must negotiate," which suggests "that living in the city obligates its inhabitants to undertake a kind of uncompensated labor." (Kee 2016) This recalcitrant work and labor was especially relevant to the homeless in 1981 as New York City denied basic rights to shelters. Hsieh highlighted the kinesthetic labor of a minotarian occupation, a yearlong act of embodied visibility in a hostile built environment. Images of Hsieh sleeping, bathing, and defecating in/on the city underscore "the extent to which the homeless body is subject to public scrutiny" in the ways that its movements are always visible and public. (Kee 2016) Hsieh also simultaneously seemed to generate a measure of agency not generally

[126] The commission idea was ultimately abandoned (Herman 1982).

ascribed to the homeless. Entering, living, using, and/or taking control of particular places became ways for the artist to "domesticate the outside environs, transforming what is ordinarily understood as public space into a quasi-private realm." (Kee 2016) This kinesthetic occupation of the outdoors allowed Hsieh to assert his presence as a rightful citizen of the city, lingering in the anonymity of the street as a means of subverting his undocumented immigrant status and claiming the sidewalk as his home.

In his own reflections on *Outdoor Piece*, Hsieh likened himself to the homeless by speaking to both the spaces he inhabited and the urban choreographies of New York City:

> The way that I lived in the street was more like homeless people. Concerning my everyday activities, I didn't have any specific plan. I was loitering around aimlessly. The major location for my action was below 14th Street in downtown Manhattan. In the early eighties there were many obsolete grounds and larger spaces downtown. This kind of ecology was suited for the gathering of the homeless and artists. (Heathfield 2009, 330)

Transforming the entirety of Manhattan into a homescape, Hsieh's "loitering around aimlessly" shifted the public architecture of everyday spaces into a domestic scale. This act of occupation created what art historian Rosalyn Deutsche describes as "spatial tactics" which reveals "the social relations that constitute both aesthetic and urban spaces." (Deutsche 1996, xvii) In her seminal work *Evictions: Art and Spatial*

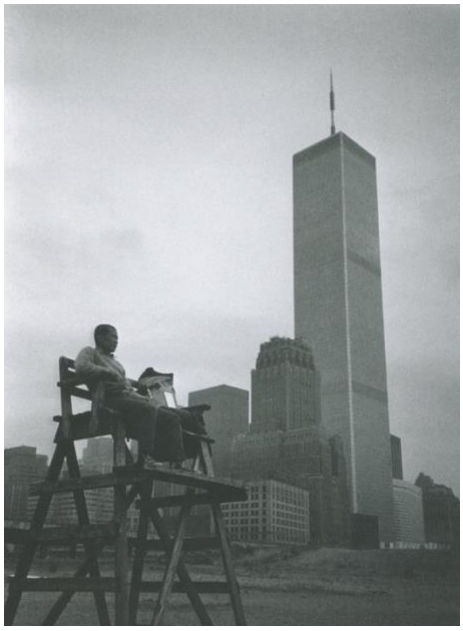

Figure 61. ***One Year Performance 1981-1982 (Outdoor Piece).*** **Teching Hsieh, 1981-1982.**

Politics (1996), [127] Deutsche argues that "homeless people and public space are integrally linked, dual products of the spatioeconomic conflicts that constitute contemporary urban restructuring." (Deutsche 1996, xv) This offers a socio-political and economic lens to think of *Outdoor Piece* as a tactical yearlong action that disrupted, "rather than secure[d], the apparent coherence of its new urban sites." (Deutsche 1996, xvi) Embodying the critical idea that "public space is not a preconstituted entity created for users; [but] arises only from a practice (or counterpractice) of use by those groups excluded from dominated space" (Deutsche 1996, xvi), Hsieh challenged deeply ingrained and emerging movement and spatial codes in New York City by denaturalizing the outdoors through daily tasks otherwise ascribed to the interior privacy of the home.[128]

While it is tempting to seamlessly ascribe *Outdoor Piece* to the narrative of the homeless crisis during the early 1980s, it is also true that the "qualities of Hsieh's existence in this work are quite distinct from the life of the homeless." (Heathfield 2009, 40) For one, Hsieh was never dependent on the street itself for income. In addition to leveraging his loft for spending money by subletting it during his performance (Kee 2016), his daily maps testify to his regular expenditures on food and other goods (Heathfield 2009, 40). In fact, Hsieh initially rented the loft at 111 Hudson Street in 1974 with the help of his family in Taiwan (Langenbach 2002, 47),

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[127] Deutsche's first chapter focuses on a spatial, social, and aesthetic analysis of Polish-born artist Krzysztof Wodiczko's *Homeless Projections* and sites of urban revitalization in New York City in the 1980s. While quite different than Hsieh's work in both its overt political nature, use of spectacle, and general aesthetics, Wodiczko's oeuvre engages the homeless crisis in a way that underscores its relationship to architecture. One might argue that Wodiczko's white-European identity gave him more security within the city, while Hsieh "wearing an Asian skin that he cannot hide, and being abject in this society of the street, [risked] far more than the discovery of his inauthenticity as a street inhabitant." (Heathfield 2009, 39)

[128] In a 1981 issue of the New York Times, David Bird wrote an article in which homeless men were depicted performing regular tasks on the street. Photographs captioned "Poignant Scene at Garbage Can," When It's Time to Sleep," and "Shampoo, Street Style," attempt to humanize the men (Bird "Help is Urged…," 1981). These images recall *Outdoor Piece*'s documentation, maps and photographs depicting an occupation of large swaths of the city for domestic purposes.

who also helped support *Cage Piece* with a $10,000 gift (Sontag 2009). One of the most important aspects of his legal defense following his arrest during *Outdoor Piece* was to deny supposition of permanent vagrancy to the court (Kee 2016). As Frazer Ward argues, “Hsieh’s privation must also be seen as the paradoxical exercise of a privilege that goes to the complex economic realities of illegal immigration.” (Ward 2006, 11) As such, Hsieh’s performance was not a literal attempt at becoming homeless. Instead, the yearlong action allowed the artist to temporarily embody the extremes of living on the street all the while knowing that the work would come to a decisive end.[129] While the “conceptualization and performance of *Outdoor Piece* overlapped with contemporary debates over the criminalization of the homeless” (Kee 2016), it does so at the “border: neither in, nor out, nor on.” (Langenbach 2007, 121) In this privileged economic standing, Hsieh can be said to once again be laboring in a position of occupation—"caught between the frames” (Langenbach 2007, 122) of a double identity. Entering, living, using, and taking control of an embodied reality that was other to him, Hsieh appropriated social positions from his adopted city and reproduced them as aesthetic, conceptual, and kinesthetic signifiers (Langenbach 2007, 121)

[129] As Adrian Heathfield argues, his “hovering and transitivity ask us both to distinguish him from the human beings he lives in proximity with, and simultaneously to imagine their state as an elemental condition of our own lives.” (Heathfield 2009, 40)

In the wake of *Outdoor Piece,* Hsieh embarked on one last yearlong performance by collaborating with fellow performance artist Linda Mary Montano in *One Year Performance 1983-1984 (Rope Piece)*[130]. In it, the artists lived for an entire year bound to each other by an eight-foot long segment of rope. Tied at the waste, they performed daily tasks while never becoming separated from each other.[131] Once again, Hsieh entered, lived, used, and took control of a space as a means of subverting spatial and movement economies in New York City. As Mark McCain described it for the Boston Globe at the time, "Congested streets, revolving doors, public restrooms and crowded subways are challenging. Bicycle rides through Central Park and touch football are impossible." (McCain 1983) Sleeping in an "austere loft on two narrow beds 3 feet apart," (McCain 1983) Hsieh and Montano reshaped the domestic architecture of the home, occupying both public and private spaces in ways that kinesthetically denaturalized them.[132] Charles Leroux captured the importance of their collaborative motion by describing the choreography between their two bodies as a "kind of dance," one primarily composed of "negotiation." (Leroux 1984) Hsieh and Montano's occupation became coherent because of their cohabitation, moving in a multitude of

Figure 62. *One Year Performance 1983-1984 (Rope Piece)*. Linda Montano and Tehching Hsieh, 1983-1984.

[130] Of all of Hsieh's one-year performances, *Rope Piece* was by far the most featured in both art specific and mainstream media. This is in large part attributable to Montano's notoriety as a feminist performance and visual artist prior to the collaboration. The piece was covered across the country in the Detroit Free Press (Schwartz 1983), the Philadelphia Inquirer (Salisbury 1983), the Boston Globe (McCain 1983), Vogue (Liebman 1984), the Chicago Tribune (Leroux 1984), and The Atlanta Constitution ("The ties that binds…," The Atlanta Constitution 1983).

[131] The difficulties of a state of uninterrupted and prolonged exposure to each other are well documented in various accounts of the piece. Beyond simple daily disagreements about domestic rituals, Montano and Hsieh were said to have completely different interpretations of the work. (Burnham 1986, 15)

[132] About the work as it relates to domestic and homely space, Hsieh stated: "I had homes in the streets in *Outdoor Piece* as I still kept my privacy, by in *Rope Piece*, "home" was a luxury." (De Jongh 2010, 4)

ways the space and choreographies of their joined bodies opposing other ritualized and ingrained patterns of motion. In the aftermath of their widely covered separation on July 4th, 1984 (Dowd 1984), Hsieh left his loft on Hudson St. and began renovating a new space in Brooklyn (Johnston 1984, 179). Leaving Tribeca for good, an unrecognizable real estate market compared to his arrival in 1974, his investment in a new Brooklyn loft mirrored artists and new immigrants who also moved from Manhattan towards the outer boroughs.[133]

Throughout his four yearlong performances, from 1979-1984, Tehching (Sam) Hsieh entered, lived, used, and took control of spaces within the geographic boundaries of New York City at various scales. As a result of these occupations, his work continuously unsettled distinctions between domestic and private spaces, pushing the quotidian logics of movement and imagining new choreographies within the city that were often recalcitrant with dominating powers like law enforcement and the growing real estate development. In *Outdoor Piece*, he placed himself in opposition to the city's flow of inhabitants, most of whom moved swiftly and efficiently between home, work, and play while ignoring the embodied realities of homeless individuals:

> Then, there are the piercing noises of the street life as they push and pull against the vague motions of Hsieh's body—his pauses, stops, hesitations, forbearance—as he bring into relief the dynamic temporal forces of life. Here the temporal rhythms of the environment in connection with Hsieh shift and modulate between the interstices of isolation and assimilation. (Parr 2005, 333)

Over the period of a year, Hsieh performed everyday bodily rituals "we would normally understand as private, but in an alley, under a bridge, on a pier, and so on—not quite in public, but at its margins." (Ward 2006, 13) From the space of his loft at 111 Hudson Street to the stoop

[133] Hsieh and Montano were described as "Manhattan artists" in a 1984 New York Times piece, a geographic reality that shifted when both of them moved away from the island immediately following *Rope Piece* (Dowd 1984). Linda Montano went to stay with her parents in Saugerties, New York. (Johnston 1984, 179)

where he was assaulted for trespassing, from his containment in a cage to his choreographies of domestic living throughout the built environment, Hsieh's occupation rubbed up against New York City's shifting real estate and housing market, its effects on homeless populations, and the increased policing of undocumented immigrants as they shifted the urban and economic landscape with their labor.

Suzanne Lacy & Leslie Labowitz: *In Mourning and In Rage*

> Suzanne Lacy's *Three Weeks in May* marked the establishment of New Genre Public Art, a socially engaged, interactive cultural practice that deploys a range of traditional and nontraditional media in public spaces for public audiences, intersecting activism, education, and theory.
>
> —Vivien Green Fryd, *Suzanne Lacy's Three Weeks in May: Feminist Activist Performance Art as Expanded Public Pedagogy*. (2007)

Suzanne Lacy and Leslie Labowitz Starus initiated a series of collaborations in 1977 that were pivotal in developing new approaches to performance and the creation of alternative support networks for women artists in California. These interventions in outdoor spaces denounced sexist representations of women in the media, income and job inequality, and rampant incidents of public and domestic violence. Within the span of eight months in 1977, Lacy & Labowitz jointly orchestrated two large-scale performative protests at the heart of Los Angeles' Civic Center with *Three Weeks in May* (1977) and *In Mourning and Rage* (1977). The latter, a widely cited example of feminist organizational tactics in the arts, took the form of a funeral procession on the steps of City Hall. Complete with a full car caravan lead by a black hearse, ten women in mourning garment, media presence, and representatives from local government and community groups, it entered, used, and took control of the building's front steps and surrounding municipal park by transforming them into a temporary site of grief, recognition, and empowerment. Documentation of the work captures the architecture of City Hall as a potent space in the debate

surrounding women's rights to self-determination in the city. Denouncing press coverage of the Hillside Strangler, the epithet given to the serial killer who terrorized Los Angeles between October 1977 and February 1978, the performance carefully reframed representations of women's bodies in the media by occupying a municipal monument. Similar to Tehching Hsieh, their actions were not defined by a singular kinesthetic logic but by the opposition their very embodied presence as women had on ritualized and ingrained patterns of dynamic motion in particular public places. Contributing to a critical moment of Californian art, Lacy & Labowitz developed public "strategies of engagement" through an aesthetic vocabulary (Denzin 2003, 199) that repurposed feminist tactics of intervention.[134] As women asserted themselves outside of the domestic sphere, the artists highlighted continued insecurities posed by large American urban centers and their built environments. While Hsieh's oeuvre underscored the simultaneous visibility and invisibility of both undocumented immigrants and the homeless in New York City architecture, Lacy & Labowitz's repeated public occupation of downtown Los Angeles drew attention to political economies of power that disregarded women's right to the infrastructure of the city in their movement and spatial identities.

To fully comprehend Lacy & Labowitz's collaboration as it coalesced at Los Angeles' Civic Center and City Hall, it is essential to recognize their different arrivals at public art making, movement-based-performance, and feminist aesthetics. Born in Wasco, California, Suzanne Lacy's activist-aesthetics grew out of California's prevalent conceptual and feminist art movements. Following a bachelor's degree in Zoological Sciences at the University of

[134] The notion of "strategy" is important in Lacy & Labowitz's work, as both artists clearly articulated the deployment of feminist tactics of public intervention towards political and social ends through collective acts of bodily intervention (Lacy & Labowitz "Evolution of a Feminist Art" 1978, 84). Contemporary critics have echoed the physical strategies behind each performance (Paulk 2002, 28; Szymanek 2018, 33), rearticulating a sense that the occupation of outdoor spaces with women's protesting bodies was explicit and tactical.

California, Santa Barbara (1968), Lacy undertook graduate work in psychology at the Fresno State College (1969-1971) where she was introduced to Judy Chicago and the Feminist Art Program (Fryd 2007, 23). Strongly influenced by Chicago and the culture of the program, Lacy helped form the Woman's Building in 1973, a seminal Los Angeles-based center for feminist art. As an architectural site where women-identifying artists could coalesce, exhibit, and participate in workshops, the Woman's Building represented an important architectural manifestation of California's feminist community. Not unlike Hsieh's 111 Hudson Street loft, it provided a safe space for otherwise marginalized individuals to produce works and develop practices that may have otherwise been impossible. During this period, Lacy also completed an M.F.A. at the California Institute of the Arts (1973) where she worked with Alan Kaprow. Best known for his creation of "happenings" and an early proponent of performance art (Fryd 2007, 23), Kaprow taught Lacy "that art could become politically meaningful by engaging directly in life by addressing significant issues, creating performances that demanded audience responses, and erasing the barrier between artwork and viewer to affect the participants' […] experiences." (Fryd 2007, 24) According to art historian Vivien Green Fryd, both Kaprow and Chicago pushed Lacy to consider art as an "activist medium that could express both intense emotions and aesthetically sophisticated, formal means by deploying the body in public spaces as the site of art production." (Fryd 2007, 25). As a result, the young artist created works that were above all engaged and "accessible to others" (Stofflet 1976, 39), interacting with a broad and "diversified audience about issues directly relevant to their lives." (Lacy 1995, 19) Most poignantly, these inclinations to deploy the body of the artist in public spaces set Lacy on a pathway to adopt and codify acts of entering, living, using, and taking control of particular urban places and architectural landmarks as a means of challenging gender-based violence.

Like her collaborator, Leslie Labowitz Starus benefited from the work generated out of the Women's Building and Californian performance art movement. However, influences from her time in Europe are of equal importance. Born in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, Labowitz earned her M.F.A. from Otis College of Art and Design (1972) before moving to Düsseldorf, Germany as a Fulbright Scholar. While attending the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, where she met Joseph Beuys, she began to approach art as a mode of enacting social change. With exposure to "Marxism and "political thinking" unlike anything comparable in the U.S." she discovered politicized European art canon in Käthe Kollwitz, John Heartfield, George Brecht, George Grosz, and Max Beckmann (Lacy & Labowitz "Evolution of a Feminist Art" 1978, 78). In a 1978 issue of Heresies, Labowitz describes her interest in Russian Constructivism for its relationship to outdoor spaces: "The large-scale monumental street works, often collaborative, and the innovative direction of performance in the public sphere (streets, factories, schools) symbolized the kind of synthesis between art and politics I wanted to move toward." (Lacy & Labowitz "Evolution of a Feminist Art" 1978, 78) Enacting this newfound spatial consciousness, she performed *Menstruation-Wait* by taking control of the entrance hall of the art academy in 1972, confronting an audience of students, teachers, and artists with her waiting body.

Women art making movements in Germany differed from America, with collectives forming out of pre-existing radical feminist groups with ties to the working class. First teaching art in a German Gymnasium, and then joining an organization in Bonn dedicated to the legalization of abortion, Labowitz further developed aesthetics to be "understood by a general audience" through the "use of clear, direct images" deployed in public spaces (Lacy & Labowitz "Evolution of a Feminist Art" 1978, 80). Returning to Los Angeles in 1977, she describes her

"intent on continuing the public work on women's issues" but immediately recognized the drastically different conditions of the city she now inhabited: "In Europe I had let my defenses down and felt almost no fear about walking through the streets at night. I knew that coming back meant I would have to begin building those defenses back up—rape being the highest rising crime in the U.S." (Lacy & Labowitz "Evolution of a Feminist Art" 1978, 80) Versed in the political power of women entering, living, using, and taking control of space with their bodies, Labowitz met Lacy who was equally interested in shifting the American public sphere and otherwise inaccessible or dangerous architectural sites through acts of kinesthetic occupation.

As the architecture of New York City was itself a vector for discussing the national crisis surrounding homelessness and the fate of undocumented immigrants, Los Angeles was a particularly important place within America's conversation surrounding violence against women in the late 1970s. With speculation that the "growing mobility of women" may have contributed to a rise of incidents, Rape Crisis Hotline director Joan Robins plainly stated the urgency facing the city: "Women are getting raped every day in Los Angeles." (Liddick 1977) Estimating that only 5-10% of cases were being reported (Liddick 1977), and that one out of every three women in Los Angeles would be sexually abused at least once in her lifetime (Mehren "Combating L.A.'s Image," 1980), city officials struggled to address the issue. Infrastructurally and spatially this was apparent in the lack of coordinated efforts by local government to initiate and facilitate access to safe spaces for women. Until 1978, when the first shelter for battered women opened, only 30 beds existed in emergency shelters for women in comparison to the 4,000 for men (Mall 1978). No longer viewed as domestic issue, incidents of rape were widely reported across the city. A 1977 article from the Los Angeles Times offering self-defense tips clearly articulated how outdoor, urban public spaces and the movements economies they engendered were

perceived as unsafe and hostile: "In your car, watch where you park. […] On the street, carry your keys in your hand with a whistle on the key chain (not around your neck.) Don't overload with packages. Wear sensible clothes and shoes." ("Women's Class on Self Defense," Los Angeles Times 1977) These warnings curtailed women's choreographic trajectories through the city, producing embodied fear characterized by profound limitations when commuting daily. California State Assembly member Maxine Waters denounced this loss of kinesthetic, spatial, and embodied autonomy: "[…] women have lost the night, certainly. Do you know one woman in Los Angeles who will walk to a neighborhood store at night without fear of being mugged, or who rides the bus at night and has to walk three blocks to her house without being in fear for her life?" (Mehren "Women to 'Take Back the Night," 1980) As official statistics under-represented the magnitude of rape incidents, the most underreported of all violent crimes, ("Kedren Helps Rape Victims," Los Angeles Sentinel 1979) women's movement patterns and trajectories within the city reflected their insecurity and uncertainty in the architecture of the public sphere.

Lacy & Labowitz's first major collaboration occurred shortly after their first meeting. *Three Weeks in May* (1977) was a public, consorted effort to "confront Los Angeles with its reputation as the rape capital of the world." (Januszczak 1980) Taking place at the City Mall Plaza,[135] in the basement of City Hall, the act of entering, using, and taking control of an iconic architectural landmark looked to "report on the horrors of political and social realities that were elsewhere escaping representation." (Collins & Bornowsky 2012, 42) The overall event included

[135] The use of the City Mall Shopping center, adjacent to the City Hall, came as a result of an artist friend whose father was City Commissioner (Labowitz & Lacy "Evolution of a Feminist Art" 1978, 82) A number of city officials also endorsed their use of public space, including Tom Bradley, the deputy mayor (Fryd 2007, 29). The use of pre-approved sanctioned city-spaces for performance distinguishes Lacy & Labowitz from other artists in this dissertation who were often trespassing, using public sites unannounced, or transforming their own properties in performance.

two large maps of Los Angeles, one upon which the word "RAPE" was stamped in four-inch red lettering at locations where assaults were reported over the course of the three weeks (Case 2001, 151).[136] In a fainter shade of red, additional stamps recorded an estimated number of unreported rapes. Installed outside of City Hall, these "maps were the central image around which the performance structure of three weeks of activities was created." [137] (Lacy & Labowitz "Evolution of a Feminist Art" 1978, 82) Pinpointing the high incidence of rape through cartographic means, Lacy & Labowitz converted otherwise abstract and therefore easily dismissible statistics and an ordinary city map into a physical and geographic representation of Los Angeles' spatial and choreographic precarity for women. Similar to Hsieh, for whom the process of mapping daily bodily rituals in New York City made tangible the existential, economic, and socio-political strain of remaining outdoors and vulnerable to exterior forces, *Three Weeks in May* exhibited the very *being* of women's daily navigation of Los Angeles as constantly under threat. In an attempt to "break down the myths that support the rape culture," the artists used the movement-based-performative act of mapping bodily trajectories as a visual, spatial, and kinesthetic signifier to convey violations of women's

Figure 63. *Three Weeks in May*. Suzanne Lacy and Leslie Labowitz, 1977.

[136] The two twenty-foot-wide and six-foot-high yellow maps of the city of Los Angeles were created through the support of the community-based arts organization Studio Watts Workshop and the Woman's Building (Mall 1977). While one map became a sea of red stamps (Lacy 1995, 252), the other detailed sites for support including crisis and counseling center, emergency care facilities, and rape outreach organizations.

[137] As Labowitz and Lacy described it in 1978, placing "the maps in a public site was critical to the subsequent structure of the piece […]. Going into the public sphere added to the piece the awareness of multiple communities and their possible roles in social art." (Labowitz & Lacy "Evolution of a Feminist Art" 1978, 82)

rights to the city and "expose the facts of [women's] rapes, the numbers of them, the events surrounding them." (Lacy 1977, 67) By giving geographic scale to the embodied urban experiences of both victims and other affected women, the performance inked onto the topography and infrastructure of Los Angeles what had otherwise been an underreported and/or misrepresented crisis by politicians and the media alike.[138]

In an article for Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies (1977), Lacy characterized the maps in *Three Weeks in May* with a vocabulary that explicitly outlined their spatial function as objects denouncing the architectural violence of Los Angeles for women:[139]

> The maps do not show you where to go and where not to go, what to do and what not to do. The truth is that no place is safe. Children are raped in their homes by their fathers; women are picked up off the streets in broad daylight, and are raped in their beds at night as well. It seems clear to say that women should not hitchhike: seventeen of the eighty-six were raped while accepting a ride or offering a ride to a stranger or an acquaintance. But twenty-one were raped at night in their own beds. Should we not stay at home either? We all know not to walk the streets late at night: thirteen of the eighty-six were raped while doing so--and twenty-three were picked up off the streets in broad daylight. One woman was raped by her bus driver when she fell asleep before the end of the route. Another was raped at five o'clock in the afternoon as she sat in her office. Women are offered help when their cars break down and are raped instead. […] It's not where you are: two nights ago a woman was raped right here in the mall. (Lacy 1977, 67)

The passage emphasizes both domestic (interior) and public (outdoor) architectural sites as unsafe from the reaches of rape and other forms of sexual violence. Naming basic structural units that shape the architecture and infrastructure of a city—the home; the street; the car; the bus; the office; the civic center mall—and associating each site with sexual violence, Lacy spatializes

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[138] Lacy recalls that "clarity of communication was desperately important, and this need structured the development of [a] form of language" in *Heresies* (Labowitz & Lacy "Evolution of a Feminist Art" 1978, 78). Occupying public spaces became seminal in disseminating information, as did the deployment of maps, statistics, and testimonials.

[139] Extending beyond the reach of their performances, Lacy collaborated with Labowitz on a number of essays starting in 1978 in which they "called for artists to create art that would affect social issues and stimulate individual and collective action." (Fryd 2007, 33) Occupying yet another public space outside of the gallery, this aided in "the "hijacking" of mass print and electronic media" (Fryd 2007, 23) their overall New Genre Public Art relied on.

rape in a geographic scale that encompasses the entirety of Los Angeles. Similar to Hsieh for whom the specter of forced removal and deportation hovered over his embodied experience of New York City, sexual violence literally followed women wherever they traveled and determined their movement patterns. In both instances, the conscious act of mapping daily trajectories and spatializing violence highlights what Susan Leigh Foster describes as a "structuring of deep and enduring cultural values that replicates similar sets of values elaborated in other cultural practices" (Foster 1998, 5), an urban choreography resulting from spatial insecurity.

As an "educational undertaking," (Slater 1977) it was also important for *Three Weeks in May* to be more than a statistical and informational exposé. As Jack Slater a journalist for the Los Angeles Times described it, "the most important aspect of the map is that it also lists community organizations" where "women can go and talk to other women in order to move from not being a victim to finding their own power." (Slater 1977) Slater's account of Lacy's stamping ritual illustrated how the act of kinesthetically entering, using, and taking control of the mall shifted the habitual movement patterns that governed the space: "At about 3:30 every afternoon, Suzanne Lacy, an artist, makes her way through the underground passages of the City Mall at 1st and Los Angeles St. and, with red paint and roller, begins to stencil RAPE, RAPE, RAPE, across the face of a large municipal map on display in the main corridor." (Slater 1977) The gesture of "making her way" through the underground passage of the City Mall to reach and stencil the map on

Figure 64. *Three Weeks in May*. Suzanne Lacy and Leslie Labowitz, 1977.

display is critical, highlighting Lacy's kinesthetic activation of the space and the recalcitrant physicality it created vis-à-vis other normative behaviors. Lacy's performance itself was ritualized, repeated every afternoon at 3:30, paralleling the activities of shoppers, lawmakers, politicians, and civil servants who tended to their daily routines.

Aware that counteracting the public rhetoric of rape could not be done with any one action (Klein 1999, 91), Lacy & Labowitz extended the performance into thirty "city-wide series of public and private events." (Roth 1980, 93)[140] As Lacy described it, the "map, viewed by countless shoppers, downtown workers, and tourists, was accompanied by a full schedule of public events—rallies, self-defense demonstrations, art performances, rape speakouts, readings, and panels." (Lacy 1977, 63) This included readings of police notes for some 90 assaults and a "guerilla action" with Melissa Hoffman and Judith Loischild in which they "outlined a woman's body on the sidewalk with red chalk" at every street corner in the reports. (Nickel 1997, 92) A text accompanying each silhouette read "A woman was raped near here" with the date of the crime. Marking Los Angeles with silhouettes, Lacy & Labowitz extended the reach of the City Mall action by reconfiguring the infrastructure of street corners into temporary monuments that attested to the violence of women's spatial and choreographic existences. These kinesthetic occupations of city property,

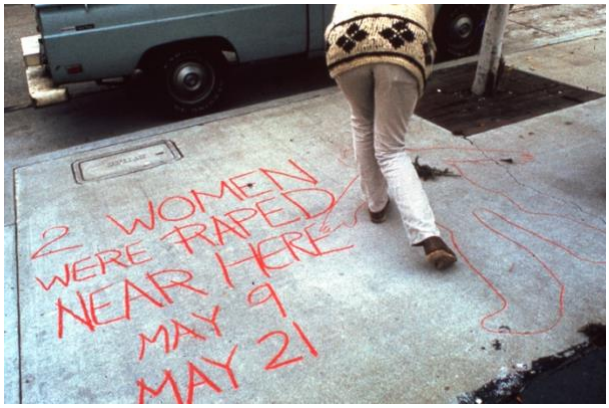

Figure 65. *Three Weeks in May*. Suzanne Lacy and Leslie Labowitz, 1977.

[140] Lacy also conceived of four performances over the course of four consecutive days: *Myths of Rape*, *The Rape*, *All Men Are Potential Rapists*, and *Women Fight Back*. In *Myths of Rape*, eight participants were blindfolded with white fabric brandishing the word "Society" while they "wandered throughout the mall carrying signs naming various dominant "myths" surrounding rape culture in the U.S.." (Szymanek 2018, 39)

entering, using, and taking control of a particular place including a closing rally (Nickel 1997, 92),[141] empowered women by bringing geographic visibility to the curtailing of their urban lives. Using "the frame of the city to contain a variety of "acts," from reflective conversations to media interventions," *Three Weeks in May* moved "from the body to the body politic" (Lacy 2006, 323) by extending individual spatial and kinesthetic experiences of restraint and violence into a mobile and collective whole, projecting a coherent and communal embodied reality that subverted the dangers posed by otherwise unsafe public sites of the city.

The spatial empowerment generated by kinesthetic occupation in *Three Weeks in May* is described by art historian Angelique Szymanek who characterizes the event as "an intervention that can be understood to subvert rather than merely situate itself within […] institutions." (Szymanek 2018, 35) Focusing on the tangible limitations imposed by architectural sites in Los Angeles, she underscores that "although we may conceive of the public sphere as immaterial, public space is not." (Szymanek 2018, 37) Lacy & Labowitz's site-specific intervention took control of the City Mall Plaza's built environment with a purpose, a place that in its lack of infrastructural security for women recreated "a culture that often exercises and enforces its dominance through violence." (Szymanek 2018, 38). In a statement outlining her intentions for the work, Lacy reflected on the geographic scale of the space and the movements it engendered:

> Downtown Los Angeles was perceived as the optimal installation site because it was the center of activity for the city, housing governmental city and county organizations, large businesses and shopping complexes. Further, much fear and mythology had accumulated about the downtown area and the many people who work there leave immediately after

[141] By the closing rally, media had been alerted to *Three Weeks in May* as television camera crews and newspaper reporters were on hand to witness the event (Labowitz & Starus "Evolution of a Feminist Art" 1978, 83). Photos of women "actively kicking beneath the shadows of City Hall" were present in next day newspapers (Labowitz & Starus "Evolution of a Feminist Art" 1978, 83), adding weight to the importance of representing embodied forms of empowerment vis-à-vis imposing architectural structures within the performance.

> working hours are over. Many attempts have been made to revitalize this area, but a fear exists, much of it for women, related to rape. (Szymanek 2018, 35)

Three Weeks in May acknowledged that "the public sphere, and the various modes by which it is constructed and policed, was intimately tied to the creation and preservation of rape culture." (Szymanek 2018, 36) Deliberately moving their installation out of the interior private space of a white walled art gallery onto the outdoor space of the City Mall, Lacy & Labowitz "juxtaposed art and non art activities within and extended timeframe and within the context of popular culture." (Fryd 2007, 29) Like Hsieh for whom the conceptual, aesthetic, and kinesthetic act of blurring art and real life distorted embodied dichotomies between the safety of the home and the dangers of the streets, Lacy & Labowitz occupied public, outdoor spaces to challenge an unsuspecting audience.

Art historian Vivien Green Fryd argues that this occupation of the City Mall augmented the element of surprise and the political impact of the event, reaching a wider audience than it might have in any other site: "By locating the piece in the large, subterranean complex of the city mall, Lacy metaphorically indicated both the visibility and invisibility of rape in American culture." (Fryd 2007, 30) Confronted with the crisis of rape and the embodied realities of women's movements in response to it, the action rubbed up against consumers, politicians, and lawmakers' daily activities. (Fryd 2007, 30) Placing the recalcitrant bodies of its participants in rupture with the pedestrian and quotidian flow of the City Mall produced a rebuttal to the violence of Los

Figure 66. *Three Weeks in May*. Suzanne Lacy and Leslie Labowitz, 1977.

Angeles' streets for women. Instead of seeing the spatial organization of fear within the city as fixed and immovable, Lacy & Labowitz approached choreographies in public sphere as a "slowly changing constellation of representational conventions" (Foster 1998, 17) that could be transformed. Asserting the "thought-filledness of movement and the theoretical potential of bodily action" (Foster 1998, 27) to engender change, they dismantled routinized kinesthetic patterns of fear.

In the wake of *Three Weeks in May*, Los Angeles' crisis with sexual violence came to a climax in 1977 with the events surrounding the Hillside Strangler.[142] The Californian metropolis became enwrapped in a "rash of strangulation murders of young women," (Townsend 1977) many of them in quiet working-class sections of the city (Dobbin 1977; The Sun 1978). As police urged women in certain districts to curtail their movements through the city and stay home after dark (Dobbin 1977), "fear of the Hillside Strangler" pervaded throughout Los Angeles (Lindsey 1977). This embodied fear was felt across geographic scales, from the Hollywood "street scene" ("Strangler Dumps 11th Victim," The Atlanta Constitution 1977) to suburban neighborhoods: "Prostitutes on Sunset Boulevard and suburban mothers in Southern California are sharing something this Christmas season: fear of a multiple murderer the local press calls "the Hillside Strangler."" (Lindsey 1977) Important shifts in spatial identity and choreographic patterns of movement took form as some women refused to drive alone at night, and sex workers "clustered for safety in groups of six or eight, […] slowly searching the faces of the men who

[142] The Hillside Strangler received his name after the bodies of victims were "found sprawled on hillsides north and east of Los Angeles." ("2 Rangers Cleared," The Atlanta Constitution 1978) The geographic nature of this name is critical, as it played into the spatial ambiguity of his exact location, further entrenching a sense of fear at his ability to be anywhere.

pull up their cars along Sunset Boulevard." (Lindsey 1977). [143] As one headline clearly decried, "Los Angeles Lives in Fear of Strangler." (Cannon 1978) This had repercussions on housing development and apartment house rentals in the northeast as the growth of suburbs stunted (Lindsey 1977). Rumors also spread that a policeman might be responsible ("Woman Says Officer," Los Angeles Times 1978), making the state, entrusted with enforcing order and providing security, a possible threat .[144] Testimony by a local resident attested to changes in choreographies as women navigated the city with a sense of fear: "He follows me to work, cruises my neighborhood in a police car, haunts the same theaters and restaurants I go to, even does his laundry at my laundromat. […] with other women in Los Angeles, I'll gaze, through the transparent walls of my prison-parlor, startled to see his figure everywhere, and waiting for a reprieve." (Couppee 1978) As women "throughout the city grew edgy about the killings and many refused to go out alone" ("L.A. Police Quiz 2," Chicago Tribune 1978), Lacy & Labowitz readied a kinesthetic response to the violence enmeshed in the urban landscape.

In Mourning and In Rage (1977) was conceived as a direct response to the Hillside Strangler case and a broad appeal to end political and social inaction surrounding violence against women. On the morning of December 13, 1977, Lacy & Labowitz organized a media event which included the participation of women's organizations, city government, and members

[143] It is critical to note that although the fear surrounding the Hillside Strangler reached women throughout Los Angeles, sex workers were especially vulnerable and underrepresented in the overall media. Reports indicate that mainstream outlets were initially reticent to cover the case when it seemed to only concern sex workers. (Lindsey 1977)

[144] In March 1978, after a woman kicked a sheriff deputy claiming she was terrified by reports that the murdered might be someone disguised as an officer of the law, the Los Angeles Police Department issued procedures for stopping women in poorly lighted areas. This included "driving to a well-lighted area, not getting out of their cars and asking for identification." (Mann 1978)

of the women's community.[145] The two collaborators described the event in detail in 1978 for Frontiers:

> Seventy women dressed in black gathered at the Woman's Building in Los Angeles. The women received instructions for the event which began when ten actresses dressed in black mourning emerged from the Building and entered a hearse. The hearse and two motorcycle escorts departed from the Building, followed by twenty-two cars filled with women in black. Each car had its lights on and displayed two stickers: "Funeral" and "Stop Violence Against Women." The motorcade circled City Hall twice and stopped in front of the assembled members of the news media. […] One at a time, nine seven-foot-tall veiled women mourners emerged from the hearse and stood in a line on the sidewalk. The final figure emerged, an active woman clothed in scarlet. The ten women faced the street as the hearse departed while women from the motorcade procession drove slowly past in silent homage to the mourners. Forming a procession three abreast, the mourners walked toward the steps in front of City Hall." (Lacy & Labowitz "In Mourning and in Rage" 1978, 52)

Departing from the Woman's Building to travel by caravan to City Hall represented the first of many acts of entering, living, using, and/or taking control of public city architecture in an effort to subvert the violence they represented for women. Located in an industrial corridor north of downtown, the three-story red brick building at 1727 N. Spring St. formed an architectural epicenter of feminist art. Originally constructed by the Standard Oil Company, artists transformed the interior into studio and performance spaces after acquiring the building in 1975. With limited resources, women from the Feminist Studio Workshop (FSW) completed the project themselves, raising money from concerts and events featuring Lily Tomlin, Meg Christian, Holly Near, Margie Adam, and many others. This

Figure 67. *In Mourning and in Rage*. Suzanne Lacy and Leslie Labowitz, 1977.

[145] On the day after the performance, the LAPD found the body of another woman who had fallen victim to the Hillside Strangler (Klein 1999, 106) furthering the sense that *In Mourning and In Rage* actively defied the city's urban violence on women by occupying a public location.

repurposing of a vacant factory space and self-sufficient transformation of the building into an art space mirrored New York City loft conversion. The architectural landmark proved to become a more prominent political symbol of women's empowerment and feminism in California than any other American site. A staging ground for performances, exhibitions, workshops, and meetings, this "vibrant center of women's culture" (Klein 2012, 129) promised a place "free of the patriarchal bias of most art institutions and art schools" with "feminist pedagogy, collective work, and collaboration" (Klein 2012, 130) at the forefront. Lacy & Labowitz's choreography by caravan from the Woman's Building to City Hall geographically anchored the event in both sites, two carefully selected urban and architectural landmarks in the artist's fight to end violence against women in Los Angeles.

Figure 68. ***In Mourning and in Rage*****. Suzanne Lacy and Leslie Labowitz, 1977.**

Once on site, participants positioned themselves on either side of the steps of City Hall to form a "black-clothed chorus from a modern tragedy" (Lacy & Labowitz "In Mourning and in Rage" 1978, 52) to mourn in "a public manner."[146] (Lacy & Labowitz "In Mourning and in Rage" 1978, 54) The imposing bodies of nine seven-foot-tall veiled women mourners contrasted with the bright, white, neo-classical exterior surface of City Hall. Entering, using, and taking control of the space while casting long shadows on the steps, the faceless women obstructed the

[146] Taking into account the journalistic overexposure of the murdered women, the veiled figures *of In Mourning and in Rage* "refused that dehumanizing scrutiny in favor of anonymity which both shields the participants from voyeuristic ogling and suggests the ubiquity of rape." (Szymanek 2018, 34) The facelessness of these "giant women in black and red addressing the media" (Roth 1980, 93) also played into their monumentality, adding to their subversion of City Hall's spatial dominance.

landscape and became an obstacle to the quotidian flow of pedestrian traffic into the building. Occupying this symbolic site by holding hands, speaking at the microphone, and standing for the media to behold, they were visually and kinesthetically unavoidable. This gathering of bodies provided a "public space for women to come together to share their grief and rage through a ritual." (Lacy & Labowitz "In Mourning and in Rage" 1978, 54) The anonymity of the veiled mourners, their physicality extended by costumes so as to become larger than life, denounced and challenged the prevalence of violence "in American homes and streets, with wife and child battering, rape, and homicide." (Lacy & Labowitz "In Mourning and in Rage" 1978, 54) As a carefully staged media event, (Dougherty 1998) positioning the bodies of empowered women occupying the iconic architecture of City Hall, *In Mourning and In Rage* "carefully choreographed" (Nickel 1997, 98) and challenged newspaper and television coverage of the Hillside Strangler and the broader national dialogue on violence against women.

Figure 69. *In Mourning and in Rage*. Suzanne Lacy and Leslie Labowitz, 1977.

Completed in 1928, the Los Angeles City Hall was the vision of leading architects John Parkinson, Albert C. Martin, and John C. Austin. At 27-stories tall, the highest structure in the city until 1958 by council decree (Harris 1978), it dominated the downtown skyline and anchored for the Civic Center Mall (Bernstein 1977). Designed to incorporate different architectural elements in a unique hybrid of styles, it was the city's most conspicuous landmarks and a popular location for film and television productions (Youssef 2000, 3). Located at the center of Los Angeles's commercial and social activities (Hales 1928, 13), its structural features

were thought to represent the city's spirit: "the broad and solid base is typical of the City's firm foundation at the strategic point of the great Southwest; the flanking wings rising from the base typify its marvelous growth from the original pueblo; while the soaring lines of the tower symbolize the indomitable spirit of its citizens that made it possible." (Hales 1928, 63) City Halls' lawn and steps also played an important part in its architectural authority, with multiple special interest groups occupying its landscape as a symbolic space to hold rallies, processions, and protests. In the late 1970s, this included the annual memorial service for Los Angeles firemen (Barker 1979); the Street Scene art showcase (Durant 1978; Ivory 1978); and protests by Iranian students calling for the removal of Mohammad Reza Shah ("Iranian Students Battle…," The Atlanta Constitution 1978). In 1977 alone, the building was also host to a series of events that underscored women's fight for gender equality. Most notable were the fourth Annual Women's Leadership Conference ("Women's Forum Slated," Los Angeles Sentinel 1977) and the public resignation of the first woman fire fighter after having led a "heated campaign" for pay equity (Anderson 1977). Despite women's place in the spatial logic of City Hall, Jean Douglas noted the skewed power dynamics that dominated the building: "women in city government carry little clout […] City Hall remains a male fortress" with a majority of governing women remaining "at the bottom of the ladder—in power, in salaries and in numbers." (Douglas 1978)[147]

The occupation of City Hall by nine seven-foot tall veiled performers was a consequential recalcitrant kinesthetic act, subverting the spatial logic of an otherwise "imposing public building." (Muchnic 1978) Despite progress towards gender parity in the 1970s with the

[147] Douglas provided the following figures to support her claims: "Women hold 16% of the elective offices, 18% of the municipal jobs and about 40% of the appointive posts." (Douglas 1978)

rise in feminism, attempts to confine women to the domestic sphere continued to manifest themselves in spatial controls on identity (Massey 1994, 179). In *Space, Place, and Gender* British social scientist and geographer Doreen Massey describes herself as a "space invader" when infringing on patriarchal sites like government buildings (Massey 1994, 185). City Hall's inaccessible, phallic, neoclassical tower overlooking an empty and carefully manicured municipal park (Rosenblum 2012, 3) represented one of these architectural sites in which "space and place both reflects and has effects back on the ways in which gender is constructed and understood." (Massey 1994, 186) The bareness and isolation generated by the park, coupled with the patriarchal authority City Hall's gender dynamics, reproduced the insecurities of Los Angeles' public spaces for women.[148] Entering, using, and taking control of the spatial and kinesthetic organization of this civic center (Chase 2007, 29), the artists and their collaborators produced a 'temporary monument' (Flyntz 2016, 22) of women's bodies. Architecture became more than a "visual backdrop" against which the piece unfolded (Klein 1999, 99) but provided a physical public stage for women to embody protest by occupying City Hall with their presence. As Elizabeth Grosz describes it in *Bodies-Cities*, the "city is one of the crucial factors in the social production of (sexed) corporeality." (Grosz 1992,

Figure 70. *In Mourning and in Rage*. Suzanne Lacy and Leslie Labowitz, 1977.

[148] In Heresies 6 Labowitz and Lacy wrote: "Our bodies are manipulated by the patriarchy as a battlefield for the diversion of attention away from economic systems which are themselves predicated on and preserved by violence." (Labowitz and Lacy "Evolution of a Feminist Art" 1978, 76) The space of City Hall can be read as one of these battlefields, a tangible space where the artists could demonstrate by a collective action of occupation.

242) The act of engaging in a "civic-square performance" (Rosler 2004, 219) during *In Mourning and in Rage* challenged Los Angeles's social production of corporeality. Positioning City Hall as a city-wide marker for sexual violence against women, the performance placed the bodies of its participants in direct opposition to the reproduction of patriarchal spatial order.

Challenging exploitative representations of women in the media as taught in the Feminist Art Workers program (Gardner-Huggett 2007, 37), *In Mourning and in Rage* repurposed and transformed the architecture of Los Angeles's City Hall in the "creation of public images seen through television, radio, and periodical coverage." (Lacy & Labowitz "In Mourning and in Rage" 1978, 55) This act of entering, using, and taking control of the steps in front of reporters came at a time when women's portrayals and lack of representation in the news media drew increasing criticism. Just a few months earlier a newly organized women's media resource center named Sensor held its first set of public events ("Sensor Media," Los Angeles Sentinel 1977). As Margaret Kilgore reported for the Los Angeles Times about the necessity of the organization, "women still are too often portrayed as "sex objects" or guilt-ridden drudges feeling guilty about household dirt or rings around the collar." (Kilgore 1977) Feminist groups like the Los Angeles chapter of Women Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW) deployed occupation as a disruptive kinesthetic tactic when they picketed advertising headquarters in Studio City to denounce violent and sexist advertising showing "a male model with one gloved hand around a female model's throat." (Liddick 1978) Lacy & Labowitz similarly created their own kinesthetic occupation,

Figure 71. *In Mourning and in Rage*. Suzanne Lacy and Leslie Labowitz, 1977.

assembling a group of performers at a carefully selected architectural landmark to present "alternative images of independent women who fight back." (Liddick 1978) Claiming space in the newsroom media itself, *In Mourning and in Rage* circulated images of empowered women occupying the steps of the city's power center, not the "degrading, possibly harmful images" that had mostly been used in the Hillside Strangler case (Liddick 1978). [149] Kinesthetically responding to urban violence by transforming the space of City Hall into a stage for the media to capture women embodying their right to the city, Lacy & Labowitz facilitated "a space for the unspeakable, the unimaginable, and unheard to appear." (Szymanek 2018, 37)

Following the successes of *In Mourning and in Rage* and *Three Weeks in May*, Lacy & Labowitz adapted and translated their kinesthetic occupation of downtown Los Angeles to other urban contexts with similar site-specific attention. [150] Like Hsieh, for whom the act of occupying different geographical scales with his body became a conceptual framework to challenge circulations of power, the California artists entered, used, and took control of other symbolic spaces with feminist messages. On one occasion, the artists were covered by Variety after driving up and down Sunset Boulevard in a gold convertible limousine denouncing sexist album art in the music industry ("Sexist Album Art," Variety 1977). Staged as another media event, *Record companies drag their feet* (1977) repurposed the space of the street, empowering women activists to denounce the economics of using sexually violent images of women in selling records. The following year they were invited to Las Vegas where they developed *Rape is Everybody's Concern* (1978), "a public education project that aims to heighten awareness of the

[149] Documentation of the work included the presence of six local media outlets at the performance, talk show invitations for Lacy & Labowitz (Lawrence 2005, 84); their own photography; and the video done by Jerri Allyn for the Woman's Building (Klein 1999, 99).

problem through the arts." ("L.A., Vegas Focus," Los Angeles Sentinel 1978) From these performances grew the umbrella organization *Ariadne: A Social Art Network* (1978-1980), a "coalition of artists, activists, media reporters and politicians with the purpose of direct political actions on violence against women." (Zetterman 2016, 6) These new events, spanning across California and into the American Southwest, continued to draw media attention by allowing women to occupy the public sphere and distinct architectural sites and landmarks with their bodies in attempts to defy urban logics of sexual, gender-based violence. Moving outside of glossy art magazines, museums, and galleries, Lacy & Labowitz adopted and adapted the streets and other alternate sites in local communities where they could create political art that encouraged uses of moving bodies as a means of intervening in political economies of power (Fryd 2007, 24). Identifying how *public* spaces across America, like Los Angeles' City Hall, failed "to meet the mark by which such a claim can be made," (Szymanek 2018, 34) they repeatedly occupied architectural structures with their own bodies to denounce gender inequality, sexual exploitation, and violence against women.

Notes on Standing

The artists in this chapter entered, lived, used, and/or took control of exterior architectural sites in Los Angeles and New York City as a form of occupation during the late 1970s and early 1980s. Each artist moved out of institutional art spaces and galleries to create broader publics, choosing the steps, stoops, and streets as the staging grounds for their works. Hsieh's durational practice inhabited the entirety of lower Manhattan's exterior landscape at a time of economic growth and real estate expansion, rampant homelessness, and increased tension surrounding immigration, while Lacy & Labowitz's feminist interventions strategically obstructed the spatial order of Los Angeles' iconic Civic Center and City Hall during a heavily mediatized crisis

focused on rampant gender-based violence in America. Their occupation drew attention to the circulation of power and the limitations imposed on both gendered and racialized bodies in public spaces, reminding us that the city's infrastructure is shaped by and in turn shapes social, economic, cultural, and political conditions of corporeality. In their various recalcitrant postures of occupation, divided as they were geographically, conceptually, and politically, Hsieh, Lacy, and Labowitz demonstrated that a moving and performing body entering, living, using, and taking control of the city can "perform protest, a direct and local way of upsetting a power balance." (Franko 2006, 6) Los Angeles and New York City's urban structures, social choreographies, and architectural functionalism were temporarily transformed in composition and experience during these transgressive events.

These techniques of the body geared towards shifting habitual movement-based-performance in given architectural spaces have been passed down to contemporary artists, activists, and researchers. Some have even engaged with re-performance to better understand the practices of Hsieh and Lacy & Labowitz. Writing about the re-activation of archives of performance for the exhibition 'Pacific Standard Time' in 2012, the Los Angeles-based artist Audrey Chan describes a re-performance of *Myths of Rape* (1977) one of the works originally produced as part of *Three Weeks in May* (1977). While the original action deployed women in the Los Angeles City Mall carrying handmade protest signs featuring rape statistics, Chan and her collaborator's "re-creation took place at the Los Angeles Convention Center, during the opening night gala of the 2012 LA Art show, a commercial art fair." (Chan 2013, 39) Performing "choreographed movements," walking amongst the crowd, and prompting interactions with members of the audience (Chan 2013, 45), the artist highlighted three central tenets of Lacy & Labowitz's original collaboration: the significance of the intervention's context and architecture;

the use of choreographed movements to interject in a space's movement quotidian pedestrian patterns; and the critical impact of entering the public sphere to reach a broad audience. Similarly, Adrian Heathfield describes his own re-enacting of Hsieh's *Outdoor Piece* while researching the artist's body of work for a retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in 2010: "As a re-doing of a tiny fragment of Hsieh's work, my walk starts as a hopeless tourism and closes as a failed attempt, withering against the length, scale and depth of Hsieh's endeavor." (Heathfield 2009, 38) The curator acknowledges that his attempt at recreation was not aimed at a "faithful reconstruction" of the original but instead to create a "walking over in their place, a re-sensitizing of thought by re-membering, a rehearsal in imaginative proximity." (Heathfield 2009, 38) Acknowledging the temporal, spatial, and physical magnitude of Hsieh's exertion, continuously occupying Manhattan with his performing body, Heathfield draws attention to the relation between geographic scale and movement in the piece.

Working within the performative lineage of these kinesthetic strategies of occupation, *Ceci est un □ à compléter chez soi : This is a □ to be completed at home* shifted my relationship to the build environment as well as that of my audience. Transforming the lobby of Concordia's Hall Building into a stage to stand, sit, and be visible in, I distorted the lines between the private and public space of the home, office, and classroom. While the politics of my corporeality and actions were drastically different than the artists in this chapter—I am especially cognizant here of my privilege as a white, non-disabled cis-gender male in the North American public sphere—my occupying figure produced changes in choreographies usually associated with the university atrium. As Heathfield describes his own efforts to embody Hsieh's kinesthetic presence, my re-performance "moves to a different rhythm and is directed toward quite different residues." (Heathfield 2009, 38) Mainly, I drew attention to the largely transitionary space of the university

atrium as a potent historical, political, and social site of kinesthetic protest.[151] Becoming "the man who lives in a box in the entranceway" to students, faculty, and passersby, I reactivated Robert Filliou's archive by holding various conversations about the changing architecture of pedagogical institutions and its relevance to the sociality of performing bodies. I have visceral memories of this sensation, of being at odds and recalcitrant with the flow of bodies moving in a public site meant for circulation, transition, and temporariness. As I look back on my occupation of the lobby, I see myself similarly employing "physical interference" to make a "crucial difference" in space by using my "body as articulate matter." (Foster 2003, 395) My actions in and around my cube—entering, living, using, and taking control of it—provided me with a powerful corporeal position from which to exert a sense of agency. This kinesthetic strategy of occupation, collectively embodied, appropriated, and passed down falls within the lineage of artists and activists discussed in this chapter. Like them, I looked to shape the dynamics of space and place, executing "actions that both require and provide strong commitment and, once practiced, slowly change the world in which they occur." (Foster 2003, 408)

[151] Concordia's Hall Building holds an important place in Montreal's political imaginary as the site of public protests. The location of building, the policies of the university, and the architecture of the lobby have played an important role in the clashes between students, private security, and police forces. In 1969, a group of 100 students barricaded themselves in a classroom for 14 days before being evicted. Lead by a group of Black students protesting systemic racism in the institution, the protesters occupied a floor of the Hall Building and the space of the local media until they were forced out by a fire lit by the SWAT team (Nicolas 2019).

Conclusion

Performing the City/Performance and Architecture

> Architecture and events constantly transgress each other's rules, whether explicitly or implicitly. These rules, these organized compositions, may be questioned, but they always remain points of reference. A building is a point of reference for the activities set to negate it. A theory of architecture is a theory of order threatened by the very use it permits. And vice versa.
> —Bernard Tschumi. "Violence of Architecture," *Architecture and Disjunction* (1996)

In this study, I have looked to provide a concise and compelling critical history of performance art that connects the moving body of the artist and the underlying infrastructure of the city in Los Angeles and New York City between 1970 and 1985. Combining art history, visual analysis, and performance studies as a lens of analysis, I have argued that artists resisted, renegotiated, and responded to architectural and urban functionalism in this tumultuous socio-political time period by employing three distinct kinesthetic tactics of protest: locomotion, interruption, and occupation. Defining these 'techniques of the body' through their different performances on the East and West coasts of the United States, I have repeatedly outlined broader political economies, ecosystems of wealth, racial disparity, and gender power dynamics, and the placemaking process of avant-garde communities with their distinct aesthetics and ideals. This research has served to expand emerging work on understanding and reading the connections between movement-based-performance practices and the 'regular flow of the city,' exploring the potential for artists to engender new, meaningful spatial-subjectivities by imagining kinesthetic alternatives to quotidian pedestrian patterns. Repeatedly defying movement-economies of power in outdoor public spaces, the artists in this dissertation were at the forefront of a new and emerging aesthetic, one that has become more defined and refined throughout the decades.

In the introduction to the 2014 special issue of *TDR: The Drama Review* on the intersections between live performance and the built environment entitled "Performing the City," editor Carol Martin confirms the premise behind my research when she suggests that cities in the 1970s "became site-specific performative environments for the dramaturgy of urban space through public practices." (Martin 2014, 14) While my interest in this topic predates this publication, the journal coincides with the start of my PhD at Northwestern University and the beginning of my dissertation research. In more ways than one, my discovery of this issue has guided the overall premise of my research to this point. "Performing the City," as an overall project, ties the historical avant-garde of public, outdoor performances to current-day acts of kinesthetic protest, cultural expression, political defiance, and aesthetic identity. Covering outdoor performance events across the globe—in Al Ain, Abu Dhabi, Berlin, Warsaw, Damascus, Istanbul, Lago, and New York—it draws connections between performing artists working in/against the city, confronting and changing the built environment today. Especially critical to my research was "Brooklyn's Experimental Frontiers: A Performance Geography," an article written by Northwestern graduate and colleague Jasmine Mahmoud published in "Performing the City." Describing how geographic place and aesthetic experiences are entangled, she defines avantgarde performance "as a geographic practice that depends on unregulated and "empty" space to break boundaries and make meaning [….]." (Mahmoud 2014, 103) Arguing that these practices implicate themselves in the racist placemaking that devalues the lived experiences of non-white, low-income residents in Brooklyn during the 21st century, Mahmoud demonstrates how the post-war movement-based-performances I have documented in my dissertation dovetailed into the neoliberal displacement of ethnically diverse communities by real estate development.

In 2015, *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art* published their own special issue tilted "Performance and Architecture." The issue appeared just months before my qualifying exams and focused primarily on building practices and the discipline of architecture itself. Editors Cathryn Dwyre and Chris Perry also pointed to the 1970s by focusing on the deconstructivist architect Bernard Tschumi. Speaking about *The Screenplays* and *The Manhattan Transcripts* (1976) in their introduction, two of Tschumi's seminal theoretical projects, which employ bodily movement and performance, they write: "the emphasis was removed from the static object of architectural form and placed instead on the dynamic body of its inhabitants, that is, human activity or event." (Dwyre & Perry 2015, 4) In an interview between the editors and Tschumi, the architect speaks about moving to New York in the mid-1970s because of his interest in the art scene:

> "There was another reason for me to come to New York: it's the city. I think that was a fascination for my generation. We did not quite believe in architecture anymore and the city was really important, the city as a phenomenon of density and excitement. I'll give you an example. When Trisha Brown develops a piece [*Roof Piece*] using the roofs of Manhattan where she's not using the white space of the gallery, but rather the water towers and the fire stairs as the protagonist of a piece, what she does is a rejection of the value that were carried, say, fifteen years earlier. […] What was happening then was intensely stimulating but very much part of an overall questioning." (Dwyre & Perry 2015, 9)

While the rest of "Performance and Architecture" goes on to focus on contemporary design and architecture projects that have performative elements to them, Tschumi's interview grounds this new generation of architects and designers in the legacy of events like Trisha Brown's *Roof Piece* (1971). Although both "Performing the City" and "Performance and Architecture" summarily locate their origins in the outdoor interventions and performances held in New York City's during the 1970s, they then quickly branch out into contemporary examples that span across the globe. What they lack is an in-depth historical narrative, a theoretical and critical

urban and performance analysis, that gives texture, sense, and background to the beginnings of this movement.

As demonstrated in both of the *TDR* and *PAJ* special issues, scholarship on the interrelatedness between the agency of the performing body and its immediate built environment has increased in recent years. This is a response to sponsored and unsponsored relational aesthetics events unfolding in outdoor public spaces, the rise of live performance in institutional arts contexts, and emergent mass protest movements following the 2008 financial crisis. In the past decade, an important strand of performance studies scholarship has consciously straddled the realms of the social, political, cultural, and aesthetic, addressing the intersecting world of architecture and performance with new purpose. While much of this research has been forward looking, engaging contemporary issues with an eye for a post-9/11 world of mass surveillance and the over-policing of public spaces, it has done less to revisit the past on which this new paradigm has been developed. By observing the ways in which movement-based-performance artists adopted the bricks, concrete, and steel surfaces of New York City and Los Angeles specifically between 1970 and 1985, this project has attempted to identify a watershed moment in performance and urban history. This occurred as artists, in large numbers over a sustained period, began to purposefully inhabit the city with a specific focus on addressing, expressing, and challenging conventional aesthetics, the insidiousness of state control, and other abuses of power. Interweaving the personal histories, practices, and individual works of these artists to both hyperlocal and broader nationwide socio-political instabilities, debates, and seminal events, the dissertation has outlined how movement-based-performances were inherently linked to the urban built environment.

In order to argue that artists were repeatedly shaping and being shaped by the immediate context of their outdoor public presentations, this study has chronicled with detail the movement vocabulary of artist's bodies in the city just as an increased privatization of public space made any outstanding, non-normative, recalcitrant or dissenting kinesthetic trajectories untenable. This active and in-depth reading of performance events, all too often reduced to their meaning as visual signifiers devoid of kinesthetic identity and/or uncertainty, has been at the root of this dissertation's overall project. In addition, comparing New York City and Los Angeles highlighted both cities in their own aesthetic identities, drawing contrasts and parallels between the different yet overlapping deployments of locomotion, interruption, and occupation. As the West Coast metropolitan artists embraced the singularity of sprawl and suburban openness, New York City performers dove deep into the density of gridded glass, steel, and concrete towers. These urban spaces were repeatedly shown to have their own specific set of embodied and kinesthetic experiences, dictated and manipulated by the practices of performance artists and dancers. As theorists, critics, urban planners, policy makers, and activists rethought and reshaped the post-war, post-industrial American city, performance artists and their interventions indexed and challenged how normative spatial-order functioned at the level of the body. As issues of race, class, gender, and ethno-nationality often determined their own positionality vis-à-vis the built environment, artists rejoined movements of urban unrest by adopting and/or adapting postures of kinesthetic protest.

Throughout the project, as both an introduction and conclusion to each chapter, I have posited movement-based-performance as a research methodology to offer critical and practical insight into the formal, historical, and urban histories of my case studies. This structure distinguished *Form Follows Action* from previous works that have ventured to explore similar

issues concerning performance art, urban environments and their political economies from the position of distant observer. By crawling, falling, and standing for my reader in each chapter, this research offers first-hand insight and an analytical framework to process embodiment in the city as it relates to movement. Rendering forms of kinesthetic protest intelligible to a broad audience and actively engaging in furthering academic discourse that seeks to valorize practice-based-research has been a valuable methodological tool, deepening my understanding, reading, and relating to each individual case study.

Foregrounding practice as research also challenges the ways in which we kinesthetically approach, theoretically frame, and historicize New York City and Los Angeles. Echoing Sansan Kwan's notion of a "space-time-body-event," my own performances practice, which is always consciously related to architectural structures, provided me with a singular look at the composition of the city and its performances. *Form Follows Action* engages with two urban centers that are rich with the past as they continue to expand into the future. This is what Sharon Zukin describes in certain neighborhoods of New York City as a "kairological image," living simultaneously in the past and present and in a contrasting class world of poverty and privilege. Urban redevelopment in Los Angeles and New York City has given place to radical changes since the 1970s, however it has also led to the preservation of streetscapes, buildings, and public spaces. Although considerably altered, as entire communities and social classes have been pushed out, these cities continue to bear the traces and stories of their past selves. Performance practice was therefore critical in becoming conscious of urban spaces as simultaneously spatiotemporally specific and inscribed in a reiterative force that bears the traces of previous events, architectures, and performances.

In Chapter 1, my case studies included the works of the Los Angeles-based performance artist Kim Jones (aka Mudman), and two New York-based artists, Papo Colo and William Pope.L. Opening with theoretical and practical insight from my own re-engagement with Pope.L's military crawls in *Five Dollar Crawl After William Pope.L* (2011), a two-kilometer performance I enacted on the streets of Toronto in the leadup to a lecture on the artist, I then demonstrated how each artist employed locomotion as a kinesthetic tactic of protest. Aesthetically distinct with their own socio-political motivations, these movement-based-performers overlapped in their obstruction of pedestrians and motor vehicles, the enforcement of 'law and order' by police and security forces, and processes of urban renewal heavily underway in both cities.

Kim Jones (aka Mudman), a Vietnam war veteran, unsettled the flow of commercial and residential traffic and the regulation of outdoor public spaces. In *Wilshire Boulevard Walk* (1976), the artist and Venice Beach dweller walked along the longest boulevard in the United States, dressed as Mudman and exchanging with curious onlookers. Highlighting Los Angeles' car culture, Jones' walk became a marker of the city's vehicular-driven urban rationale while simultaneously challenging its functionality. His gestures were all the more significant as abandoned, disabled, and destitute veterans were left stranded in metropolitan inner cities during the 1970s, shaping the demographics of American urban homelessness. In *Roof Sculpture* (1973-1974) and *Telephone Pole Piece* (1978), the artist directed his attention to the above-ground electrical grid and sprawling low-level housing units, standing atop his home-studio and climbing up utility poles that populated Los Angeles' treeless skyline. Across the country, in New York City, the Puerto Rican artist Papo Colo pushed back against the colonization of his native island and the continued dismissal of its sovereign and economic rights. In *Superman 51*

(1977), Colo took over the elevated West Side Highway by running along it with 51 pieces of wood tethered to his body by dangling ropes, representing each state in addition to Puerto Rico. Collapsing with exhaustion at the end of his run with the newly erected World Trade Center in the background, his action asserted the presence of his Brown body in Manhattan while challenging the highway, a connecting system of national cohesion. Lastly, the African-American artist William Pope.L performed *Times Square Crawl* (1979) in which he identified and denounced racial inequality and rampant homelessness in New York City. Crawling along 'the great white way' of Broadway Blvd. and adopting horizontality as a position of agency, Pope.L challenged the policing of Midtown where real estate development and gentrification displaced Black, Brown, and homeless populations. Framing these tactical and thought-filled actions in relationship to the built environments of New York City and Los Angeles, this chapter demonstrated how each body in locomotion is unique and makes distinctive choices, but always in relation to a larger sociality.

Chapter 2 opens with my own experience of interruption, the kinesthetic experience of a falling body between built surfaces, during a residency in the small fishing village of Skagaströnd, Iceland. Theorizing the embodied presence of a temporarily floating figure against the backdrop of a building, which evokes the potential of the human form to distort the regularity of everyday spatial life, the chapter considers the works of SoHo-based artist Trisha Brown and the Dutch born, California-based conceptual artist Bas Jan Ader. In their interruptions, both artists open a threshold between the past and the future by participating in and shaping pivotal shifts within their own disciplines, simultaneously announcing performance's emerging relationship to challenging everyday outdoor architectural sites. Both of their falls offer new analytical entry points into the lofts and bungalow studios they inhabited, with their actions

interrupting the city's regular flow of economic goods, industrial activities, and household rituals, the aesthetics of dominant art movements, and indexing processes of urban renewal, gentrification, and suburbanization.

Trisha Brown's work announced a transition in American dance's formal, aesthetic, and spatial concerns, as well as a definitive shift in the political economy of the SoHo neighborhood they took shape in. Starting with *Trillium* (1962) and *Planes* (1968), but most evident in the events of "Dances in and around 80 Wooster Street," composed of *Man Walking Down the Side of a Building*, *Leaning Duets*, *Rummage Sale*, and *Floor of the Forest*, *Leaning Duets*, *Rummage Sale*, and *Floor of the Forest* (1970), Brown's performative rise and fall, a precarious game of catch and release with gravity, paralleled the ambiguity surrounding the presentations of public works of art by those living in SoHo in the early 1970s. In *Roof Piece* (1971), I argue that Brown laid claim to an urban area spanning multiple addresses in SoHo, her sequences of gestures flying (and falling) above the neighborhood's grid regardless of streets, traffic lights, and/or intersections. By choreographing a slow walk, down the side of 80 Wooster Street, levitating above the roof of a vehicle, walking in the street at a forty-five-degree angle, or transmitting movement sequences across roofs, she physically and conceptually disrupted SoHo's social kinesthetic. These actions unsettled the flow of pedestrian, automotive and industrial bodies, halted economic and urban models of productivity, and challenged domestic norms of habitation.

In contrast, Bas Jan Ader adopted the quintessential symbol of American real estate growth, the bungalow, as a staging ground for a brief yet dynamic performance in *Fall 1, Los Angeles*. In doing so, Ader drew attention to the housing structure that dominated post-war US urban development. In a short time period, paralleling Brown, Ader developed falls that physically and conceptually disrupted the social kinesthetic of suburban life, brought attention to

California's urban growth and sprawl, and troubled the domestic space of the home and its norms of productivity. In *All of My Clothes* (1970), Ader played on the boundaries between the privacy of the home and the public space of its rooftop. By selecting a typical Claremont bungalow and transforming his own roof into a performance space, Ader brought into focus regional urbanization by the onset of largely white economically mobile populations to affluent suburbs. Whether it be sitting comfortably atop his roof before tumbling down its angled façade, assembling his entire wardrobe atop that same roof as though it had fallen from the sky, or watching Los Angeles from afar in a nocturnal journey, Ader recurrently fell to intervene in the built environments of his adoptive home. Theorizing the fall as an act of interruption, a distortion of movement, time, and architectural space, this chapter observes how artists cast their bodies into a state of vulnerability informed by their environmental context but reaching beyond it as well.

The moment one intentionally stops moving in an environment built with the purpose of circulating bodies efficiently, the spatiotemporal composition of everyday life changes. Chapter 3 considers occupation, the act of entering, living, using, and/or taking control of a particular place. Not necessarily defined by a singular kinesthetic logic, and sometimes framed as trespassing, occupation is characterized by the opposition it creates vis-à-vis other ritualized and ingrained patterns of dynamic motion. This chapter begins with a description of *Ceci est un □ à compléter chez soi : This is a □ to be completed at home* (2017), a performance I created based on the work of the French Fluxus artist and economist Robert Filliou. During a five-day durational action between the hours of 10am and 6pm, I occupied the *Sightings* space of the Leonard & Bina Ellen Art Gallery in Concordia University's Hall Building, interacting with passers-by, generating objects, drawings, and building an evolving installation. Through this

process, I transformed the dynamic and transient space of Concordia's atrium into one of deliberately grounded, lived-in aesthetic performance. The chapter then revolves around two historical case studies, the works of the Taiwanese-born, New York-based performance artist Tehching Hsieh and the Los Angeles-based feminist collaborative duo of Suzanne Lacy and Leslie Labowitz Starus. Through both of these examples, I argued that being visible in the outdoors with their bodies highlighted the realities of marginalized populations and indexed processes of urban erasure and subjugation rooted in immigration policy, homelessness, gender, and sexual violence. Each artist moved out of institutional art spaces and galleries to create broader publics, choosing the steps, stoops, and streets as staging grounds.

Tehching Hsieh's home address in New York City, 111 Hudson Street, became an iconic landmark where he organized his yearlong actions. Hsieh portrayed the double-blind of his American status as an undocumented immigrant by being entirely visible and vulnerable to the state while also hiding in its infrastructure. In both *Cage Piece* (1978-1979) and *Time Clock Piece* (1979-1980), Hsieh relentlessly enacted the repetitive kinesthetic logic of capitalist labor. At a time of increased policing of undocumented immigrants, and at a critical moment in U.S.-Taiwan relations, Hsieh's entering, living, and use of public space were consequential. *Outdoor Piece* (1981-1982) reframed the architecture of the city as daily living quarters for many individuals just as homelessness was entering the national lexicon. Ingraining himself outdoors at the height of the 1980s homelessness crisis in New York City, his actions highlight the shifting housing market's effects on vulnerable populations by transforming the city into an extended homescape. Squatting, sitting, and lying down, Hsieh employed tactics of kinesthetic occupation to oppose daily political economies of dynamic, ritualized movement rooted in the displacement of low-income populations, the erasure of racialized bodies in urban environments,

and the growing investment of foreign money and trade into the U.S. housing and business markets.

Suzanne Lacy and Leslie Labowitz Starus initiated a series of collaborations in 1977 that were pivotal in developing new approaches to performance and the creation of alternative support networks for women artists in California. These interventions in outdoor spaces denounced sexist representations of women in the media, income and job inequality, and rampant incidents of public and domestic violence. Los Angeles was a particularly important place within America's conversation surrounding violence against women in the late 1970s. In *Three Weeks in May* (1977), Lacy & Labowitz converted otherwise abstract and therefore easily dismissible statistics and an ordinary city map into a physical representation of Los Angeles' spatial and choreographic precarity for women. Just a few months later, *In Mourning and In Rage* (1977) was conceived in response to the Hillside Strangler. Lacy & Labowitz's choreographed movement by caravan from the Woman's Building to City Hall geographically linked and anchored the event in both sites, two carefully selected urban landmarks in the artist's fight to end violence against women in Los Angeles. The imposing bodies of nine seven-foot-tall veiled women mourners contrasted with the bright, white, neo-classical exterior surface of City Hall. Entering, using, and taking control of the space while casting long shadows on the steps, the faceless women obstructed the landscape and became an obstacle to the quotidian flow of pedestrian traffic into the building. Occupying this symbolic site by holding hands, speaking at the microphone, and standing for the media to behold, they were visually and kinesthetically unavoidable.

Notes on Past, Present, and Future Crawls, Falls, and Live-ins

Past

Although I have focused entirely on New York City and Los Angeles in this dissertation, other examples outside of the American territory share similar characteristics. Here are three contemporaneous artists employing similar kinesthetic tactics of protest, spread across the globe around 1970 in their own distinct architectural contexts and avant-garde communities.

Six thousand miles south of New York City, the Brazilian artist Lygia Pape first performed *Divisor* (1968) in the streets of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The action, which bound dozens of people together with a large white sheet, created a collective body out of many individual performers occupying the width of the street. As described by art critic Yasaman Alipour, these performers "at once [became] a unified social body, while the sheet separating their heads from the bodies—hidden beneath—[evoked] the surveillance of the autocratic regime." In line with Pape's use of social sculpture during this time period, *Divisor* was "complete only with group participation," what New York Times art critic Jason Farago described as a "reversal typical of '60s Brazilian art, a biting metaphor for government surveillance and limits to freedom."

Across the Atlantic Ocean along the Kärntner Strasse in Vienna, Austria, Valie Export performed *From the Portfolio of Doggedness* (1968) in which she walked her then partner Peter Weibel on all fours on a leash in the streets. Criticizing the dynamics of gender roles by placing Weibel into a submissively horizontal animalistic crawl, tethered to a mobilized Export in a dominant vertical walk, the locomotion of the performance provoked a distortion of domestic and public spatial orders. Functioning within Viennese Actionism, Export made use of the body as surface, material, and site for art-making within the everyday structures of the built environment. In numerous other works including *Cinema Trap* (1968-1971), *Eros/ion* (1971),

and the photographic series *Body Configurations* (1972-1976), the artist employed movement-based-performance as a means of unsettling social constructs and patriarchy.

Further east in 1969, the Japanese artist Katsuhiko Akasegawa (alias Genpei Akasegawa) was documented holding up an oversized 1,000-yen bill, wandering the streets near his residence in Tokyo, Japan. The performance, along with other interventions he initiated with the collective Hi-Red Center, combined direct actions and printed materials in ways that denaturalized quotidian experiences to undermine their security. Part of a body of work in which Akasegawa printed fake 1,000-yen notes to mail in the 1960s, the street walking action occurred as the artist's criminal trial for threatening confidence in paper currency ended. Shouldering the oversized bill from a highly mediatized event during which members of the Japanese avant-garde defended the notion of a readymade, the performance juxtaposed Akasegawa's body suspended before the law, the backdrop of the city, and the currency of the state in the 1,000-yen bill.[152]

These case studies present future opportunities to expand this research across the world, employing similar methodologies as the ones presented in this dissertation by intertwining art and urban histories, performance studies, and movement-based-research. The overlaps and differences between each cultural context, avant-garde community, and metropolitan center also offers the possibility to further compare these narratives at larger scales. While locomotion, interruption, and occupation appear to remain central kinesthetic tactics, their roots in local protest movements, aesthetic legacies, and political-economies also undoubtedly gives them unique attributes.

[152] Akasegawa was also responsible for creating *Thomasson* or *Hyperart Thomasson*, a form of conceptual art that referred to a preserved architectural relic which serves no purpose. Akasegawa deemed these leftover structures of a building or the built environment a piece of art in itself.

Present

In a 2020 article in The New York Times "What Makes Pope.L's Art Endure? (It's Not the Famous Crawls)," art critic Martha Schwendener argues that in the artist's first major retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), the "crawling pieces register well—the exertion and absurdity of the actions are made clear" but that "[in] the end, however, Pope.L tends to borrow more than he innovates: the crawling, ingesting and meditating are couched in earlier actions and overlaid with social critique." Thinking through the exhibition's reliance on video and photographic documentation of Pope.L's body of work juxtaposed with the context of a contemporary museum space, Schwendener remarks that the jarring nature of the original actions, although still "absurd," seem somewhat dated and distant. Instead, she points to a more recent series of performances or "hauntings" which are more akin to flash mobs presented during "biennials or other large exhibitions around the world." Citing "gonzo tactics" and "stealth magic," she concludes that "[haunting] public spaces and even his own museum retrospective is where the real enchantment of Pope.L's work lies, […] rather than the grueling and more obviously impressive endurance tests." Schwendener's review points to a relevant issue related to the basic arguments presented by this dissertation and the historical legacy of the artists it encapsulates. The nature of public spaces, and more precisely the geographic scales and kinesthetic habitus of major metropolitan centers like New York City and Los Angeles have drastically changed.

During a visit to New York City in 2014, for a Graduate Student Conference organized by the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics, I stood outside of the Performance Studies building at NYU waiting for fellow workshop members to exit. When the whole group of approximately five people were out in front of 721 Broadway, we decided to group hug since

this was our last day together and the weekend had been dynamic and fulfilling. Right there, in the middle of the sidewalk, we embraced and celebrated our research, which had focused on our overlapping interests in "public performance interventions." Focusing on São Paolo, Montreal, Lima, Portland, Lisbon, and other places around the world, we all brought different art histories, kinesthetic tactics, political economies, and architectural contexts to our presentations. During our embrace, a family of tourists wearing "I ♥ NY" t-shirts walked by us. As they observed our embrace, the youngest incredulously asked her parents what we were doing. Without hesitation, the father, with his thick midwestern accent, suggested that we were engaged in "some kind of performance art."[153]

In the aftermath of the Marina Abramović's highly mediatized, sensationalized, and well attended exhibition *The Artist Is Present* (2010) at MoMA, performance art had made it into the national lexicon in ways that surpassed all of our expectations. Standing just a few paces away from SoHo, forty-years later but still in sight of buildings I write about in this dissertation, the city was no longer an unexpected meetings grounds for live art and an unsuspecting audience. Visionary artists like Trisha Brown, Papo Colo, Tehching Hsieh, and William Pope.L could no longer usurp the architecture of New York City with outstanding feats of kinesthetic intervention without obtaining city permits, institutional support, and the aid of a police escort and first responders. Neither could they remain anonymous, mysterious or troubling, since they would either be googled by passers-by with cellphones or explained away as "some sort of performance art," as we had in our unexceptional group hug. As New York City and Los Angeles have changed, gentrified, and catered to the entertainment industry and the divertissement of public

[153] I have written more extensively about the use of "performance art" as shorthand in contemporary political and media discourse to discredit something as gross incompetence, unserious, or absurd in "Performance Paces, Sandrine Schaefer's Embodied Know-How" (2021) for *Canadian Theatre Review*.

art, they have become stages for the spectacle of various performing arts.[154] What was once transgressive has largely become a feature of the post-modern metropolis.

Future

Writing in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, a global event that has left large swaths of the world in revolving lockdowns, the transgressive events outlined above seem to exist in a romantic, past, and distant era. In some large cities, curfews, movement restrictions, and police enforced checkpoints mandate that no one leave their home unless shopping for food and medicine or to attend to "essential work." No two responses between countries and governments are similar, increasing the global tension of border closures and travel as reported cases, virus mutations, and death counts rise. Amongst the debris, those whose living conditions were already precarious continue to suffer the most. Cities like New York and Los Angeles have largely been slowed down, emptied of their more affluent populations who have sought more open aired spaces while working from home, the streets vacated of the busy daily activity. As a result, artists and cultural workers alike have adapted to rapidly changing circumstances by rethinking the spatial and relational pillars of the art world: the artist's studio, the exhibition venue, the live performance. Being at a standstill has engendered multiple examples of resourcefulness, resilience, and resistance. Staying in place and confining has also facilitated a process of introspection.

Performance-making will inevitably be altered from this pandemic, as public space invariably evolves to accommodate our needs. At this point in time, outdoor performances offer

[154] Nowhere is this more apparent than on New York City's iconic Highline. In 2019 I watched *Sensation 1/This Interior*, a performance by dancer-choreographer Lygia Lewis with an audience of nearly three hundred. Juxtaposed with Colo's *Superman 5*1 (1971), which was created just one hundred feet away with barely any audience, the scale, impact, accessibility, and spectacle of movement-based-performance in the city has considerably evolved.

the opportunity for events to occur in a relatively safe environment. Throughout the summer, in both New York City and Los Angeles, artists took to the streets to present works that were otherwise meant for the inside of galleries, museums, and theatres. In some ways, it feels like we are on the edge of another threshold, similar to the one in the 1970s described in this research. Not unlike then, this phenomenon coincides with a series of exterior social, economic, and political factors: a financial crisis and rampant unemployment, escalating violence in response to protest movements, the structural impacts of climate change, the increased visibility of the Black Lives Matter movement, and important shift in metropolitan centers demographics due to teleworking. The cultural landscape of tomorrow will without doubt bear the scars of the pandemic, and one can only imagine that outdoor kinesthetic acts of movement-based-performance will be necessary to survive, persist, and adapt in the face of new economic, social, and political paradigms. Only time will tell, but there is a sense that change is once again on the horizon.

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