

Figuring Diachrony

Ethics Before the Voice

Brent Harris

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School of Art and Design

Auckland University of Technology (AUT)

Primary Supervisor: Mark Jackson

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly stated in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signature of Candidate:

Acknowledgements

Go only to passers-by or passings-by, to the ones who do not attend to them. Right in the beginning,
I might have faltered, there on the first round.

Abbreviations

ATVM	‘At This Very Moment in this Work Here I Am’ in <i>Re-Reading Levinas</i>
<i>BPW</i>	<i>Emmanuel Levinas: Basic philosophical writings</i>
<i>CPP</i>	<i>Collected Philosophical Papers</i>
<i>EE</i>	<i>Existence and Existents</i>
<i>OB</i>	<i>Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence</i>
RS	‘Reality and Its Shadow’ in <i>Collected Philosophical Papers</i>
SEC	‘Signature Event Context’ in <i>Limited Inc.</i>
<i>TI</i>	<i>Totality and Infinity</i>

Abstract

Figuring Diachrony: Ethics Before the Voice

This PhD project engages the fields of contemporary art, performance studies and performance philosophy. It explores *participation* and the relation of *ethics* to *politics*, through performance art works in public places. The research developed through a series of performances by the researcher, the researcher's participation in performances of others, and in the writing of this exegesis. The project engages a reference field occurring among selected texts of the 'ethics as first philosophy' of contemporary philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, selected texts of Jacques Derrida, selected passages of David Wills's *Dorsality*, performance works of Ant Hampton and Glen Neath, Martin Nachbar and others, and writings on performance of André Lepecki, Brian Massumi, Alan Read, Liza Kharoubi and others. Following the introduction of the project in Chapter One of the exegesis, Chapter Two explores becoming and belonging within performance practices in relation to locale and the *there*, prosthetics, and recording. It proposes a choreographic engagement with *passing*, *attending* and *tethering*, where it proposes these as something like the 'quasitranscendental' structures Rodolph Gasché proposes—as conditions of possibility of classes or categories, and conditions of impossibility of the closure of such classes and categories. In relation to this it invents the neologism *attendeer* as a relation of attention to passivity. The engagement with tethering recalls an audio-recorded voice saying, 'Bear in mind that you are tethered', in Hampton and Neath's performance *The Bench or Hello for Dummies*. The project's engagement with choreography references David Wills's writing in *Dorsality* of a 'technology in the back' (2008: 12), a technology in the human animal that is behind, prior to, and undoing of, conceptual perspective. Chapter Three explores modes of resemblance within the performance practices in relation to Levinas's proposition in 'Reality and Its Shadow' of a passive *participation* in 'the image' which suspends conceptuality, as no longer the participation of a subject or substantive. It proposes that at times performances, through their minimal differences with life in general in a locale, open an engagement with 'the image'. Chapter Four considers this project's methodology through an exploration of Levinas's 'The Trace of the Other', and Wills's writing of *dorsality* as modes of 'bending back'. In relation to this it considers the project as practice-led research. Exploring relations on footpaths of passers-by and attendeers in my performance practice, Chapter Four begins an exploration of responsibility and relations of ethics to politics, engaging writings on performance of André Lepecki, Liza Kharoubi, Alan Read, and writings on politics of Simon Critchley. Chapter Five engages my performance practice in relation to Levinas's writing of ethics as *diachronic* time—'a *saying* prior to anything *said*'—and juxtaposes aspects of Levinas's engagement aspects of Jean-Luc Nancy's engagement with *Listening*. Chapter Five explores relations of *saying*, seriality and interruption, and considers Levinas's proposition of ingratitude in relation to the possibility or impossibility of the movement of a work that is not a restitution to the same. 'Figuring Diachrony: Ethics before the voice' relates performance practice to the possibility or impossibility of figuring the trace of ethics.

One: Introduction

This practice-led PhD project explores my performance art practice in relation to questions of participation and the relation of ethics to politics. These explorations occur in a reference field occurring among: selected texts of the contemporary philosophers Emmanuel Levinas, Jacques Derrida, and David Wills; an experimental theatre work by Ant Hampton and Glen Neath, performance works of dancer and choreographer Martin Nachbar, among performance works of other artists; and writings on performance of André Lepecki, Brian Massumi, Liza Kharoubi, and Alan Read. This exegesis explores performance practices as opened by, and opening, a sense of *participation* as a passivity, anonymity, or interruption of conceptuality and the trace-structure of such an 'experience' or enigma. This engagement with participation is most strongly provoked by Levinas' essay 'Reality and its Shadow'—but not exclusively so, as Massumi's engagement with expression and Wills's and Derrida's engagements with prosthetics each inform the senses of participation this exegesis explores. That is also to say that the exegesis folds its engagement with participation together with a number of other related explorations; of becoming and belonging, locale or the *there*, prosthetics, and recording. Of Levinas's texts, I engage most with 'Reality and Its Shadow' and *Otherwise than Being* for the way these open an engagement between ethics and aesthetics. I consider this project's methodology in relation to Levinas's essay 'The Trace of the Other' (1986). Derrida's engagements with J.L. Austin's 'performative' and with Stéphane Mallarmé's understanding of *writing* occur as provocations throughout the project and exegesis. I engage Wills's *Dorsality* not only as commentary on Levinas and Derrida (among others), but as an 'original' contribution to engagements with technology and performance.

The exegesis submitted for examination was written in advance of *Wednesday* (2013b), the performance work submitted for examination, and the viva voce the following day. The exegesis has been amended post-examination in response to the examiners' reports and requests for amendments to the exegesis, and to include some discussion of *Wednesday*. The writing submitted prior to the examination anticipates *Wednesday* and the viva voce and in this I have retained the original tenses. The sections of Chapter One I have added post-examination are; 'Dance and Dance Studies', 'Choreography', 'Theatre and Performance', 'Performance Philosophy', 'Performance-Philosophy Engagements in the Reference-Field: Levinas', 'Walking', 'This Exegesis', and 'Contributions'. In Chapter One I have also revised the section 'Levinas's Ethics' to add a consideration of 'performativity' and to register some differences between *Totality and Infinity* and *Otherwise than Being*. In the section 'Wills's Dorsality' of Chapter One I have added some discussion of Lepecki's (2006) engagement with choreography in relation to Althusser's writing of 'interpellation' in 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation)' in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other*

Essays (1971). In Chapter Two I have slightly revised the section ‘By-Play’. In Chapter Four I have added the section ‘Responsibility’, and in Chapter Six I have added the section ‘Conclusion’.

Practices

In the three years prior to this candidature, and within the four years of it, I have carried out a series of performances in streets and other public places. With the exception of *Wednesday* (2013b), the most recent of these occurred as *Oct Dec Series*, an ‘offsite’ project with ST PAUL Street Gallery which I carried out in Auckland New Zealand from 19 October to 15 December 2011.¹ Of my projects, this is the most frequently discussed in this exegesis. *Oct Dec Series* consisted of 11 ‘episodes’ in different urban and suburban locales. These episodes were grouped or bundled in three ‘Bundles’; ‘1’, ‘O’, and ‘A’, and these Bundles were announced successively—‘O’ and ‘A’ after the completion of the Bundle prior—in email invitations from ST PAUL Street Gallery to its email subscribers. These email invitations gave the title, the starting time—or in the case of two episodes of Bundle A, the finishing time—of each episode and its approximate locale, such as the name of a suburb, and invited subscribers to email to book to attend an episode. I emailed in reply to confirm each booking. Approximately 24 hours prior to the starting time or finishing time I sent a second email to each of those who had booked to inform them of the exact starting or finishing location. The episodes involved my; walking and other movements, speech and vocalization, arranging of small objects (although their status as objects will be questioned) including one or two plastic water bottles and my mobile phone, and instructions-invitations-requests to those attending; the movements or behaviors of those attending; among the other goings-on or comings and goings of the locale. Other of my projects, many of which engage in similar processes to episodes of *Oct Dec Series*, I will introduce as they occur in the discussions.

I attended Ant Hampton and Glen Neath’s *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* (2012) with the deliberate aim to write about it in this exegesis, having received an email invitation to it as an email subscriber to ST PAUL Street Gallery in April 2012 and identifying it as probably a practice that resonates with my own.² According to Ant Hampton’s website, a series of iterations of *Hello for Dummies* had

¹ Available at <http://www.stpaulst.aut.ac.nz/2011/brent-harris>. I prepared the email invitations and the project’s page on the ST PAUL Street Gallery website in partnership with gallery assistant Melissa Laing. These invited subscribers to email octdecseries@gmail.com to book for episodes.

² Thus part of the resonance between my practice and *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* was in their differing engagements with ST PAUL Street Gallery as projects occurring through a number of iterations ‘offsite’ in relation to the gallery premises. ST PAUL Street Gallery, directed by Charlotte Huddleston, is located in the School of Art and Design, Auckland University of Technology.

My identifying of *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* as probably resonant with the concerns of this project was based in part on my attending an earlier project by Hampton and Tim Etchells, *The Quiet Volume*, within

occurred in 2011 in Lincoln, The United Kingdom, and prior to that, 11 series of *The Bench* had occurred in different places, in a number of different languages.³ In Auckland, Alterations (Amit Charan, Joel Cocks and Laura Preston) curated *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* as part of ST PAUL Street Gallery's Curatorial Season, curated by Vera Mey.⁴ The 'play', involved two participants intended to be 'strangers' to each other.⁵ Of the iterations of the play in Auckland I participated in two. In each case I booked via a link to an online form within the email invitation. In each iteration I met another person—a guide—in the public place nominated in the email that confirmed my booking. Via my guide, and someone else guiding my partner, I met my partner without seeing their face, and whose face, according to 'the first rule', I was *not* to look at. Each participant and guide responded to recorded audio via an MP3 player with headphones. Responding to the audio recording, the guides' instructions, and a map printed on A4 paper, my partner and I were requested or invited or instructed to walk a short distance together to a designated bench, a bench there prior to its enrolment into the play. Beginning this walk we parted company with the guides, and then carried out the play sitting side by side on the bench. *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* took place on each of the four days Wednesday 18 - Saturday 21 April in four different locations within Auckland; at 6.30am in an urban park, at 8.30am in an urban cemetery, at 12.30pm and 2.30pm at the Auckland Public Art Gallery, and at 5.30pm and 6.30pm in the shared pedestrian and vehicle space of Lorne Street outside Auckland Central City Library. The first of the two iterations I participated in began at 12.30pm on Wednesday 18 April 2012 at the art gallery, with the bench on the outdoor terrace of Level Two facing out towards Albert Park. The second began at 5.30pm on

Ciudades Paralelas in Berlin in 2010 curated by Lola Arias and Stefan Kaegi. This project occurred with a similar format to *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* but took place in the reading room of the Humboldt University Library in Berlin. I was one of two people sitting side by side, each listening to recorded audio through an ipod, see <http://www.ciudadesparalelas.com/bibliotecaing.html>.

³ Available at <http://www.anthampton.com/menu.html>. These projects are versions of what the website of Hampton's and Silvia Mercuriali's former company Rotozaza describes as 'Autoteatro', a format which came about through Hampton and Mercuriali's shared projects, <http://www.rotozaza.co.uk/statement.html>, and in which, 'there are no actors or human input during the work other than [the participants'] own.' <http://www.rotozaza.co.uk/autoteatro.html>. I suggest that my explorations in this exegesis of my attending of *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* may complicate or contest this formulation.

⁴ See <http://www.stpaulst.auckland.ac.nz/2012/curatorial-season-2012>.

At the end, or after the end, of the iteration on the gallery terrace, Laura Preston told my partner and I that Alterations chose the locales of each of the iterations. The online booking form, a page on the website of ST PAUL Street Gallery. An archive of Alterations' projects is available at <http://www.altsproject.info/>

The booking form for *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* <http://www.stpaulst.auckland.ac.nz/alterationsbookingform>, introduces Alterations as, 'a curatorial agency... motivated by art and research, which examines notions of time and duration as a key mode of exhibition production.'

⁵ The email invitation I received states, 'In signing up for this play you will be guided to a specific park bench and paired up with a stranger'.

Saturday 21 April 2012 on Lorne Street outside the library, with the bench in the shared pedestrian and vehicle space of Lorne Street.

The works I discuss in this exegesis of the choreographer and dancer Martin Nachbar—*Incidental Journey* (2006) and *The Walk* (2012)—I have never attended ‘in-person’. My participation or attending in and with these projects has occurred within reading an article in *Performance Research Journal* by Esther Pilkington and Nachbar, ‘We Always arrive at the theatre on Foot: A walk to the theatre in Sixteen Steps and Eighteen Footnotes’ (2012), in reading a self-published article by Nachbar, ‘Travelling, Fleeing, Passing (The Artist as “Transient”)’ (2006), in reading the page on *The Walk* (2012) of the website of Sophiensaele, one of the production houses of *The Walk*, and in reading Nachbar’s paragraph entry in the Teachers’ Directorate of The Inter-University Centre for Dance Berlin.⁶

The modes in which I have attended-to and passed-by each of the three performance practices thus differ from one another. The chapters that follow are in part questionings of such differences, for example of modes of belonging, of that which is others’ and that which is mine, of locale, and recording. In writing this exegesis my aim has been to draw out concerns emerging within my attendings-to or passings-by of these practices that are of interest or relevance to what I may have thought at the time of writing, were the concerns of this PhD project. This PhD project has been shaped to a large extent by each of my engagements within these three practices. My explorations of *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* occur primarily in Chapter Two, ‘Becoming and Belonging’, in relation to that chapter’s engagements with *tethering*, *re-cording*, *mis-fitting*, and *by-play*. My engagement with Nachbar’s practice, and Pilkington and Nachbar’s article, occurs primarily in Chapter Three, ‘Appearances or Epiphanies’, in relation to that chapter’s engagements with *appearance*, *citationality*, *feigning*, *under-cover-agent*, and *locale* in relation to *becoming visible and becoming a group*. In comparison to the other two practices, my engagement with my own practice is more widely spread or dispersed through the exegesis. Chapter Four, ‘Bending Back’ engages the three practices as part of an exploration of methodology. Throughout this exegesis I intend not so much to explore the practices

⁶ The Tanzforum Berlin website (2012: <http://www.tanzforumberlin.de/trailer424.php>), credits *The Walk* as a co-production of Nachbar and two theatre and production houses, FFT Düsseldorf and Sophiensaele in Berlin. The ‘trailer’ includes a video of an indoor iteration of *The Walk*.

The self-published article ‘Travelling, Fleeing, Passing (The Artist as “Transient”)’ (2006), in which Nachbar writes of *Incidental Journey*, see http://www.e-tcetera.be/UserFiles/File/Etcetera-104-Nachbar_Eng.pdf.

Nachbar’s entry in the Teachers’ Directorate of The Inter-University Centre for Dance Berlin, (<http://www.hzt-berlin.de/?z=3&p=86&pp=22&lan=en&PHPSESSID=0081c6ce49274006512c81d0c8ac8381>) states: ‘Incidental Journey [was] a series of performances that took to the streets to investigate events traumatic to various cities.’

in their discreteness as remark or fold emerging concerns in each chapter, attempting to re-turn or re-vert the engagements of the previous chapter(s). While for the most part I have restricted my explorations of performance practices to the three outlined, in this Introduction chapter as part of contextualizing the project, I briefly discuss the ‘manoeuvres’ of Tim Brennan, the work of Richard Long, and the ‘Radioballett’ of the group LIGNA. A related exploration of the contexts of this project in this chapter occurs as an exploration of what Cull, Mullarkey & Minors (2012) refer to in their introduction to *How Performance Thinks*, the proceedings of the eponymous conference in April 2012 at Kingston University, as ‘the emerging sub-field’ of ‘Performance Philosophy’ (4). In the exegesis I also briefly reference or discuss a number of other practices or occurrences, which I will introduce as they occur.

Places of Departure and Targets

This project aims to contribute to a number of imbricated fields: contemporary arts, performance studies, performance philosophy, contemporary dance and critical dance studies, and performance art. Broadly speaking, this project is ‘practice-led’ performance research, and performance ‘practice as research’. However, in Chapter Four: ‘Bending Back’, I propose that this project contests Baz Kershaw’s (2011) model of performance practice as research. While this project discusses selected parts of performance arts legacies to explore its location within the fields it engages, its ‘original’ contribution is not intended to be in the field of art history. In what follows in this chapter I aim to outline (1) a ‘there’ that this project starts from relative to the disciplinary fields it engages, (2) how this exegesis works and does not work, and (3) the contributions to the fields mentioned above, that I suggest are demonstrated, or occur, in this exegesis.

To put it schematically, this project explores relations of ‘performance’ and ‘philosophy’. I will call the belonging-and-becoming-with-one-another of the different practices, genres and legacies this project engages, the project’s *reference-field*. Any field would be an extensifying-intensifying. If a field borders that which it is not, deconstructively, as Peggy Kamuf describes in her introduction to Derrida’s *Without Alibi* (2002), its border would be ‘always divisible’ (2). This exegesis aims to demonstrate or perform relations among the concerns, characters, and figures in its reference-field such that they become significant for engagements with participation and the relation of ethics and politics within the disciplinary fields listed above. The reference-field of this project is also a disciplinary field. Hopefully the reference-field occurs as a resonating chamber, perhaps resembling the kind of chamber Nancy in *Listening* (2007), suggests the subject *is*. And in mentioning a chamber I cannot forget the ‘secluded chamber’ Lepecki (2006: 26) identifies as the haunted place of choreography as practice of masculine solitude, which I will discuss in the section ‘Choreography’ in this chapter.

There has been sustained exchange among several of the philosophical projects that this project engages. I will outline the exchanges most relevant to this project in the section ‘Levinas’s Ethics’ below. Critchley (2002a) notes the influence that Derrida’s essay ‘Violence and Metaphysics’, which responded to Levinas’s earlier works including *Totality and Infinity*, had on Levinas’s subsequent writings. I discuss ‘At This Very Moment Here I Am’, Derrida’s extended essay on later works of Levinas and in particular *Otherwise than Being*, in Chapter Five. Among the philosophical engagements between writings of Derrida and Levinas I reference John Llewelyn’s *Appositions of Derrida and Levinas* (2002a) and Simon Critchley’s *The Ethics of Deconstruction: Derrida and Levinas*. The texts of Wills that I explore most, engage explicitly with Levinas. Derrida’s text in ‘Right of Inspection’ (1998) that I engage in Chapter Two is one of a number of Derrida’s writings translated by Wills.

By contrast, the makers of the ‘performance’ practices engaged in this exegesis were not, as far as I know, explicitly or deliberately in dialogue with one another. One mode of coalescence of the ‘performance’ parts of the reference-field would occur only in that it is ‘me’ or ‘the project’ that is encountering them. While there is a circularity in this, recalling Alan Read’s suggestion of the tautological character of the term ‘site-specific’ (2008: 203)⁷, my choosing of the performance practices this exegesis explores occurred as part of my ‘interestedness’ or tending-towards contemporary performance engagements with ‘public space’, email-invitation, choreography, and voice.⁸ The reference-field I will outline suggests that my encountering of works of others is a mode of my performance practice. A repeating paradox and problem of this project, to the extent that it occurs in a mode like that of Levinas’s *Otherwise than Being*, is: it is inter-ested, it chooses or aims, to demonstrate or perform undoings or interruptions of its inter-est or aim. It would then be called to discuss the extent to which and the ways in which such undoing or interruptions occurred, and this would be another aim that would be called to be interrupted. I will outline this idea in more detail in the section on Levinas’s ethics below. Another way of saying that one mode of coalescence of the ‘performance’ parts of the reference-field would be that it is ‘me’, or ‘the project’ that is encountering them, is to say that all the parts of this project’s reference-field are encountered through my-body-there in its remembering-forgettings. My-body-there would also occur as a reference-field. Most prominent perhaps among its remembering-forgettings are years of

⁷ Discussing the playgrounds of Aldo van Eyck in Amsterdam, and Ingeborg de Roode and Liane Lefaiivre’s *Aldo van Eyck, the Playgrounds and the City* (2002, cited in Read 2008), Read writes, ‘Almost all his city-centre playgrounds were inserted between pre-existing urban forms and of course this made them effortlessly site-specific in a way that exposes the tautology of that overused phrase (Read 2008: 203).

⁸ For Levinas, my interestedness, as inter-est-edness, is the mode of my being that is interrupted or called into question by the other. I will pick up on this in Chapter Five.

performance practice, training/education as a contemporary dancer and choreographer, and training/education and beginner-level practice in another mode of performance: that of a secondary school teacher. Most prominent among the genres of performance in my reference-field are experimental theatre, and performance art and dance, although performances of interest to this project are not limited to these genres.

I encounter and engage the parts of my reference-field called ‘performance’ in ways shaped, provoked, enabled, and limited, by the parts of my reference-field called ‘philosophy’, and vice-versa. I will consider the kinds of provoking, enabling and limiting that may be occurring in the relation of ‘performance’ and ‘philosophy’ in the section on Performance Philosophy below. The exegesis explores performance’s materiality and choreo-graphy responding to the engagements with *writing* of Derrida and—via Gerald L. Bruns (2002)—Stéphane Mallarmé and Maurice Blanchot. André Lepecki’s engagements with dance and choreography are provoked by a number of philosophical engagements including writings of Derrida, and I in turn encounter Lepecki’s writings on choreography in a way provoked by Derrida and Wills. I encounter Lepecki’s engagement with history in a way provoked by Levinas’s writing on research and recollection in ‘The Trace of the Other’ (1986).

Research performs a contribution to knowledge. In some of its engagements this project is concerned with an ‘experience’ or mode that would not be knowable, or that would not belong to the order of knowledge. Therefore, in relation to such ‘experience’, this project aims to make a contribution to what is ‘known’ or thought within the project’s disciplinary fields, of a relation to such an ‘experience’. Research must be, empirically speaking: *original*. In this sense, this exegesis aims to demonstrate that this project makes original contributions to the imbricated fields of contemporary arts, performance studies, performance philosophy, contemporary dance and critical dance studies, and performance art.

In *Exhausting Dance: Performance and the Politics of Movement* (2006), Lepecki suggests that '[d]ance accesses modernity by its increased ontological alignment with movement as the spectacle of modernity's being' (7).¹⁰ Lepecki quotes historian Harvie Ferguson's suggestion that 'modernity is a new form of subjectivity' (Ferguson 2000: 5, cited in Lepecki 2006), and that 'the only changeless element in Modernity is propensity to movement, which becomes, so to speak, its permanent emblem' (2000: 11, cited in Lepecki 2006: 7). Lepecki also picks up on Peter Sloterdijk's (2000) proposal that 'ontologically, modernity is a pure being-toward-movement' (2000: 36, cited in Lepecki 2006: 7). Thus Lepecki suggests that to challenge the ontology of choreography and of the dancer as (a) 'being-toward-movement' may be to challenge 'the political ontology of movement in modernity' (8). Lepecki draws on the work of Ferguson, Sloterdijk, Teresa Brennan and others, who, Lepecki suggests, 'identify the establishment of modernity with the subjectification set in place by the Cartesian division between *res cogita* and *res extensa*' (10). Lepecki's engagement in *Exhausting Dance*, and this project, in different ways contest the 'self-sufficiency' (11), and, we might say, 'auto-motivity' of the subject of modernity.

Lepecki discusses Randy Martin's proposition in *Critical Moves* (1998) of 'mobilization as mediating concept between dance and politics' (2006: 11). Lepecki quotes Martin,

theories of politics are full of ideas, but they have been least successful in articulating how the concrete labour of participation necessary to execute those ideas is gathered through the movement of bodies in social time and space. Politics goes nowhere without movement. (1998: 3)

This quotation from Martin would seem to 'participate' in a dualism of idea and body, or idea and materiality, and this project aims to contest such a dualism. Of interest are Lepecki's comments on '[t]he word "participation" in Martin's theory' (12), which, Lepecki suggests, 'is important, since it contains a critique of representation. For Martin, mobilization is already participation, it is a

⁹ Randy Martin proposed the term 'critical dance studies' in *Critical Moves* (1998). Of critical dance studies Martin suggests:

I would like to treat dance studies not simply as the empirical collection of all that has been written about dance but also more speculatively as a project that relates to various modes of thought and from which it is possible to imagine a whole range of applications, both to dance and other practices.... Dance studies must begin in the middle of what has been produced under its sign. (181, 182)

Broadly speaking, this project engages dance studies in such a way as Martin suggests.

¹⁰ In relation to this claim Lepecki refers to Mark Franko's 'Figural Inversions of Louis XIV's Dancing Body' (2000). Franko suggests, 'The royal body dancing was made to *represent itself as if remachined* in the service of an exacting coordination between upper and lower limbs dictated by a strict musical frame. It was an early modern techno-body. (Franko 2000: 36, emphasis Lepecki's)

moving-toward-the-world – in the sense that methexis proposes a participatory encountering that challenges the distancing forces of mimesis’ (12). Lepecki explores works of dancers and choreographers such as Jerome Bel, Xavier Le Roy and others, as challenging ‘dance’s political ontology by the enactments of stillness’ (15).¹¹ Lepecki picks up on C. Nadia Seremetakis’s concept of ‘the still-act’ that she developed in *The Senses Still: Perception and memory as material culture in modernity* (1994). Lepecki suggests that Seremetakis proposed the still-act

to describe moments when a subject interrupts historical flow and *practices* historical interrogation. Thus, while the still-act does not entail rigidity or morbidity it requires a performance of suspension, a corporeally based interruption of modes of imposing flow. The still *acts* because it interrogates economies of time, because it reveals the possibility of one’s agency within controlling regimes of capital, labour, and mobility (Lepecki 2006: 15).

Lepecki quotes Seremetakis:

Against the flow of the present, there is a stillness in the material culture of historicity; those things, spaces, gestures and tales that signify the perceptual capacity for elemental historical creation. Stillness is the moment when the buried, the discarded, and the forgotten escape to the social surface of awareness like life-supporting oxygen. It is the moment of exit from historical dust (1994: 12).

An ‘escape’ is a movement, and neither Seremetakis nor Lepecki are proposing that the still-act enacts complete or absolute stillness. This project aims to engage with ‘movement’ in two general senses. One sense would be movement as a body’s (in principle) measurable or calculable displacement over a (in principle) measurable or calculable time. Such a ‘body’ might be identified as participating in or belonging to any number of categories or genres, for example the inhuman, the human, the inanimate and the animate. My practice, as dance and choreography, is intimately concerned with such movement. It seems reasonable that movements of this kind might be slowed in, or as part of, a still-act. The other sense or senses of movement with which this project is concerned would be movement as constitutive of the body that moves. Names for such senses of movement that I engage in this project include Derrida’s *différance*, Levinas’s *diachrony*, Wills’s’ writing of ‘the dorsal’ or ‘the tropological turn’ (2008: 17), and the sense of ‘relation’ that Brian Massumi engages in *The Political Economy of Belonging and the Logic of Relation*, a chapter of *Parables for the Virtual: movement, affect, sensation* (2002). *Différance*, *diachrony*, ‘the dorsal’ or ‘the tropological turn,’ and ‘relation’ as Massumi engages it, are not equivalent or synonymous terms and I do not attempt a commentary on how they may be related. Rather, I seek to explore how they may open engagements with performance practices, and how performance practices may open engagements with them. They would be senses of movement that one could not still or slow—and

¹¹ Lepecki suggests that this is a practicing of ‘what Gaston Bachelard calls a ‘slower ontology’ (Bachelard 1994: 215).

Lepecki does not suggest that one could. These senses of movement may be related to the movement of methexis as Lepecki suggests of Martin's engagement, if methexis was a sharing constitutive of the bodies that shared. Such a methexis might suggest Jean-Luc Nancy's engagement with *partage* that I will outline in Chapter Two. However, I will not engage with questions of methexis in this exegesis. It might be arguable that at times my practice's stammerings, interruptions and doublings-back, especially when these seem to slow down a process relative to a 'normal' or expected speed, may occur as something like such a 'still-act' as Seremetakis (1994) and Lepecki (2006) discuss. Modes of interruption and turning-back are integral to my practice as I hope the discussions in Chapter Two 'Becoming and Belonging' will show. These engagements with speeds, slownesses, rhythms, relays, progressions, regressions, digressions and interruptions has a part in what I aim to demonstrate or invent as the 'originality' of this project, but the contribution this project aims to make is not primarily an engagement with the 'still-act'.

Lepecki considers the 'still-act' as a mode of engaging otherwise with history, of receiving history otherwise than via a normative, dominant, or sedimented stratification of layers:

To exit from historical dust is to refuse the sedimentation of history into neat layers.... Against the brutality of historical dust literally falling onto bodies, the still-act reshapes the subject's stance regarding movement and the passing of time. (Lepecki 2006: 15-16)¹²

Levinas' sense of the chronological, in which intervals of time are measurable and calculable, would be the mode of history as what is said, known or knowable about the past. The 'sedimentation of history into neat layers' might be a description of historical time as chronology. It might also partly describe the development of orthodoxies in history and art history. Lepecki suggests the 'still-act' as an interruption of one kind of historical temporality, and the opening of another temporality that is also historical. In the quotation from Seremetakis above it seems to me that that which might 'exit from historical dust' (1994: 12) is that which is potentially historical—and if history is a mode of memory—potentially able to be remembered. That unknown 'thing' would be potentially knowable, a potential historical object—and thus in some sense already known. If so, the still-act itself would thus be prefigured or, to adapt Read's (2008) term, 'preformatted'¹³ if only as a remembering—or an

¹² Lepecki continues, quoting Homi Bhabha in *The Location of Culture*: 'it is the function of the *lag* to slow down the linear, progressive time of modernity to reveal its 'gesture', its tempi, 'the pauses and stresses of the whole performance' (1994: 253, cited in Lepecki 2006: 15-16). Lepecki outlines the 1992 choreographic laboratory SKITE at the Cité Universitaire in Paris curated by Jean-Marc Adolphe, as his 'first encounter with dance's kinetic depletion as still-act, as a suspensive response to pressing political events' (16); and he outlines the involvement in this residency of the choreographers Vera Mantero, Santiago Sempere, Meg Stuart, and Paul Gazzola.

¹³ In *Theatre, Intimacy and Engagement: The Last human venue* (2008) Read suggests, 'In the work of Societas Raffaello Sanzio the *performed* world of the adult, our constructs for their pleasure, are continuously being broken down and rearranged in the *performed* world of the infant, animal and actor' (170).

‘inventing’, (where inventing means finding in the sense Gregory Ulmer suggests in *Heuretics* [1994]). This still leaves open a question of that other than a potential historical object, and a question of potential ‘itself’. In Chapter Three I will explore performance practices in relation to a sense of participation that Levinas explores in RS, in which participation would occur as a kind of suspension from historical-chronological time, a suspension of the time in which an ‘I’ might be an agent. This would not be a suspension in which something might exit from historical dust and be remembered as an historical object. Rather, the kind of suspension or interruption of history or chronology that Levinas proposes in RS would be a suspension not only of the category of history as such, but a suspension of all categories. Such participation would be other than historical, not able to be remembered in any history. Perhaps the ‘still-act’ in Lepecki’s and Seremetakis’s engagements also involves a suspension of the category of history. If so, these engagements would propose that history would, after or through the suspension, be restored reordered. The sense of participation as suspension that Levinas explores in RS would not be able to ‘interrogate economies of time’ or ‘reveal the possibility of one’s agency,’ unless that meant in some obscure way revealing a passivity out of which any sense of agency or economy would emerge, and into which it would always risk ‘falling’, ‘rising’, or turning (in)to. In relation to performance works I will explore the question as to whether and in what sense such a suspension would be a mode of what Levinas suggests in RS, of evasion of history and responsibility. This project engages with senses of participation that perhaps would be constitutive of the ‘still-actor’, or the subject who interrupts historical flow, or a subject-interrupting-historical-flow, or, more generally, of the ‘still-act’. The kind of suspension with which Levinas is concerned in RS does not offer a reordering of layers of history or an escape of the potentially historical (and so in some way already historical) from historical dust. Therefore it might seem that such a suspension has little to offer a politics or a critical engagement with history. However, perhaps exploring such an idea of an undoing—or foundering—of foundation might allow a shifting of sedimented understandings of participation in performance. I will explore the relation of such a suspension to a politics in Chapters Three, Four and Five.

Choreography

Back to history: Lepecki (2006) offers an engagement with *choreography* as the name for the way in which that which has passed, in its historical materiality in or as bodies, to use the terms of the previous section, ‘still acts’. In a chapter titled ‘Masculinity, Solipsism, Choreography: Bruce Nauman, Juan Dominguez, Xavier Le Roy’, Lepecki discusses Janet Kraynak’s engagement with Bruce Nauman’s studio films in *Please Pay Attention Please: Bruce Nauman’s words* (2003). Lepecki writes:

Nauman’s carefully executed actions – methodically and precisely embodying and mobilizing a set of pre-given instructions... reveal how the relation between language and choreography is one mediated by force. When Nauman walks in an exaggerated manner around the perimeter of a square, dutifully following the title as an imperative organization of his mobility, he reveals the tensions and cracks in ‘the

relation between force and form, force and signification, performative force, illocutionary or perlocutionary force', to use Jacques Derrida's reflections on the 'differential character of force' (Derrida 1990: 929). (25)

The question of the relation of force and the choreographic is of most direct relevance to the discussions in Chapter Two 'Becoming and Belonging', in terms of the way that engagements occur with norms or codes within my practice.¹⁴ For Lepecki, the force of choreography 'would always precede and determine one's stepping into subjectivity' (25). That is to say that the subject would be constituted choreographically. I hope this idea will resonate in Chapter Two with a brief commentary on David Wills's (2008) engagement with Louis Althusser's (1971) writing of 'interpellation,' which I will outline in the section 'Wills's *Dorsality*' below. Lepecki discusses mathematician, Jesuit Priest and dance master "Thoinot Arbeau's famous 1589 dance manual" *Orchesographie*, as 'the moment when Western dance alloyed writing with its being to create the neologism '*orchesographie*' (a writing, *graphie* of the *orchesis*, dance)'. Lepecki suggests that in Arbeau's *Orchesographie*, 'We find not only that the alloying of writing with dancing into a new word created a proper name for modernity's 'being toward movement' (Sloterdijk 2000b: 36 [cited in Lepecki])... but also that this lexical act with corporeal implications was performed thanks to a lawyer's request' (25). Lepecki recounts Arbeau's recounting of his pedagogical interactions concerning dances of the past that may be forgotten and lost, with Capriol, a young lawyer:

Capriol: Set these things down in writing to enable me to learn this art, and in so doing you will seem reunited to the companions of your youth.... [A] pupil, by following your theory and precepts, *even in your absence*, could teach himself in the *seclusion of his own chamber*. (Arbeau 1966: 14, in Lepecki 2006: 26, emphasizes Lepecki's)

Lepecki suggests:

In *Orchesographie*, the project of dancing-writing, the nascent art of choreography, is cast as being pregnant with a spectral-technological promise: that of finding a means for the male subject to transcend presence as that which must always be present. The coining of the neologism '*orchesographie*' unleashes the spectral force in the signifier and allows direct access to absent presences. Socialization with those who are not quite there is achieved whenever a dance book is read in a secluded chamber. Partnering with the spectral requires a particular form of masculine solipsism. (2006: 26)

¹⁴ "The act of "saying something" is what Austin 'dubs' 'the performance of a locutionary act' (1962: 94). For Austin, 'an 'illocutionary' act [is the] performance of an act *in* saying something as opposed to performance of an act *of* saying something (99-100). Austin refers to the 'doctrine of the different types of function of language... as the doctrine of "illocutionary forces" (100). Further, Austin calls an illocutionary act that produces 'certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience, or of the speaker, or of other persons... done with the design, intention, or purpose of producing them', a 'perlocutionary act' (101). As an example of locution, Austin gives 'He said to me "You can't do that", whereas, as an example of illocution, Austin gives 'He protested against my doing it', and as an example of perlocution, Austin gives, 'He stopped me' (102).

Lepecki suggests that *orchesographie*, as it emerged through the interactions of Arbeau and Capriol, anticipates ‘Derrida’s description of the kind of telecommunicational effect writing produces’ (2006: 27). ‘Signature Event Context’ (SEC) (1988c)—a text I will discuss in more detail in the section ‘Derrida and Deconstruction’ below—suggests that all communication, as ‘writing’, is telecommunication—that distance or spacing is necessary to communication, where communication is thought in relation to a ‘break with the horizon of communication as communication of consciousness or of presences and as linguistical or semantic transport of the desire to mean what one says’ (8). Lepecki suggests that melancholic affect is tied up in the invention of *orchesographie* (choreography), as an attempt through writing-dancing, to reunite with absent former dance partners. In this project I do not explore the parts of Lepecki’s proposal concerning melancholia or gender. The part of Lepecki’s call, if not one of his ‘pregiven instructions’ (2006: 25) that this project attends-to, is Lepecki’s engagement with choreography as *movement-writing*, where *writing* is engaged in Derrida’s sense (which, as I will explore in Chapter Three, is affiliated to the senses in which Mallarmé and Blanchot’s engage with writing). Lepecki quotes Derrida’s suggestion in SEC, of writing as ‘a sort of machine’ (Lepecki 2006: 27; [‘a kind of machine’] Derrida 1988c: 8), a material process that produces effects that are not limited by the intentions of a writer or reader. In this sense, what a knowing intentionality or subject who may be called a ‘choreographer’ does as ‘choreography’, would have always already have had its conditions of possibility and limits in, to adapt Derrida’s phrase ‘writing before the letter’ in (‘Différance’ 15),¹⁵ choreography—movement-writing—‘before the letter’. This might also be, in the terms of David Wills (2008) that I will outline below, choreography as a ‘technology in the back’ (2008: 12). These senses of choreography are places of departure of this project. Lepecki writes:

Choreography becomes that which allows a lawyer to cite, to quote, to repeat the foundational gestures, the absent presence, and the cadence of a dance’s originary force. We return to the deep connection between choreography and the performative speech act – both can enforce themselves properly only under the condition of their citationality. (Lepecki 2006: 27-28)¹⁶

¹⁵ In the section ‘Derrida and Deconstruction’ I will outline Derrida’s discussion of ‘writing before the letter’ in ‘Différance’ (1982a: 15).

¹⁶ Here, Lepecki references Judith Butler in *Bodies that Matter: On the discursive limits of ‘sex’* (1993: 12-16). Lepecki also notes Jean-Charles Masséra’s suggestion, in ‘Dance with the Law’ (2002), in relation to Nauman’s installation *Get Out of My Mind, Get Out of This Room*, ‘the law is a cadence, a rhythm that circulates through bodies. The more your drives are synchronized with the rhythm of the law, the easier the execution of the task’ (25). Such a suggestion links with Lepecki’s engagement with the ‘still act’ that through a slowing, might in some way remark the law, or, at least, norms, of dance and performance. More generally Masséra’s suggestion links with a question of rhythm, interruption, repetition, speeds and slownesses—in relation to ‘law’, where law would occur as an ordering not simply reducible to an identifiable authority. How such a sense of law’s ‘rhythm’ might relate to the sense of ‘rhythm’ that Levinas explores in RS, in which rhythm is a mode that opens a participation that undoes the identity of the ‘I’, which I will discuss in Chapter Three, is an open question.

Thus choreography would occur as a mode of haunting. Haunting would operate somewhat like what Lepecki proposes of the ‘still-act’ in the sense that it disorders or reorders time. Lepecki quotes Derrida in *Specters of Marx: The State of the debt, the work of mourning, and the New International*, who suggests, ‘haunting... is historical, to be sure, but it is not *dated*, it is never docilely given a date in the chain of presents, day after day, according to the instituted order of a calendar’ (Lepecki 2006: 28; Derrida 1994: 3).

In ‘Introduction//Dance as a Practice of Contemporaneity’, beginning his edited anthology *Dance* (2012), in relation to metaphor – from which Martin (1998) also differentiates the political possibilities of dance – Lepecki suggests,

because dance *does* what it sets itself up to do, because it always establishes a contract, or promise, between choreographic planning and its actualization in movement, it inevitably reveals an essential *performativity* at the core of its aesthetic project (if we understand performativity as a general theory of the ways in which citational effects are implemented and reproduced, and where statements and particularly promises acquire world-making force). (16)

Derrida’s engagement with the performative, as I will outline in the section ‘Derrida and Deconstruction’ below, would suggest that dance could not completely do what choreography prescribes that it do. However, here I pick up on the question of metaphor, Lepecki continues:

This link between dance and performativity demonstrates a non-metaphoric implementation, or actualization, of that which preconditions dance: endless citationality of an always singular yet always dispersed (or semi-absent) source, which nevertheless insists on making a dance return: again and again, despite of (or rather because of) its ephemerality. This insistence on returning with a difference, this ethics of persisting while facing the demands of absence, constitutes dance’s particular affective-political force within the broader field of contemporary art. (16)

Lepecki’s target in relation to the ‘metaphoric’, may be modes of choreography the *modus operandi* of which might be an uncritical subscription to models by which what happens in a dance is thought to provide a metaphor for what happens ‘out’ in the world, rather than a mode in which dance’s participation, as metonymy perhaps, occurs ‘in’—immanent to—that world. The former mode might tend thus to miss senses of performativity that Butler or Derrida differently inherit from Austin. If so, Lepecki’s suggestion concerning the metaphoric would have something in common with Read’s critique in *Theatre, Intimacy and Engagement* (2008) of engagements with theatre and performance that prioritize death and disappearance. Read makes a call for attendings-to births and appearances, in part, in critical dialogue with Peggy Phelan’s *Unmarked: A politics of performance* (1996), and *Mourning Sex: Performing public memories* (1997), in which, according to Read, Phelan suggests that sometimes performance’s disappearance might be thought as having a metaphorical relation with ‘real’ deaths ‘outside’ the theatre. However, I suggest that Lepecki’s exclusion of metaphor should be complicated in consideration of the engagements of Derrida and Rodolph Gasché with metaphoricity that I will outline below.

On another note, *Exhausting Dance* (2006) is one precedent for this project's engagement among or across disciplinary borders in 'performance'. In the 'Introduction', in relation to his inclusion in the book of discussions of works of Bruce Nauman and United States' contemporary artist William Pope L., Lepecki writes:

The fact that two of these artists are not 'properly' dancers and do not describe themselves as choreographers, but have nevertheless explicitly experimented with choreographic exercises (Bruce Nauman) or explicitly addressed the politics of motility in (William Pope L.) is methodologically important for my argument. Their work allows for reframing choreography outside artificially self-contained disciplinary boundaries, and for identifying the political ontology of modernity's investment on its odd hyperkinetic being. To address the choreographic outside the proper limits of dance proposes for dance studies the expansion of its privileged object of analysis; it asks dance studies to step into other artistic fields and to create new possibilities for thinking relationships between bodies, subjectivities, politics and movement. (5)

Theatre and Performance

In addition to assenting to Lepecki's call for the 'expansion of [dance studies's] privileged object of analysis' (2006: 5), this project adopts Alan Read's strategic 'mixing' of the terms 'theatre' and 'performance' in *Theatre, Intimacy and Engagement: The Last human venue* (2008):

I am consciously mixing the terms theatre and performance here in order to re-establish their affinity at a disciplinary moment that would appear to witness their withdrawal from each other. I am unwilling to sacrifice theatre, the term and the field of practices it describes, precisely because of the apparently intractable instrumentalism that makes theatre appear so conservative to some of those who would wish it away to be replaced with a more pliant term, performance. To simply replace the term 'theatre' with 'performance' and then to appeal to the plurality of practices that continue to escape the instrumental under this more diverse wing of aesthetic and social processes is to solve an interpretive dilemma without facing up to the implications of such a sleight of hand. By placing the term 'theatre', with the implication that it is there to be grasped, alongside the term 'performance', which is so interesting because of its characteristic of continuing somewhere just beyond our reach, I wish to sustain another minimal difference for this project, one in which the goal-orientated teleologies of the political, sometimes discernible in the theatrical but by no means always, are put into tension with the apparent dispersal of the performative, that more than often confirms its audience's expectations in quite the most conservative way possible.... My own sleight of hand in mixing the terms 'theatre' and 'performance' is plainly visible to an audience more commonly used to their exquisitely nuanced separation. My goal is not the continued interior definition of *their* minimal differences, but the recognition, tracing and measurement of *that* remainder to them, the processes of politics that, despite protestations, remain remaindered by *both* their marginal practices. (27-28)

Many of the examples Read engages in *Theatre, Intimacy and Engagement* are not ostensibly theatre nor performance (art), but engagements in human and non-human life as performance or theatre.

The way this project engages the relation of ethics and politics affiliates most closely to the way these are characterized in Levinas's writings, which I will outline in the following section. However, this project also picks up on Read's distinction between 'the political' and 'politics' in relation to theatre and performance:

Politics is here used, after Bernard Williams, as the word to describe the *means* by which safety, trust, and the conditions of cooperation might be organised for the greatest number.... The political, on the other hand, denotes that tendency to still the continuing process of politics, instrumentally interrupting the performative capacity of politics and predicting effects that in reality are far more elusive to representation than any party would like to imagine. (2008: 25, 26)

The distinction Read subscribes to concerning politics and the political is important in enabling me to think of the relation of politics to performance. In relation to the model Read suggests above, this project engages with the relation of ethics to ‘politics’, rather than with ethics to ‘the political’, Read continues:

Theatre is here used as the word to describe expressive practices that through the presence of performer and witness affect an excitation which sustains the performative process while necessarily interrupting any premature political outcome. Given this definition, the one state that is intolerable to theatre, that indeed denied the existence of theatre, is indifference. (26)

To the extent that this project, as theatre or performance, occurs as politics, it aims to occur as such a holding open of a process. I hope this will find some resonance in the section ‘Responsibility’ in Chapter Four.

Derrida and Deconstruction

In that this project picks-up-on several of Jacques Derrida’s deconstructive engagements, including Derrida’s engagement with Levinas’s later writings in ‘At This Very Moment in This Work Here I Am’ in Chapter Five, it is Derridean and deconstructive in its way of researching. In this section I will offer a brief explication of some of Derrida’s engagements in relation to how they are engaged within this exegesis.

A well-known ‘figure’ in Derrida’s writings that I engage throughout this exegesis is *différance*. In ‘Différance’ (1982a), Derrida cautions that to ask ‘What is *différance*?’ would be to presume a fullness of presence that *différance* would unseal: *différance* conditions this account, for Derrida, I cannot examine *différance* from the outside to ask what it is. In ‘Différance’ Derrida questions Ferdinand de Saussure’s proposition that a sign is ‘secondary and provisional’ (Derrida 1982a: 9). This is the idea in Saussurian linguistics that a sign derives from a thing that is simply present at another place or at another time, and stands in the place of this presence (Saussure in Cahoone 1996). Derrida notes that for Saussure both parts of the sign, ‘the ideal meaning’ (10), and the signifier, the ‘image’ or ‘imprint’ (10) of a material phenomenon such as a written or spoken word, are not ‘positive terms’, but are composed only of differences. For Derrida, an element in such a system ‘is never present in and of itself’ (11), but is constituted as part of a *chain* of other differing and deferring elements. Derrida proposes in ‘Différance’ that in addition to the two components of the sign, the real is itself made as a ‘play’ of differences. Derrida thus proposes an ‘originary’ (9) *différance*, the thought of which would undo ideas of simple origin. Derrida argues that even consciousness itself is produced

via a ‘play’, or movement of *différance* in that consciousness, as self-presence, involves a ‘being beside itself of consciousness’ (16), a division of presence such that that presence can recognize itself as itself. For Derrida, meaning is produced within a play of traces, or, to introduce another of Derrida’s figures, a ‘writing before the letter, an archi-writing without a present origin, without archi-’ (‘Différance’ 15). This sense of ‘writing’ would be related to the materiality of ‘writing’ for Stéphane Mallarmé, which I will discuss via Bruns’s (2002) engagement in Chapter Three. There would to some extent occur an analogy between Derrida’s (archi-)writing and Levinas’s (archi-)saying (which I will outline below), as each in different ways deconstructs the difference between speech and writing, and each occurs or would have occurred as the passing or ‘passed’ of a trace. Derrida proposes presence and consciousness provisionally as ‘effects’ (16) of *différance*, provisionally in that the thought of *différance* would deconstruct the opposition of cause and effect, ‘The same, precisely, is *différance* (with an *a*) as the displaced and equivocal *passage* of one different thing to another, from one term of an opposition to the other.’ (‘Différance’ 17, my emphasis). I will engage with concepts of *passage* in Chapter Three in relation to Levinas’s ‘Reality and its Shadow’ (1987b) (RS), and in Chapter Five in relation to Nancy’s engagement with *Listening* (2007). When spoken, *différance* is homophonic with the French word *différence* (the ‘difference’ to which Saussure refers). As the above quotation is from a spoken presentation, Derrida needed to clarify that it was *différance* ‘with an *a*’ of which he was speaking. I note in relation to this project’s engagement with saying, speech, and voice that, for Derrida as he discusses in ‘Signature Event Context (1988c) (SEC) a ‘phonic sign’ is also *writing*, ‘a grapheme’, ‘because this unity... only constitutes itself by virtue of its iterability’ (10). It is such a sense of the grapheme as iterable mark that I engage in my explorations within the performance practices of *choreographies*—movement-writing or moving-writing. For Derrida, any sensed mark or marking is produced in its citation, iterability, or *différance*. In ‘Différance’ Derrida describes *différance* as involving a conjunction of spatial difference, in the sense of the ‘beside itself’ (16) of consciousness, and temporal deferral and division. In this sense *différance* would occur as a primordial *spacing* and *temporalizing* as the ‘possibilizing’ of each determinate space, place, ‘here’, ‘there’ or locale; and of each time, or of time as chronology in Levinas’s sense that I will outline below. The temporality of *différance*, at least insofar as it refers to a dividing of the present, would in some way be analogous to Levinas’s *diachrony*. Episodes of my practice explore spatial intervals, temporal intervals and their relation. Part of my interest in what might in part be a deliberate practice of ‘spacing’, or remarkings of spatial and temporal intervals, is how and the extent to which such a practice might open *différance* as spacing-temporalizing.



While for Levinas, ethics exceeds the themes, *said*, totality, and totalizing of politics, Derrida's engagements with questions of politics and democracy are engagements with *différance* as an exceeding of the present and a deferral. In 'Remarks on Deconstruction and Pragmatism' (1996), Derrida suggests,

democracy to come... does not mean that tomorrow democracy will be realized, and it does not refer to a future democracy, rather it means that there is an engagement with regard to democracy which consists in recognizing the irreducibility of the promise. (83)

In 'Signature Event Context' (1988c) (SEC) Derrida brings the thought of *différance* and 'writing' to a question of context, and to event and signature, in an engagement with Austin's proposition, in *How To Do Things With Words* (1962) of the 'performative utterance' (5). Austin argues that if we determine the context in which a verbal communication occurs, we are largely able to reduce the uncertainty of this communication. Derrida argues that contexts are never absolutely saturated. That is, contexts can never be completely determined or delimited because the essential iterability and citationality of the sign effects a rupture from every context in which it appears because it always recalls other contexts. For Austin, a performative utterance does not "describe" or "report" (5), and does not belong to the mode of correctness-truth or falsity—as does what Austin calls a 'constative'. Rather, for Austin, in a performative, 'the uttering of the sentence is, or is part of, the doing of an action' (5), for example, "I promise" (9). For Austin, a performative is 'hollow or void if said by an actor on the stage, or if introduced in a poem, or spoken in soliloquy' (22). Austin suggested that these uses of language are not serious, but 'parasitic' on 'normal use' (22) and excluded these from his analysis. In SEC, Derrida proposes that every performative, as with the sign

in general, is necessarily conditioned and constituted by iteration or *différance*, and that these are also a kind of *parasitism*. For Derrida the parasitic cases of the performative that Austin describes, such as the words of an actor, are ‘the determined modification of a general citationality—or rather, a general iterability’ (17). In relation to the figuring of the performative as an *event*, ‘of speech or by speech’ (18), Derrida asks whether a performative could succeed unless it iterated an identifiable model, for opening a meeting for example. Thus, for Derrida, there would not be ‘an opposition between citational utterances, on the one hand, and singular and original event-utterances on the other’ (18). One implication of this proposition is that the performative and the event are necessarily iterations of existing power relations and ‘structures’, even as these open to the exterior.

Perhaps it is in their respective thoughts of unconditional opening that what Critchley in *The Ethics of Deconstruction* (1999) refers to as a ‘homology’ (9) between Derrida and Levinas, is most recognizable. Critchley quotes Derrida in the ‘Afterword’ of *Limited Inc.*:

Now, the very least that can be said of unconditionality (a word I use not by accident to recall the Categorical imperative in its Kantian form) is that it is independent of every determinate context, even of the determination of a context in general. It announces itself as such only in the *opening* of context. Not that it is simply present (existent) elsewhere, outside of all context; rather it intervenes in the determination of a context from its very opening, and from an injunction, a law, a responsibility that transcends this or that determination of a given context. Following this, what remains is to articulate this unconditionality with the determinate (Kant would say, hypothetical) conditions of this or that context; and this is the moment of strategies, of rhetorics, of ethics, and of politics. The structure thus described supposes both that there are only contexts, that nothing *exists* outside context, as I have often said, but also that the limit of the frame or the border of the context always entails a clause of *non-closure*. The outside penetrates and thus determines the inside. (Derrida 1988b: 152-3)

For Levinas and for Derrida, such an opening is constitutive of that which opens. For Derrida, the opening of con-text allows for a determination of context. A related formulation can be recognized in ‘The Law of Genre’ (1992c), in which Derrida proposes that it is the recognition of ‘a common trait’ (228) that is necessary for a work to be included in a genre, and that because this common trait always ‘re-marks’ itself, this trait does not properly belong to the genre it designates, but rather, ‘It belongs without belonging, and the ‘without’ (or the suffix ‘-less’) which relates belonging to non-belonging appears only in the timeless time of the blink of an eye... without the respite or interval of a blink, nothing would come to light (230). I suggest that this ‘blink of an eye’ would be another figure of the temporality of *différance*. Derrida suggests:

a text would not *belong* to any genre. Every text *participates* in one or several genres, there is no genreless text, there is always a genre and genres, yet such participation never amounts to belonging... because of the *trait* of participation itself, because of the effect of the code and of the generic mark. (1992b: 230)

Undecidability is another of Derrida’s figures that I engage in my discussions of performance practices. In *Positions* (an interview originally published in 1972), Derrida (2002b) suggests, ‘it has been necessary to analyze, to set to work, *within* the text of the history of philosophy, as well as

within the so-called literary text... certain marks... that *by analogy* (I underline) I have called 'undecidables' (2002: 42, 43). Derrida proposes that such 'undecidables' cannot be assigned to one or another side of a binary opposition. For Derrida, binary oppositions prioritize one term over another, for example, a prioritizing of ideality over materiality. In *Positions* (2002b), Derrida suggests that an 'undecidable' does not make a third term, or offer the possibility of a dialectical synthesis. Such undecidables include the hymen (with regard to the fiction of Mallarmé in Derrida's 'The Double Session', and the *pharmakon* in 'Plato's Pharmacy', both in *Dissemination* (1981). In 'Plato's Pharmacy' (1981a), Derrida notes that the name for writing in Plato's account of its invention in the *Phaedrus*: 'the *pharmakon*', translates variously as cure, poison, medicine, or drug. For Derrida, the identity of writing and its inventor, demi-god Thoth, insofar as the 'positive' and 'negative' meanings never entirely separate themselves from one another, are essentially 'undecidable'. With regard to the relation between Thoth and his father Thamus, Derrida proposes the *supplement*, in which Thoth, 'supplements and supplants' Thamus:

Thoth extends or opposes by both repeating or replacing. By the same token, the figure of Thoth takes shape and takes its shape from the very thing it resists and substitutes for. But it thereby opposes *itself*, passes into its other, and this messenger-god is truly a god of the absolute passage between opposites... In distinguishing himself from his opposite, Thoth also imitates it, becomes its sign and representative, obeys it and *conforms* to it, replaces it, by violence if need be. He is thus the father's other, the father, and the subversive movement of replacement. The god of writing is thus at once his father, his son, and himself. He cannot be assigned to a fixed spot in the play of differences. Sly, slippery, and masked, an intriguer... a wild card, one who puts play into play. (1981a: 93)

'Play', for Derrida is thus the movement of supplementation and *différance*. Thus the sense of 'play' for Derrida differs from that in Levinas who, as I will discuss in Chapter Three and Chapter Four, sometimes construes 'play' in association with art, as an escape from responsibility. In the passage above, Derrida engages otherwise than within an understanding of mimesis as a relation between a prioritized model, idea or ideal form, and a material copy derivative of the idea. My engagement with Levinas's writing of the image and resemblance in Chapter Three occurs as another, different, contesting of mimesis as a relation of model and copy. SEC and 'Plato's Pharmacy' (1981a) each explore in different ways how a text or work has filial relations to its author, whose signature cannot simply tie author to text or work.

I suggested above that this project is to some extent provoked by a Derridean and deconstructive way of researching. In *Of Grammatology* (1976), Derrida outlines a deconstructive reading as involving two modes or moments of reading. There is the necessity of a first moment of the 'respectful doubling of commentary' (158). Derrida describes the mode of commentary as 'an indispensable guardrail' (158) against the possibility of criticism 'saying almost anything' (158). However, commentary 'has always only *protected*, it has never *opened*, a reading' (158). In *Limited Inc.* (1988b) Derrida suggests that commentary works towards a 'minimal consensus' (146) with regard to a text.

Before describing the second moment of deconstructive reading in *Of Grammatology*, Derrida notes that such a reading ‘cannot legitimately transgress the text toward something other than it’ (158), for Derrida there is no non-textual reality outside it. The second moment of reading still remains ‘within’ the text in question; it proceeds through a repetition within which the same text signifies otherwise. As Derrida explains in *Of Spirit* (1989) ‘without even using words other than those of the tradition, I follow the path of a repetition which crosses the path of the wholly other. The wholly other announces itself within the most rigorous repetition’ (113). ‘Bending back’ is one of the modes of repetition I explore in this project, picking-up-on David Wills’ *Dorsality* (2008) that I will outline below. Writing about deconstruction in ‘Letter to a Japanese Friend’ (1988a), Derrida suggests that ‘*It deconstructs it-self. It can be deconstructed. [Ça se déconstruit.]*’ The ‘it’ [ça] is not here an impersonal thing that is opposed to some egological subjectivity’ (4). That is, for Derrida, deconstruction exceeds the intentionality of a someone who would intentionally aim to deconstruct, and any ‘it’ deconstructs it-self, including deconstruction itself. In a formulation that bears a resemblance to Levinas’ (1981) description of the relation of the saying and the said which I will outline in the next section, Derrida writes in *Of Grammatology*, ‘the enterprise of deconstruction always in a certain way falls prey to its own work’ (1976: 24). This might also be considered as a bending back upon itself.

Levinas’s Ethics

Writings of Levinas have been close companions of my practicing of performance since 2006. In this section I will provide an orientation to Levinas’s philosophy as I engage it in this project, and suggest some initial indicators or inducers for a turning to or turning of Levinas in performing ‘performance philosophy’.

In its practicing or performing of research this exegesis proposes or suggests, and sometimes asks questions. However, ‘ethics’, in the writings of Levinas, would have been the deposition of any proposition. Levinas’s writings are concerned with ethics as my having been in a relation with that which would have passed absolutely. This would have been a relation prior to and constitutive of my possibility to propose and question, to know, not know, and calculate. That is, for Levinas, ethics would have occurred in sensibility and corporeality prior to consciousness and intentionality. Therefore insofar as it is provoked by Levinas’s ethics, this project is not firstly concerned with the true and with knowledge. Rather, it is concerned with a trace, necessarily within the mode of knowledge, of an absolute passed, immemorial, which would have inaugurated the possibility of a knowing ‘I’. The time of this trace, for Levinas, interrupts being, the present, and the grasp of knowledge, to quote Levinas in *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence* (OB), ‘at this very moment’ (170). I will come back to this point after I have outlined some engagements within Levinas’s philosophy that I explore in relation to performance practices in this exegesis.

Levinas's philosophical writings span the late 1920s to the early 1990s. In *Existence and Existents* (1995), (*EE*), originally published in 1947 as *De l'existence à l'existant*, Levinas articulates a sense of anonymous being, the 'there is' that suspends conceptuality. I will discuss the 'there is' in relation to performance practices in Chapter Three. In *EE*, Levinas also articulates the emergence or occurrence of the 'hypostasis' as an *affirmation* from the enjoyment of what Levinas refers to in the first of his two major philosophical books, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority* (1969) (*TI*), as 'bathing in the element' (132). In *EE* Levinas formulates the hypostasis:

Through taking position in the anonymous *there is* a subject is affirmed. It is affirmation in the etymological sense of the term, taking a position on solid ground, on a base fulfilling the conditions, foundation. We have not sought, in the subject that pulls itself up from the anonymous vigilance of the *there is*, a thought, a consciousness, or a mind.... We were concerned with determining the meaning of a much more general fact, that of the very apparition of an existent, a substantive in the heart of this impersonal existence, which, strictly speaking, we cannot give a name to, for it is a pure verb.... To designate this apparition we have taken up the term *hypostasis* which, in the history of philosophy, designated the event in which the act expressed by a verb became a being designated by a substantive. (82)

For Levinas, a hypostasis is a primordial solidification and interiorization-exteriorization of a corporeality. I will explore an analogy between episodes of my practice and this idea of a body as a first solidification, in Chapter Two.

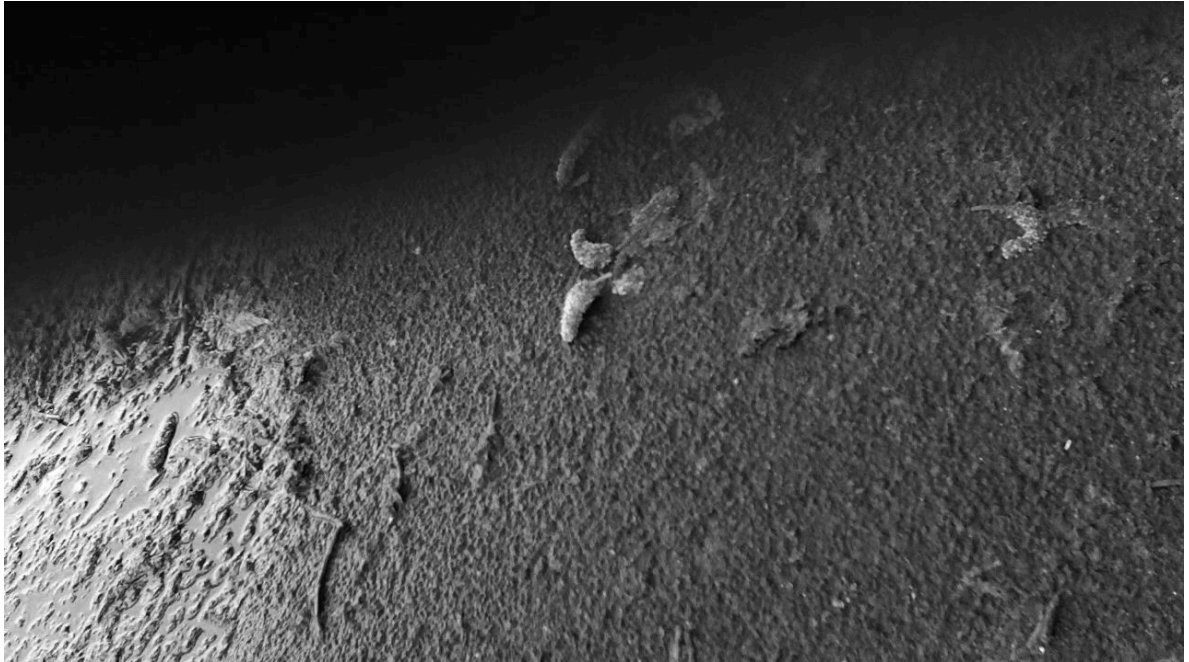
In his introduction to *The Cambridge Companion to Levinas*, Simon Critchley (2002a) suggests that, from the later 1950s, Levinas describes ethics 'in terms of infinity' (14). Critchley explains that Levinas picks up the form but not the content of Descartes' concept of *infinity*. For René Descartes (1986), the only way for the mind, which is finite, to have the idea of the infinite perfection of God is for God to exist, and to have caused this idea in the mind. For Levinas in *TI*, the idea of infinity is an overflowing of intentionality – an overflowing of what the 'I' can think. This idea of infinity is produced in the difference or inadequation between 'the idea of infinity and the infinity of which it is the idea' (*TI*: 26). Levinas adapts Descartes's formulation and, rather than interpreting it as a 'proof' for the existence of God, applies it to the relation of the subject to the other person. As Hilary Putnam explains, 'Levinas transforms the argument by substituting the other for God' (2002: 42). In *TI* Levinas suggests:

The relation with infinity cannot, to be sure, be stated in terms of experience, for infinity overflows the thought that thinks it. Its very *infinition* is produced precisely in this overflowing. The relation with infinity will have to be stated in terms other than those of objective experience; but if experience precisely means a relation with the absolutely other, that is, with what always overflows thought, the relation with infinity accomplishes experience in the fullest sense of the word. (1969: 25)

Who or what, for Levinas, is ‘the other’?¹⁷ In ‘Enigma and Phenomenon’ (1996), Levinas proposes the other as an *enigma*, in contrast to a *phenomenon* as that which appears. In *TI*, Levinas makes a distinction between the otherness of the material world, land and food, what Levinas calls the element, and the ‘absolutely *other*’ (33). For Levinas, the ‘I’ can consume food and acquire materials, and in this way negate their otherness by absorbing them into me or my house or possession. I have a relation of need to the elements. The relation to the ‘absolutely *other*’ is not one of need but of desire. Levinas reads Plato’s desire for the unseen in *Book VII* of *The Republic* (1992), as metaphysical desire, which, for Levinas, does not desire a restoration of the self or a return journey to the same, but ‘a land not of our birth... to which we shall never betake ourselves’ (*TI* 34). That is, as Levinas writes in ‘Meaning and Sense’ of ‘a Work’, the ethical relation occurs in ‘a one-way movement’ ‘from the same to the other’ (1996c: 49). It would not be reducible to an economy based in exchange or restitution. I will return to such a ‘one-way movement’ in Chapters Four and Five. For Levinas in *TI*, the other’s distance from the same is part of the other’s ‘way of existing’ (35). In this way, for Levinas, the ‘I’ will remain absolutely separated from the other, and the relation between the two cannot be totalized as in the representation of ‘a system visible from the outside’ (35). There is for Levinas, a radical asymmetricality of my relation to the other. For Levinas the infinity of the other is revealed in ‘the face’, ‘The way the other presents himself, *exceeding the idea of the other in me*, we here name face.’ (*TI*: 50). The face of the other calls my egoism, my naïve spontaneity living from the material world, into question. Crucially, the face is not reducible to a form, concept or what, as I will outline below, Levinas calls a ‘theme’.

Having given some account of ‘the other’ in Levinas’s writings, what of ‘the same’ and ‘the subject’? For Levinas in *TI*, ‘To remain the same is to represent to oneself.... The identity of the same unaltered and unalterable in its relations with the other is in fact the I of representation’ (126). For Levinas, as Critchley writes, ‘The same is therefore called into question by another that cannot be reduced to the same’ (2002a: 15). This would not indicate an incidental inability on the part of the same, but the otherness of the other. In what sense then, is there a *subject*, for Levinas? On the one hand, Levinas’s writings, particularly in his second major book *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence* (1981) (*OB*) as I will discuss in more detail in Chapter Five, ‘deconstruct’ the subject insofar as it is figured as intentional, active and knowing, and on the other hand, as I will explore in Chapter Four in relation to ‘The Trace of the Other’ (1986), Levinas proposes a primordial ‘recurrence’ of the subject. In *OB* this would be a subject as a bending-back-upon-itself, ‘a recurrence of ipseity’ (106)

¹⁷ My explication of Levinas’s engagements with the other, the same, and the subject draws on and approximately follows the chronological order of exposition of Critchley’s discussion of these themes in his ‘Introduction’ to *The Cambridge Companion to Levinas* (Critchley and Bernasconi 2002).



unable to decline its responsibility to and for the other and unable to decline its substituting itself for the other. Levinas writes in *OB*:

If the return to self proper to cognition, the original truth of being, consciousness, can be realized, it is because a recurrence of ipseity has already been produced. This is an inversion in the process of essence, a withdrawal from the game that being plays in consciousness. It is a withdrawal in-onself that is an exile in oneself, without a foundation in anything else, a non-condition. This withdrawal excludes all spontaneity, and thus is always already effected, already past. Ipseity is not an abstract point, the center of a rotation, identifiable on the basis of a trajectory traced by the movement of consciousness, but a point already identified from the outside, not having to identify itself in the present nor to state its identity, already older than the time of consciousness. (106-7)

The ipseity of the subject would have been prior to any identification I make of myself to myself. As Critchley puts it, for Levinas, ‘the subject is *me* and nobody else’ (2002a: 21).

In *OB*, Levinas articulates an interlacing of two modes of language, ‘the *saying*’ and ‘the *said*’. The *saying* would have been my exposure in absolute passivity to the other, my being-called-responding-obeying in an absolute accusative ‘me’ prior to a nominative ‘I’. My being called by the other in saying would also have been my affirmation to the other without reserve, ‘Here I am!’ ‘*hineni*!’, or ‘*me voici*!’¹⁸ The *said* is the necessary mode of being, ontology, and representation, in which the question

¹⁸ In ‘Levinas and Judaism’, Hilary Putnam (2002) explains the ‘presentational’ sense of the Hebrew word *hine* (here) in the phrase ‘Here I am’, ‘[*H*]ineni performs the speech-act of presenting myself... making myself available to another’ (38). Putnam suggests:

The places in which *hineni* is used in this way in the Jewish Bible are highly significant. The most tremendous of these occurs at the beginning of Genesis 22 which tells the story of the binding of

‘What is ...?’ can be asked. The said is the mode of themes and thematizing. The difference between the saying and the said would have occurred as a temporal difference. The *said* occurs in chronological or *synchronic* time. Within chronological time I may arrive on time, or late, for a meeting or an episode of a performance practice, I might rendezvous with others. Whereas, as Levinas writes in ‘Diachrony and Representation’ (1998a):

From the ego to the interlocutor there is a temporality other than the one that allows itself to be assembled into the presence of the *said* and the *written*, a temporality that is concrete in this ‘from-me-to-the-other,’ but which at once congeals into the abstraction of the synchronous in the synthesis ‘I think’ that grasps it thematically. (142)

In *OB*, Levinas formulates a ‘methodological problem’ (7) of whether it is possible ‘to at the same time know’ the saying, and free it ‘of the marks which thematization leaves on it by subordinating it to ontology’ (7). Even as the formulation and response to this problem in *OB* are very particular and unusual, this problem would also be a version of, or at least, in some way analogous to, a problem I explore in Chapter Three in relation to Bruns’s ‘The Concepts of Art and Poetry in Emmanuel Levinas’s Writings’ (2002), explored in different ways by Maurice Blanchot and Martin Heidegger, of whether it is possible to know a thing, as Bruns puts it, ‘how I can enter into a relation with a thing without destroying it, that is, without absorbing it into myself as an object of consciousness or as part of my grip on existing’ (2002: 220). I will explore this further in Chapters Three, Four and Five. Or perhaps it would be more precise to say that this is a problem of how one might perform a thing without destroying it.¹⁹

The relation of the saying to the said, of diachrony to synchrony, infinity to totality, and of trace to theme, are, for Levinas, relations of ethics to politics. My explorations of performance practices are explorations of Levinas’s formulation of the relation of ethics to politics. There are many other ways in which the relation of ethics and politics may be understood or explored. However, in this project I am restricting my engagement with ‘ethics’ and ‘politics’ as one provoked primarily by the writings of Levinas I engage in, and to the way these terms are engaged within the related critical-philosophical writings I explore, the philosophical reference-field of this project. For Levinas, the ethical relation would have been a relation to a singular other. However, from the start I would

Isaac. ‘And it came to pass after these things that God did test Abraham, and said to him Abraham: and he said *hineni*’ (22:1). Note here that Abraham is offering himself to God *unreservedly*. (That Abraham also says *hineni* to Isaac in 22:7 is an essential part of the paradox of this text). (38)

Levinas’s writings that I engage in this exegesis were published among his philosophical writings. For a commentary on the relation of Levinas’s philosophical writings to his Jewish writings, and the ‘crossing of [the] border’ (100) between them, see Catherine Chalier’s (2002) ‘Levinas and the Talmud’.

¹⁹ This differentiation between knowing and performing or enacting has been prompted by comments within one of the examiners’ reports.

always have been related to other others. In *TI*, ‘The third party looks at me through the eyes of the Other – language is justice’ (213), and the ‘third party’ is ‘present at the encounter’ (213) with the other. In *OB*, with the third party comes the question, ‘What do I have to do with justice?’ (157). That is, there is a necessity for ‘comparison’ between more than one ‘incomparable’ other (158). In such comparisons, for Levinas, ontology, justice and politics begin (158). The time of justice, politics, and economics is synchrony as the time of calculations and comparisons. However, for Levinas, ‘the contemporaneity of the multiple’ (or, we might say, the ‘com’ or ‘with’ of the political and economic ‘community’), ‘is tied around the diachrony of the two’ (159). I will pick-up-on this in more detail in Chapters Four and Five.

There are some initial indicators or inducers for a turning to, or turning of, Levinas, in performing ‘performance philosophy’. This project is induced by what might be described as the performativity of Levinas’s writing in *OB*. Critchley (2002a) notes that Derrida’s essay ‘Violence and Metaphysics’, which responded to Levinas’s earlier works including *TI*, to a significant extent provoked the mode of writing of *OB* with its intertwining of ‘the saying’ and ‘the said’. Critchley notes:

In *Totality and Infinity*... exteriority is still expressed in the language of ontology, as when Levinas writes that ‘Being is exteriority’ (*TI* 290). Thus, in Heideggerian terms, the meaning of the being of beings, the basic question of metaphysics, is determined as exteriority. The contradiction, where that which is meant to escape ontology is still expressed in ontological language, was powerfully pointed out by Derrida in ‘Violence and Metaphysics’. He argued that the attempt to leave the climate of Heidegger’s thinking was doomed from the start because Levinas still employs Heideggerian categories in the attempt to exceed those categories.... Accepting Derrida’s point, Levinas writes in ‘Signature’ that ‘The ontological language that is still used in *Totality and Infinity* in order to exclude a purely psychological signification of the proposed analyses is henceforth avoided (*DF* 295 [*Difficult Freedom* 295, ‘The ontological language which *Totality and Infinity* still uses in order to exclude the purely psychological significance of the proposed analyses is henceforth avoided’]). (Critchley 2002a: 17)

This project engages *OB* as a kind of ‘performative’ writing that seeks to trace ethics, where ethics perhaps would have occurred as ‘saying’. There may be at least two senses in which *OB* may involve ‘performativity’. For one, *OB* might in some way be described as a ‘performative’ response to the ‘methodological problem’ (*OB* 7) that the *saying* cannot be *said*. For another, perhaps *saying*—if there had been such a saying as Levinas writes—would ‘itself’ (even as the ‘itself’ of saying would have occurred as radical opening), have been in some way ‘performative’. Critchley writes of the *saying* in *The Ethics of Deconstruction* (1999), ‘It is the performative stating, proposing, or expressive position of myself facing the Other. It is a verbal or non-verbal ethical performance.... It is a performative *doing* that cannot be reduced to a constative description’ (7). It is important to note that these would be very different senses of performativity and performance than of which Austin (1962) writes, as the diachronic *saying* of ethics would have occurred prior to my will or decision. I will discuss these issues further in Chapter Five.

To return to what I suggested in the first paragraph of this section, insofar as this project is provoked by Levinas's ethics, this exegesis is not primarily concerned with exploring what happened in performances in terms of themes or in terms of what Llewelyn (2002b) describes as a saying 'that is a speech act correlative with what is said' (127) (which suggests a succession of chronological or present moments). Rather, it would be more concerned with the extent to which and how performances open an engagement with (1) 'ethics', (2) (ethics as or in relation to) a *participation* as a passivity, anonymity, or interruption of conceptuality, and (3) engagements with the relation of ethics to politics. If this exegesis occurred in the mode of Heidegger's fundamental ontology of *Being and Time* (1996) it might be described as attempting an 'ontological' engagement with performance practices in its seeking of fundamental structures that open within my 'ontic' engagements.²⁰ However, as Critchley (2002a) notes, for Levinas, 'ontology', the mode of 'being', always forms totalities. Heidegger's fundamental ontology in *Being and Time*, therefore for Levinas, denies the transcendence of the other. In this project I will not engage with Levinas's disagreement with Heidegger. However, Heidegger's philosophy provokes and informs writings of Levinas, and other critical or philosophical writings I engage in this exegesis. Therefore at times I include footnotes to briefly reference relevant Heideggerian engagements.

Quasi-

In Chapter Two, as I mentioned above, I explore performance practices in relation to *passing*, *attending*, *framing*, *turning*, *being-carried-along* and *tethering*, which I explore as something like 'quasitranscendental' structures. Other such structures or figures in my discussions would include *by-play*, *bending back* and *saying*. By quasitranscendental, I am proposing that these figures operate in this exegesis somewhat analogously to what Rodolph Gasché, exploring Derrida's engagement with metaphor in 'White Mythology' (1982c), describes as a 'quasitranscendental', or what John Llewelyn also suggests of Levinas's figure of 'recurrence' as a '*quasitranscendental*', or what Heidegger writes as the modal being of *Dasein*. In *The Tain of the Mirror: Derrida and the philosophy of reflection* (1986), writing on Derrida's engagement with metaphoricity in 'White Mythology', Gasché suggests:

²⁰ In *Being and Time* (1996), in the section 'The Ontic Priority of the Question of Being', Heidegger proposes that *Da-sein* (there-being), is the 'kind of being' of the 'human being' (10). Heidegger suggests:

Da-sein... is ontically distinguished by the fact that in its being it is concerned *about* its very being. Thus it is constitutive of the being of *Da-sein* to have, in its very being, a relation of being to this being. And this in turn implies that *Da-sein* understands itself in its being in some way and with some explicitness.... The ontic distinction of *Da-sein* lies in the fact that it *is* ontological. (10)

In Derrida's sense, metaphoricity is a structure of referral that accounts for the possibility and impossibility of the philosophical discourse, yet not insofar as this discourse may be construed as literary (sensible, fictional and so on) because of its inevitable recourse to metaphor and poetic devices but insofar as it is a *general discourse on the universal*.... I shall call metaphoricity a *quasitranscendental*. With *quasi*- I wish to indicate that metaphoricity has a structure and a function similar to transcendentals without actually being one. (316)

In *Appositions of Jacques Derrida and Emmanuel Levinas*, discussing Derrida's essay 'The Law of Genre' (1992c) and its engagement with class and classification, John Llewelyn writes:

Beyond the opposition of being and non-being, and beyond the ontological difference, iterability defeats the inclination of the *es* of *es gibt sein* and the *ça* of the unconscious to become reified. A quasi-transcendental rather than a transcendental condition, iterability is a condition not simply of the possibility of class as effect but also of its impossibility as a logically self-contained entity. For according to the generalized law of genre, every class is necessarily outside itself, declassified by the very condition of its identity, deconstructed by its own structure. (2002a: 30)

My proposition of such figures as *passing* and *attending* as something like 'quasi-transcendental' structures, proposes that passing and attending are not named beings, and that that which passes and attends, in its structure deconstructs itself. Passing and attending occur as conditions of possibility of passings and attendings as named, classed or categorized, as well as conditions of impossibility of the closure of such names, classes and categories. For Levinas in *OB*, as I will explore in Chapter Four, 'the oneself' is first a corporeal 'recurrence of the oneself' (104). In the chapter 'Tropes' of *Emmanuel Levinas: The Genealogy of ethics* (1995), Llewelyn writes that Levinas's '*Autrui*' does not occur, 'as a case falling under the formal concept of alterity. Nor does it simply name an a priori categorial or existential structure of my mind' (185). Rather, Llewelyn suggests, the absolute passed, or 'apriority' (185) of *Autrui* 'destructures... the transcendental unity of self-consciousness. Recurrence is the anarchic condition of more-and-less than possibility, the *quasi-transcendental* condition of the transcendental condition of the possibility of experience' (185, emphasis added).

As like quasi-transcendental structures, such figures would occur somewhat analogously to the modal being of *Dasein* for Heidegger. In the introduction of *Being and Time* (1996), in relation to the formulation of the question of being, Heidegger suggests, 'Regarding, understanding and grasping, choosing, and gaining access to, are constitutive attitudes of inquiry and are thus themselves modes of being of a particular being, of *the* being we inquirers ourselves in each case are' (5-6). Thus I am proposing that my exploration does not occur in terms of beings or subjects who, incidentally, attend or pass. Rather, I am proposing attending and passing as constitutive of the 'what' or the 'who' that or which attends or passes.

Wills's Dorsality

David Wills' *Dorsality: Thinking back through technology and politics* (2008), might be described, in part, as a series of inflexions or bendings of writings of Derrida and Levinas, among other writers. Wills

explores, as he writes in the introductory chapter ‘The Dorsal Turn,’ a ‘technological turn’ as ‘a turn into a technology that was always there’, where ‘the notion of the turn implies a type of technologization’ (3). Wills suggests,

the turn is first of all an inflection, a bending, the movement of a limb that, as the Latin teaches us, is the sense of *articulation*. Within that logic, there is technology as soon as there are limbs, as soon as there is bending of those limbs, as soon as there is any articulation at all.... I intend in the second instance that the technological turn, as inflection or articulation, be understood to begin well before the emergence of a limb.... One might as well argue that the animate first articulates and so becomes technological in the self-division of a cell. (3, 4)

In a figure of turning that resonates with walking and the pedestrian engagements of the practices I discuss in this exegesis, Wills suggests:

For now, still figuring things according to the model of the human animal, of human animal articulation, as the articulation of limbs of a human biped, the turn would be the deviation that occurs—naturally as it were—within the seemingly automatic advance of ambulation or locomotion. It turns as it walks... compensating for the disequilibrium of each movement, as it were turning one way then the other in order to advance. The particular importance of the privilege I am giving to the turn resides, therefore, in its sense of a departure that is also a detour, a deviation, a divergence into difference. (4)

Wills suggests an automaticity of the *dorsal* as ‘technology in the back’ (2008: 12) in relation to the animate or the human animal, as moving otherwise than towards a ‘*foreseeable* end’, or any end (240). Wills’s engagement with ‘technology in the back’ would thus (along with any number of other discourses, among which I include Massumi’s (2002) engagement with expression which I will discuss in Chapter Two), suggest an expanding of ‘conventional’, or instrumentalising, practices (assuming such practices exist), of ‘technique’, in contemporary dance.

In the Chapter ‘Façades of the Other’ of *Dorsality*, Wills discusses Louis Althusser’s account of subject formation in Althusser’s ‘Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses’ (1971). In Althusser’s account, the subject comes about in a turn to a hailing, Althusser writes ‘There are individuals walking along. Somewhere, (*usually behind them*) the hail rings out’” (Althusser 1971: 163; quoted here with Wills’s emphasis, Wills 2008: 36). Wills points out that in this figure the call is not foreseeable in that it comes from behind. In this sense, it concerns a contingency and something that the subject cannot ‘*foresee*’ (Wills 2008: 36, emphasis in original). Discussing Judith Butler’s engagement in *The Psychic Life of Power* (2004), with the figure of turning within Althusser’s discussion of ‘interpellation’ (1971). Wills writes:

Butler *returns* to this quandary a number of times, attempting to account for a subject whose origin is a turning, a subject that comes to be out of some sort of impersonality. This brings about a particularly abyssal ‘paradox of referentiality’: in order to refer to a subject that as yet has no ontological status, one *turns* to the *tropic* or figurative resources of language, and the figure constantly lighted on, is that of a *turn*. (2008: 37)

Asking, ‘How could one... ascribe a meaningful ontological status to a figure such as a turning, particularly one that occurs prior to subject formation? How can we conceive of a tropological inauguration of the subject?’, Wills suggests that the turning,

requires us to conceive of the figure of a body that turns before any body turns (and in any case, a turning body by no means necessarily implies a formed subject); in other words, to conceive of a body and then a subject that are constituted tropologically or even rhetorically, by the very figure of a fact of a turn or the fact of a figure of a turn. (2008: 38)

Linking to Lepecki’s *Exhausting Dance* (2006) turns Wills’s engagement with Althusser towards choreography. Lepecki suggests that ‘there is something uncannily choreographic’ in Althusser’s description of the ‘mechanism’ of interpellation, (2006: 8), Lepecki quotes Althusser:

The individual is interpellated as a (free) subject in order that he shall submit freely to the commandments of the Subject, i.e., in order that he shall (freely) accept his subjection, i.e., in order that he shall make the gestures and actions of his subjection ‘all by himself’. There are no subjects except by and for their subjection. That is why they ‘work all by themselves’. (Althusser 1971: 169, emphasis in original)²¹

The capitalization of ‘Subject’ denotes that for Althusser, ‘all ideology [interpellates] individuals in the name of a Unique and Absolute Subject (Althusser 1971: 168). Clearly, the phrase ‘gestures and actions’ suggests the choreographic. So too does the phrase ‘all by himself’. These would be choreographic modes of ideology, in which perhaps Althusser’s sense of ‘the Subject’ might also be considered as ‘the Choreographer’. Concerning the quotation from Althusser above in relation to dance choreography Lepecki suggests ‘Choreography demands a yielding to commanding voices of masters (living and dead), it demands submitting body and desire to disciplining regimes... all for the perfect fulfillment of a transcendental and preordained set of steps that nevertheless must appear “spontaneous”’. Lepecki suggests that Althusser’s proposal ‘sounds a lot like the fundamental mechanism choreography sets in place for its representational and reproductive success’ (2006: 9).

Wills notes that at times Levinas uses the word ‘interpellation’ ‘to describe the situation of the ethical subject’ (Wills 2008: 42). While acknowledging that Levinas’s engagement in *TI* was ‘developed in an altogether different context from Althusser’s concerns’ (2008: 42), Wills suggests a ‘resonance’ (42) between Althusser’s account of interpellation and Levinas’s writing of visitation of the face. In relation to *TI*, Wills suggests:

The Other doesn’t appear in front of me, facing me, so much as turn or incline itself toward me, summoning me as responsible from outside my consciousness or perception. It is precisely by means of such a ‘curvature of intersubjective space’ that the face-to-face resists being reduced to vision, ‘goes

²¹ Lepecki discusses Mark Franko’s engagement with Althusser’s proposal of subjectivation in *The Work of Dance : Labour, movement, and identity in the 1930s* (2002), noting Franko’s suggestion that ‘interpellation implies visceral address’ (Franko 2002: 59).

further than vision'.... [I]f we are to allow that other to be the absolute other, the foreigner, then we might more faithfully conceive of the other as coming from behind. The idea of a 'face' that drops from a great height to stand before us, confront us, and stop us in our tracks cannot avoid falling into and reducing to the regime of, visibility. (2008: 45, 46)

The sense of 'figuring' of the title of this exegesis, 'Figuring Diachrony', is firstly provoked by Wills's exploration of a related sense of turning: 'the tropological turn' (2008: 17).

To consider this with Gasché's engagement with Derrida's writing of metaphoricity discussed in the previous section, I suggest that the 'set of steps', as choreography, would not be transcendental but perhaps 'quasi-transcendental' (Gasché 1986: 316). That is, choreography only ever occurs as a material process in a *there*. However, if Lepecki's propositions are accurate, how might the particulars of dance choreography and performance 'talk back to', or, again to consider Gasché's (1986) terms, *reflect* back on, Althusser's proposition? Theatre dance might provide an analogy and expression of such a general sense of choreography or Choreography as Althusser suggests. Analogical with the mode of the quotation marks around 'all by himself' may be the status of the dancer's 'onstage' 'gestures and actions' with respect to the choreographer. That is, in a dance that has been 'choreographed' and 'rehearsed' many times, there persists the sense that the dancer makes her 'gestures and actions' in the dance 'spontaneously' all by herself – or at least, in response to the performance of others who she moves with. This sense is not simply false. Perhaps there may occur a distance between the sense that she or he makes her 'gestures and actions' 'all by herself' and an awareness that these gestures and actions have been choreographed and rehearsed many times, that they are the effect of innumerable movement writings, choreo-graphings. Perhaps such a distance would be an example of what Read means by 'the minimal parallax condition of putting a frame around [it]' (2008: 16). In the street scene suggested in Althusser's example (1971: 163), the police (or other hailer) may be unseen, then heard, then turned to and seen, while the Subject would be unseeable. A choreographer may, in a conventional sense, be 'unseen' while the Choreographer or Choreography would be unseeable. Shifting back to the lower case, perhaps this provides one way of thinking of choreography as a 'technology in the back' in Wills's (2008: 12) sense.

Considering Wills's and Lepecki's engagements, at least two broad, related senses of choreography emerge. One would be as a mode of interpellation as discussed above. This sense might tend to foreground processes in which an 'I' is subordinated, but these would also be the process in which the 'I' occurs at all. The other broad sense would be choreography in the mode of 'writing', as Derrida, Mallarmé, and Blanchot engage it. While choreography as *writing* would first occur as an affirmation of difference or of opening to otherness, in Derrida's engagement it is thus—as iteration—implicated in a persistence of convention, that is, as a mode of 'the performative', as Derrida discusses it in SEC and 'Performative Powerlessness'.

Lepecki (2012) suggests:

Dance's deep relationship to *scoring*, or choreographing, exposes all those commanding and imperative forces embedded in the practice of choreography. Indeed, as a system of command, choreographic scoring reveals the formation of obedient, disciplined and (pre) formatted bodies – technically and subjectively fit to produce (and more importantly perhaps) to reproduce certain staged images conveyed by an authorial will. (15)

Read also suggests a sense of performance as pre-formance (2008: 170), pre-formance and the 'pre-formatted' recall Derrida's engagements with Austin's (1962) performative. It may be useful to qualify the senses of 'exposure' and 'revealing' that Lepecki suggests here. I suggest that some of 'those commanding and imperative forces' might be revealed or exposed to knowledge in some way, but this would not be a simple sense of a making-knowable. This perhaps suggests a contrast with this project's engagement with ideas that suggest an enigma; and a choreography, or technology, 'in the back' (Wills 2008: 12). Lepecki suggests:

A crucial element in the formation of dance as an artform, choreography as a technology of scoring does have inevitable political reverberations across contemporary art practices, since choreography, once enacted, displays disciplined bodies operating in a regime of obedience for the sake of bringing an art piece into the world. Here, we might think of the early performance scores by Bruce Nauman that inevitably start with the innocent yet provocative line 'Hire a dancer ...'.... Critiques of this type of body and subjectivity, 'ready to comply', are a central theme for certain visual artists (for instance, in Santiago Sierra's *Veteran of Iraq War Facing the Wall*, 2011) and choreographers (for instance, in Félix Ruckert's *Hautnah*, 1998). (15)

Scoring also links choreography to conceptual art, as linguistic instructions have been used by a number of conceptual artists (such as Acconci and Robert Smithson) and their Fluxus precursors (such as Yoko Ono, George Brecht and Allan Kaprow) to articulate sets of possible as well as impossible actions, revealing how any system of command is always filled with the cracks that will bring it down. (15, 16)

Another link between scoring or choreography and engagements with instructions in conceptual art that could be explored, occurs in the ways my practice engages with instructions, requests, and invitations.

Back to Wills, this discussion aims to register a quasitranscendental sense of *turning* as I outlined in the previous section. The figurative or tropological (as in for example, 'turn of phrase' or 'figure of speech') would be a condition of (im)possibility of philosophical discourse. The 'methodological problem' (7) of *OB* might be described as exploring how ethics as *saying*, as that which was never present, might be figured or traced within a *said*. I aim in my exploration of performance practices in this exegesis to re-mark in different ways the turns of the figural as the (im)possibility of the closure or totality of concepts. A related sense of 'figuring' is apposite at the same time: the sense of an attempting to figure something out. In the sense that this project is engaged with 'Figuring Diachrony' suggests an engagement with research in relation to Derrida's sense—with regard to democracy in 'Remarks on Deconstruction and Pragmatism' (1996) that I outlined above—of the 'to

come'. Another sense of figuration occurs within genealogies of visual arts practices, as in the 'figurative' or 'non-figurative'. Engaging with this sense in any depth is beyond the scope of this project. However, this sense brushes up against the sense that Levinas ascribes to 'the image' in RS in relation to what he describes as 'the perspective of the world' in *Existence and Existents* (1988: 52), which I discuss in Chapter Three.

Performance Philosophy

This project aims to contribute to what Laura Cull, John Mullarkey, and Helen Julia Minors call, in their introduction to the online publication of proceedings of the conference 'How Performance Thinks', held at Kingston University in 2012, 'the emerging sub-field of "Performance Philosophy"' (4).²² 'Performance philosophy' seems currently to a large extent to be emerging as a 'sub-field' around the activities of the 'international research network' 'Performance Philosophy', which held its inaugural conference 'What is Performance Philosophy: Staging a new field' at the University of Surrey in April 2013, in the week prior to the examination of this PhD project. Among the questions the conference aimed to address were: 'What is the relationship between performance and philosophy? Is performance a kind of philosophy and philosophy a kind of performance?'²³ Cull hopes that 'In the first instance' her *Theatres of Immanence: Deleuze and the ethics of performance*,

might be understood as an expression of what we might call 'a philosophical turn' in the international field of theatre and performance research: an intensification of its long-standing interest in and engagement with philosophy, as a source of diverse concepts, plural methods and multiple ontologies that can be productively explored in relation to performance. (2012: 2)²⁴

Suggesting an affirmative engagement with the first part of her own question with Mullarkey and Minors (2013) above: 'Is performance a kind of philosophy?', Cull formulates more precisely the kind of relation between Gilles Deleuze's philosophy and performance which she takes as a premise of *Theatres of Immanence*,

this book starts from the premise that Deleuze's thought provides us with the resources to rethink performance *itself* as a kind of philosophy. That is, this book will attempt to explore the nature of what we might call *Performance-Philosophy*, beyond the tendency of both disciplines to merely *apply* philosophy to

²² <http://performancephilosophy.ning.com/page/how-performance-thinks>

²³ <http://performancephilosophy.ning.com/page/cfp-2013-conference>

<http://performancephilosophy.ning.com/page/about> 'The network grew out of the PSi Performance and Philosophy working group which was founded by Laura Cull in 2008.

²⁴ Cull writes, 'Simon Bayly's *A Pathognomy of Performance* (2011), Martin Puchner's *The Drama of Ideas* (2010), Freddie Rokem's *Philosophers and Thespians* (2010) and Michael Whitmore's *Shakespearean Metaphysics* (2008) are only four recent publications that one could cite as evidence of such a turn' (2012: 2).

performance, to treat performance as the illustration of pre-existing philosophical thought, rather than as its own kind of thinking. (2012: 3)

This project does not engage with writings of Deleuze, other than indirectly via a chapter of Brian Massumi's (2002) *Parables for the Virtual* (which I engage as an 'original' work). So to what extent, or in what ways, would it be useful to adapt Cull's premise and say that this project's 'philosophical' reference-field, taking place among texts of Derrida, Wills, Levinas, Massumi and others, provides it 'with [the] resources to rethink performance *itself* as a kind of philosophy'? Is my performance practice 'itself' a kind of philosophy? This section, and this project as a whole, only offers a provisional beginning towards an answer to these questions. A kind of problematic that this question opens might be illustrated by considerations of patience and humour. Levinas refers to patience in describing the temporality of ethics. In 'Meaning and Sense' (1996c), in the section 'Sense and Work' in *BPW*, Levinas writes:

a departure with no return, which, however, does not go forth into the void, would lose its absolute *orientation* if it sought recompense in the immediacy of its triumph, if it awaited the triumph of its cause impatiently. The one-way movement of 'unique sense' would be reversed and become a reciprocity.... As an absolute orientation to the Other, as sense, a work is possible only in patience. (49-50)

The patience involved in such a 'work' would be *my* patience. To be a work in the sense Levinas writes of above, I cannot take a share in what it offers. Levinas's description of the subject as 'the other in the same' in *OB* (25) perhaps complicates somewhat such a formulation, while retaining it. The patience with which Levinas is concerned in this passage would seem to be very different to the way in which episodes of my practice might test my own or others' patience—while, sometimes perhaps, keeping us tethered in the episode. The time of ethics, as enigma rather than phenomenon, would be an absolute patience. An understanding of a *phenomenon* of patience would be a (chronological) pre-condition of an understanding or tracing, in 'the said' of such an absolute patience. I suggest that, at the least, a performance practice would be a mode not any less fitting for the exploration of patience in the passage above, as a textual practice. In each case a question of whether or not the practice was doing philosophy would depend on what that practice did as writing (in the 'limited' sense), or performing. In *Infinitely Demanding: Ethics of commitment, politics of resistance* (2007), Critchley suggests that the affect of the ethical subject in Levinas's writings, is trauma, and argues for humour as a mode of sublimation of the fact that I am not equal to the infinite ethical demand, and I will explore this further in Chapter Four. Humour suggests many modes of practice or performance in addition to the modes of writing books and articles. Derrida's engagements with writing in the general sense would suggest that the places of philosophy and performance are not decidable, and would occur always as relays and referrals. Derrida's engagement in 'The Law of Genre' (1992c) outlined above, would suggest that any defining trait of philosophy or performance would always differ from itself, and be constituted only in a referral with what is outside the genre of which it is taken as a definitive trait. The defining trait of a genre would participate in the genre

without belonging to it. Such participation would be the positive condition of possibility of the determination of a genre or the location of something as being within a genre, as well as the impossibility of the closure of a genre. Derrida's engagement does not deny that there are genres and effects of genre; rather, it contests the propriety or closure of genres, and so would contest any proposition of a rigorous mutual exclusivity of the genres 'philosophy' and 'performance'. 'The Law of Genre' is one example of Derrida's engagement with the relation of philosophy to literature, and a question that emerges is what substituting 'performance' for 'literature' within these engagements might enable us to perform or think, however, this is not a concern I will explore in this project.

This project receives Cull's proposals of performance as philosophy as a novel provocation. If I claimed that this project—or, to the extent that they are separable—my performance practice, did performance as philosophy, I would be claiming that they offer something of interest and significance to 'philosophy', whatever that might be, as well as to the study of 'performance', whatever that might be.

In the final section of this introduction, I identify what I propose this project contributes to the genres or fields in which it participates. As a practice-led PhD in performance, this project does not, and, I suggest, should not be expected to, engage with the philosophical texts it explores with the level of exegetical precision, depth and detail that a project that identifies itself as a 'philosophy' project must. Or is this so? This raises a question of the difference between 'philosophy' and 'performance philosophy'. Perhaps performance-philosophy might offer a precision in philosophical engagement with performance. A similar problem might emerge in relation to a project that proposed to operate as 'performance *as* art history'. This project locates itself in relation to contemporary performance practices and in relation to philosophy. Perhaps this project is less able to decide whether or not it makes a contribution to philosophy than it is able to decide whether or not it makes a contribution to 'performance practice'. Or perhaps engaging with philosophy from the 'oblique' (or perhaps dorsal) angle of performance may be a particularly productive mode of philosophical research. One response is to say that this practice-led performance as research PhD engages in philosophy in the mode of a *dilettante*. Such a dilettante-project might offer some suggestions as to the contributions to 'philosophy', that this project might make within performance as philosophy; in episodes on footpaths, or memorialized in this exegesis, or in this project as a whole.

Cull continues in *Theatres of Immanence* with regard to the 'philosophical turn', suggesting:

This turn differs from the so-called theory explosion that took place in US and European Theatre and Performance Studies, and indeed, across the humanities at large during the 1970s and 1980s, in terms of the philosophical material that it includes... That is, while Janelle Reinelt and Joseph Roach argue that the theory explosion 'returned the humanities [including performance] to philosophy' (Reinelt and Roach 1992: 5 [in the revised and enlarged edition, Reinelt and Roach 2007: 4], I would argue that it returned

performance to *some* philosophies, but not to others – to Jacques Derrida and J.L. Austin, for instance, but not to Henri Bergson or Gilles Deleuze, who remain under-theorized in theatre and performance publications. (2012: 2)

As I outlined above, this project engages with Derrida's reading of Austin in SEC. While this and other writings of Derrida have influenced performance studies, this project affirms that Derrida's writings are far from exhausted in relation to how they may be engaged in performance studies or performance philosophy. This project does not so much attempt an 'original' engagement with writings of Derrida, as attempt an 'original' engagement within its reference-field of writings and works of Hampton, Neath, Wills, Derrida, Levinas, Nachbar and others.

In notes for 'What is Performance Philosophy?', a lecture given at Trinity Laban (2013),²⁵ Cull suggests that 'Philosophy *as* Performance' might 'Contribute to contemporary questions of what counts as philosophical thought; the nature and form of philosophy; understanding of philosophy as an embodied practice – conceiving philosophy **as a verb** rather than a noun' (slide 31). Lepecki (2012) suggests:

Dance's inescapable *corporeality* constantly demonstrates to dancers and audiences alike concrete possibilities for embodying-otherwise – since a dancer's labour is nothing else than to embody, disembody and re-embody, thus refiguring corporeality and proposing improbable subjectivities. (15)

In this project's reference-field, corporeality would be inescapable not just in dance but in any genre or mode whatsoever. However, perhaps legacies of dance work against the forgetting of some modes of corporeality or corporeal engagement, or at least, offer particular modes in which corporeality may be remarked or opened. Cull suggests that 'Philosophy *as* Performance' may be 'A philosophy expressed through action; or better, **a philosophy created in the event of its performance**' (slide 31). Performance philosophy would be concerned with the '**mutual transformation** of performance and philosophy by one another' (slide 33). Among the stakes of Performance Philosophy that Cull identifies is a 'challenge to philosophy to theorize its own performance, address its own embodiment' (slide 33).²⁶

This project engages more with the formal experimentation of *OB* than *TI*. One of the examiners of this project suggested that the 'Levinas' the project 'presents' may be the French writer and philosopher Maurice Blanchot (writings of whom I will reference in Chapter Three), insofar as the

²⁵A talk given on 27 March 2013, available at:
http://www.academia.edu/3161098/What_is_Performance_Philosophy

²⁶ Cull cites 'Deleuze in 1968: 'The time is coming when it will hardly be possible to write a book of philosophy as it has been done for so long.... The search for **new means of philosophical expression** [emphasis Cull's]... must be pursued today in relation to the renewal of certain other arts, such as the theatre or the cinema' (Deleuze 2004: xx quoted in Cull 2013 slide 31 / Deleuze 1994: xxi).

project seems more interested in figuring alterity formally as an exterior, rather than as a human other. If I provisionally agree with this idea, perhaps one implication is that, as a corporeal practice, or a practice that perhaps in some ways remarks corporeal situatedness, (even as any practice must be corporeal), this project's engagement with *OB* may, to some extent, offer a corporeal engagement with the formal innovations or experimentation of *OB*. Another question this suggestion indicates concerns the relation between the human and the inhuman in relation to alterity and responsibility. Wills's engagement with technology as dorsal in relation to Levinas is of interest in this connection, and I consider the alterity of technology in relation to performance practices in the sections 'Misfitting of the Template' of Chapter Two, and 'Games' of Chapter Four.²⁷

Cull, Mullarkey, and Minors (2012) write:

the tendency to treat performance as the mere application or exemplification of pre-existing ideas (for instance, from philosophy) remains a feature of scholarship in both Performance and Philosophy. In contrast, this conference questioned:

- ◆ Can we extend or democratize, perhaps, our conception of what counts as 'thought' without rendering the term meaningless?
- ◆ To what extent can performance be understood as a way of thinking rather than as the illustration, application or demonstration of existing ideas – including philosophical ideas? (4)

This project also aims to contest such a prioritization of 'philosophy' over 'performance' as Cull, Mullarkey and Minors diagnose. It aims to engage deconstructively, within this exegesis, with the border between performance and philosophy, and to contest the originality of any origin or the stability of any *archè* or foundation.

If 'performance is thinking', as Cull (3), and this project each suggest, this project affirms that *application* and *illustration* also think. The prohibition: 'My performance must not illustrate theory/philosophy' has been a catch-cry of my postgraduate studies that I have counter-signed. I suggest that within a Deleuzian-immanent engagement, a Derridean-*différential* engagement, a Levinasian-diachronic engagement, or Wills's *dorsal* engagement, that which illustration does, and

²⁷ Wills discusses how in 'Peace and Proximity' (1996d), 'Levinas quotes from a scene in Vasili Grossman's *Life and Fate* where a woman waiting in line "can only see the backs of others."' (Wills 2008: 52). Wills quotes Levinas quoting Grossman, '[She] had never thought the human back could be so expressive.... Persons approaching the counter had a particular way of craning their neck and back, their raised shoulders... seemed to cry, sob, and scream.' (Grossman in Levinas 1996: 167). Wills notes that, in relation to this, Levinas suggests that 'the face is... not exclusively a human face.' (Levinas 1996: 167) Wills suggests,

while this could also be a way of saying that the face might be not the human face but the human back, it opens the possibility, literally at least—and because he does not elaborate, the idea is left to resonate—that the ethical relation may not be a human relation at all but a relation to the nonhuman other. (52)

that which application does, may be as question-worthy as that which performance does. This project is concerned with ‘figuring diachrony,’ and illustration is a mode of figuration. I will engage otherwise than attempting to exclude ‘illustration’, as not creative, or, to quote Austin in relation to theatre, cases in which ‘language... is... used not seriously, but in ways *parasitic* on its normal use’ (1962: 22, emphasis Austin’s), from the kinds of creative things that might occur in the performance practices, or writings I explore in this exegesis. In Derridean terms, truth-as-adequation would be a condition of possibility of illustration, *and* every adequation would be an iteration: that is, an alteration. Perhaps in Wills’s terms, every illustration would occur in a technological bending or inflexion not fully recoupable to perception. In Chapter Three I will explore Levinas’s engagement with resemblance as a becoming-image of the object. A becoming-image of the object might also be read as a definition of a kind of illustration. Application of paint to a façade, or of makeup to a face; changes both the paint or makeup, and the surface. I aim to attend to ‘illustration’ and ‘application’ as material processes, and as modes of *différance*, or differing, prior to sameness or identity. If so, this exegesis is called to some extent to explain *how* the ‘philosophy’ and the ‘performance’ change in their contact or touching. Cull makes a related point a little later in relation to Deleuze’s engagement with representation:

For our part, we will suggest that Deleuze is concerned with rethinking representation rather than rejecting it, and with reconsidering presence as a mutually transformative encounter between the different, rather than as an instance of recognition, identification, communication, communion or coincidence between a subject and an object. To represent some ‘thing’ – which is always more fundamentally a process, for Deleuze – is neither to imitate it, nor to embark on a doomed project to be present to ‘things themselves’ ... performance’s production of images, texts, events and movements involves entering into a becoming that changes both the work and the world as *representation* or differential repetition. (2012: 5)

Among the senses the OED gives for the verb ‘to illustrate’ are: ‘to shed light upon... to illuminate (the mind) [both obsolete] To set in a good light; to display to advantage; to show up.’²⁸ In these senses illustration is a belonging together of light, vision and knowledge. An indication of Levinas’s engagement with tropes of vision in writing his ethics might be provided from a quotation from *OB*:

Not able to stay in a theme, not able to appear, this invisibility which becomes contact and obsession is due not to the nonsignifyingness of what is approached, but to a way of signifying quite different from that which connects exposition to sight (100).

Wills suggests that ‘it is as if Levinas’s theory of the ethical relation were constantly relayed between the face, which first means the eyes, and speech, between visibility and discursivity’ (2008: 43). I will explore relations of vision and sound in Levinas’s writings in Chapter Five as part of an exploration

²⁸ Available at <http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.aut.ac.nz/view/Entry/91578?rskey=QQj9kP&result=2&isAdvanced=false#eid>

of relations between *saying, voice, listening*, and *hearing* within performance practices in relation to texts of Levinas, Jean-Luc Nancy, and Derrida. In Chapter Two I will pick up on Wills's engagement with Levinas's ethics as a turning-to me of, or my turning-to, the face that 'visits' from outside or behind the field of vision, a turning that suggests sound and hearing as well as vision. Chapter Three outlines the significance of darkness in Levinas's *Existence and Existents*. Chapter Three then explores Levinas's 'Reality and its Shadow' (1987b), in which Levinas suggests sound as the exemplary modality of a suspension of conceptuality as participation in the image. Furthermore, this project takes as a provocation Nancy's suggestion in *Listening* (2007): 'shouldn't truth 'itself,' as transitivity and incessant transition of a continual coming and going, be listened to rather than seen?' (4).

Concerning the relation of performance and thinking, Cull suggests:

Secondly, concepts from Deleuze can support our proposition: it is not only because it is made by 'reflective practitioners' that performance counts as thinking. The human maker is not the only one doing the thinking in the creation of performance; rather, Deleuze's definition of thought as creation allows us to suggest that *everything* thinks – including the nonhuman aspects of performance – because every 'thing' is immanent to the creativity of life, an expression of how life thinks itself in and as the creation of different 'things'. (2012: 3, 4)

Cull's suggestion that '*everything* thinks' finds many resonances with explorations of performance and participation in this project, as performance and participation occurring other than as the intentional activity of a knowing subject. Such resonances occur in relation to: performance in relation to Mallarmé's, Derrida's and Blanchot's engagements with writing's materiality which I explore in Chapter Three; Wills's 'technology in the back' (2008: 12) which occurs as a refrain in many places throughout the exegesis; and—perhaps more closely related to Cull's Deleuzian engagement—with the discussion of 'expression' in relation to Massumi's parable of the soccer game in Chapter Two.

This project might be more able to engage in the affirmative with the second part of Cull, Mullarkey and Minors's (2012) question 'Can... philosophy be a kind of performance'. *OB*, for example, might provide us with a model to think philosophy as a kind of performance, as would, in different ways, many of Derrida's texts. Critchley suggests of *OB* in *The Ethics of Deconstruction*, 'no attempt has yet been made to appreciate this book's strangeness' (1999b: 9). Perhaps the particular performance and performativity of *OB* would remain open for future research. But this is not quite my project. In general terms, the idea of philosophy as performance may not be such a novel idea as the sense of performance as philosophy that Cull suggests.

Considering the writings and proper names of the reference field suggested above, there have been many explorations of relations between writings of Derrida and performance. I know of only one scholarly engagement between Wills's *Dorsality* and performance—in a Master's project: Emilie

Gallier's *The Dorsal Fin of Choreography: Writing performs – notation and spectatorship* (2012). The current project aims to explore some potentials of Wills's *dorsality* in relation to performance and performance philosophy, in particular in relation to the turnings, articulations, techniques and technologies, backings and facings, of choreography.²⁹ There have been a number of explorations of relations between writings of Levinas and contemporary performance. Calling the collectivity of these writings a conversation or debate would be an overstatement as they are relatively few and do not ostensibly refer to each other. Within its engagement in its reference-field, this project aims to contribute an encounter with Levinas and performance, and also thereby contribute towards the possibility and potential of such a conversation or debate within performance studies and performance philosophy, and to suggest what some of its possibilities or potentials may and may not be. I will outline some of the engagements with writings of Levinas in relation to theatre and performance that are of most interest to this project, and consider how these relate to the model of 'performance philosophy' as proposed by Cull (2012), and Cull, Mullarkey and Minors (2012) outlined above.

Performance Philosophy Engagements in the Reference-Field: Levinas

In this section I discuss a number of recent engagements with writings of Levinas in theatre and performance studies.

In the text of her spoken paper, 'Caliban's Cave: Is there a philosophy of the stage?' Liza Kharoubi (2011) suggests that there is 'a double-edged understanding' of 'a "philosophy of the stage"' (1):

An immanent interpretation first, where Theatre Arts (performance, dance, textual theatre) can be said to exude a philosophy *per se*, construed as a form of gestural praxis: the aim would hitherto be to define what this practical philosophy may consist in. (1)

This exegesis occurs in large part as such an aiming-to-define, and I will consider this interpretation in the section 'This exegesis' below. Kharoubi continues, 'The second interpretation harks to the fact that there actually exist a number of philosophical texts referring specifically to theatre or

²⁹ Lepecki (2012) suggests that Boris Charmatz's 'notion of the Dancing Museum', as primarily a 'mental space' denotes a conceptual-theoretical-philosophical impetus in contemporary approaches to making dance' (18). Lepecki outlines 'some recent and direct choreographic-philosophical collaborations defining this 'mental space'. Among the examples Lepecki cites are,

the one between French philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy and French choreographer Mathilde Monnier... we can also think of... Giorgio Agamben and Paolo Virno musing explicitly on dance and gesture while developing their political philosophies of modernity and contemporaneity; or Ranciere, Jacques Derrida, Alain Badiou, Erin Manning, all rearticulating their philosophical concepts thanks to the impact on their thought not only of dance understood as metaphor but of actual choreographic and dance practices. (18)

inspired by theatrical practice' (1), and notes that in this paper she concentrates on this construction. Kharoubi offers 'a short account' of [the] *temptation* of the stage for philosophy' (4), engaging writings of Martha Nussbaum, Avital Ronell, Critchley, Stanley Cavell and Alphonso Lingis. In the section 'Responsibility' in Chapter Four I will pick up on aspects of Kharoubi's engagement with writings of Critchley and Lingis, each of which she explores in relation to writings of Levinas. Critchley's *Infinitely Demanding: Ethics of commitment, politics of resistance* (2007), and Kharoubi's engagement with it, are apposite to this project's concern with performance as opening a relation of ethics to politics.

In 'The Face in the Crowd: Levinas, Ethics and Performance,' (2010) Daniel Watt suggests the importance of chance in Levinas' philosophy. Summarizing Levinas' essay 'Ethics as First Philosophy,' Watt suggests that,

for Levinas, ethics is an encounter with another face, by chance. In such an encounter my own totality as a human being is called to respond to the otherness of that person. It is such a situation that we should bear in mind as a theatrical encounter. (155)

Watt proposes that 'it is in the theatre that the model of his ethics can be best demonstrated; for before each actor are arrayed those faces which so intrigue Levinas, amounting to a very human responsibility towards such crowds.' (154) We would have to understand Levinas's being-intrigued by faces in the sense that the face of the other, for Levinas, stands in the trace of an absolute, otherwise-than-empirical alterity. Considering Jill Robbins' (1991) suggestion that 'Levinas mobilizes the nonphilosophical-empiricism, God, Judaic theology—in his philosophy, as a challenge to the dominance of the Same' (Robbins 1991: 1061), Watt asks, 'why not also theatre, where the same is a continually challenged category, from the most straightforwardly presented play to the most avant-garde performance?' (157). This would be to read Levinas, 'as a reluctant thinker of the theatre' (Watt 2010: 154), to argue that theatre could offer a way of tracing a radical opening of the same to alterity, rather than, as Levinas suggests, an attempt to escape responsibility by entering a world of illusion. Robbins's (1991) suggestion recalls Derrida's deconstructions of the relation of philosophy and non-philosophy, for example in 'Plato's Pharmacy' (1981a). Watt discusses Derrida's (1978) engagement with, as Watt writes, 'the nature of closure of the infinite field of representation that is the theatrical environment' (Watt 2010: 157), and the relation of chance and necessity in Antonin Artaud's 'Theatre of Cruelty'. Watt's linking of Levinas to Derrida's discussion of Artaud's theatre links with the section 'Games' in Chapter Four. Watt's engagement with Levinas's ethics in relation to chance also links it to my exploration in 'Misfitting of the Template' in Chapter Two.

Walking

In part, my practice occurs as 'pedestrian' performances or technologies: walking, standing and occasionally running. For Wills, in that the human must turn in making each step, walking is a

mode of the technological turn.³⁰ These pedestrian performances in my practice are often relatively unremarkable, though at times they are more likely to turn passings-by into attendings, for example through a grouping of bodies, or in my crouching, or ‘crouched-walk’, or other movements. There are rich, varied and varying genealogies of walking in and as artistic practice. Hampton and Neath’s *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* (2012) might be said to participate in the genre of the ‘audio walk,’ of which Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller are prominent practitioners. I will not attempt to provide a detailed genealogy of walking in art, or of the guided walk, as these are not the primary concerns of this project. Rather, in this section I will briefly consider a sample of practices that involve walking or other kinds of pedestrian performance that resonate with my practice and with the other practices I discuss.

The English artist Richard Long might be described as engaging in a performance practice in which walking plays a central role. Most of Long’s walks, many of which take a number of days to complete, might be described as ‘solos’. However, as the text and photographs of Long’s *Richard Long: Walking in circles* (1994) shows, Long’s walks occur as particular modes of relation to human animals, other animals, and to inanimate beings or processes. What might be called Long’s ‘documents’ of his walks, for example a diagram of wind directions recorded at intervals during a walk, recall or anticipate Read’s writing of ‘the expanded collective’ (2008: 38). Perhaps these walks tend to be ‘unremarked-as-art, or ‘identified-as-hiking,’—in a walk, when Long appears to a passer-by, this appearance would occur in any of a number of guises.³¹ It feels a little childish of me, perhaps it recalls my theatre background and a feeling of make-believe, and it seems not to be an interest of Long himself, but I am intrigued by, and derive some kind of enjoyment from, the idea of the non-appearance-as-art-to-(human)passers-by of Long’s performances. Why theatre would be

³⁰ This project engages locomotion as technique and technology, that is, in Wills’s terms, as occurring ‘in the back’ (2008: 12), that is, in ways other than the foreseeable or conscious, Wills writes,

according to the model of the human animal, of human animal articulation... the turn would be the deviation that occurs—naturally as it were—within the seemingly automatic advance of ambulation or locomotion. It turns as it walks. Technology as mechanicity is located—not for the first time but in a particularly explicit way, that is to say, as fundamental relation to the earth as exteriority—in the step. In walking, one, the human, any given biped, is with each step correcting its bearing, limping from one foot to the other, realigning its centre of gravity, compensating for the disequilibrium of each movement, as it were turning one way then the other in order to advance. The particular importance of the privilege I am giving to the turn resides, therefore, in its sense of a departure that is also a detour, a deviation, a divergence into difference. We will imagine the human turning as it walks, deviating from its forward path in order, precisely, to move forward, advancing necessarily askew (2008: 4).

³¹ In her essay ‘Walking in Circles’ within *Richard Long: Walking in circles* (1994) Anne Seymour writes that Long ‘is capable of sustaining many roles as well as that of artist, including traveller, explorer, pilgrim, shaman, magician, peripatetic poet, hill-walker and ordinary twentieth-century person from Bristol’ (7).

linked with childishness, and what ‘theatre’ and ‘childishness’ would mean here should themselves be questioned, but I am unable to pursue that here. Perhaps as someone who reads the book *Richard Long: Walking in circles*, and so sensing such a play of guises, I imagine myself to be ‘under’ the cover. However, a play of guises would be happening as the appearing of everyone, each time, as who or what they are. It seems that Long is not ‘under-cover’ in the way I will discuss of the under-cover-agent performing reconnaissance that I will discuss in Chapter Four. Perhaps in appearing as a hiker Long is a consummate actor. I don’t know to what extent, if at all, that Long decides to conceal or secrete the fact that what he is doing in his performances is, in part, producing a trace or document that is to be exhibited or published. ‘Walking’—whatever that is—is only one part of Long’s performances. Long often arranges found objects, such as stones. Long produces photographs and text works that would be ‘documents’ of these performances. The other general mode of Long’s practice, subsequent to the walk, might be photographic, textual and material ‘exhibitions’, or ‘publications’ in the form of books. As far as I know, Long has never exhibited or published documents of a walk that is yet to be undertaken. And as far as I know, Long has not performed a performance/walk as a concurrent exhibition or publication of itself, for example like my performances for invited human others. Alternatively, one might say that Long’s performances are exhibited or published concurrently to anyone who, and anything that, happens to be ‘there’. These are questions of the temporal and spatial limits of Long’s performances and performances in general, and also questions of the relation between ‘nature’ and technology, such as the technology of *writing* in the sense that Derrida and others engage it. Captions to photographs in *Richard Long: Walking in circles*, give dates, locations, and sometimes a brief description of the route—a performance ‘script’. Aside from much else, Long’s projects raise again and again questions of the relation between ‘performance’ and ‘recording’ in relation to naming, history, and economy. Thus there is, in very broad terms, some analogy between the exhibition or publication modes of Long’s practice and this exegesis as a combination of text and photographic images. I will explore relations of ‘performance,’ ‘document,’ ‘text,’ and ‘photograph’ in relation to performances in Chapter Two. Long’s arranging of found objects, or—in the terms I will propose—Long’s choreography of himself with and among ‘belongings’ or ‘be-Long-ings’, are one inspiration for my arranging of, or choreographies among, ‘belongings;’ even as such arranging in my practice tends to occur with different kinds of locales and materials, including those I bring with me and those I find ‘there’ in the locale, to the locales and materials of Long’s practice. Each practice involves the movement of bodies between landmarks and staging posts; the arranging of belongings; and the production of still photography and texts. As I will explore in Chapter Two, my practice has tended to hold or arrange the camera in ways that alter what might be described as ‘normal’ or ‘normative’ operations of a camera in relation to ‘performance’ and ‘recording.’

Long's walks might be said to be guided by a script or planned route. Episodes of my practice, Hampton and Neath's *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* (2012), and Nachbar's *Incidental Journey* (2006) and *The Walk* (2012), participate in what might be called the genre of 'the guided walk.' One genealogical thread of the 'guided walk' links with what Allan Kaprow describes in the essay 'Pinpointing Happenings,' republished in *The Blurring of Art and Life* (1993), as the 'Guided Tour or Pied Piper kind of Happening,' in which 'A selected group of people is led through the countryside or around a city, through buildings, backyards, parks, and shops. They observe things, are given instructions, are lectured to, discover things happening to them' (86). I suggest that the discussions of this exegesis open many of the processes Kaprow refers to in this passage. I propose that this project engages with, and at times tests limits of, leading and being-led, through, perhaps most prominently, explorations of *tethering*. I propose that this project explores instruction, instructing and being-instructed through; explorations of *tethering* and the 'audio-vocal-verbal', explorations of *turning*, choreography, and interpellation, and exploration within episodes among kinds of 'instruction', 'request' and 'suggestion'. In relation to Kaprow's suggestion that the members of the 'selected group' 'observe things,' Chapter Three, in its engagements with appearance and enigma, explores observing and a sense of participation in which would occur a dissolution of the opposition between observer and observed. Chapter Three's section on the 'under-cover-agent' explores being-observed or observing-oneself. The section in Chapter Three 'The Walk: Becoming Visible and Becoming A Group' explores the idea of a *group* in footpath locales in response to Esther Pilkington and Martin Nachbar's 'We Always Arrive in the Theatre on Foot: A walk to the theatre in sixteen steps and eighteen footnotes' (2012). In Kaprow's account, the group is 'selected'. This exegesis does not engage at length with questions concerning the selection of the bodies, people, or 'groups' of people, or locales that participate in, pass-by, attend-to or are tethered-with the practices I discuss. However, questions of selection are, in part, questions of passing and attending, and interiorizings-exteriorizings, that I discuss in Chapter Two; and I pick up questions of interiorizings-exteriorizings in relation to 'Responsibility' in Chapter Four. The processes of invitation and booking that my practice has explored perhaps draw attention to questions of selection of 'attendeers'—a neologism, a composite of 'attendees' and 'attenders', which I will introduce in Chapter Two—though in an as-yet imprecise way. Episodes with a 'finishing time' might tend to remark relations between chance and selection insofar as attendeers' times of arrival into the vicinity of the episode, or at least, into the vicinity of the location named as the finishing location, and the direction from which they arrive, often become key initial determinants of differentiation—and thus selection—in relation to the 'group' of attendeers in general.

In 'The Manoeuvre' (2010), Tim Brennan discusses his 'A Luddite Manoeuvre' within the ROAM festival in Loughborough in 2008.³² Brennan notes that since 1994 he has 'been developing' what he terms 'manoeuvres' that have emerged out of his 'manipulation of the guided-walk form' (80). As with the works of Nachbar I will discuss (and as with the work of Allan Kaprow [1994] I briefly outlined above) I have not attended Brennan's practice 'in-person', and attend (to) 'the manoeuvre' in the mode of reading, and writing in response to, the artist's written account of their practice.

Brennan writes:

As a mode of 'discursive performance', each 'manoeuvre' has involved my recitation of quotations to targeted groups of participant walkers at various intervals along a route. I have designated each route and selected and sequenced quotations prior to each performance. Routes have been defined in urban, rural and domestic contexts (towns, countryside, parks and gardens)... At the outset, walkers understand that their own behaviour en route contributes to the overall work. At times walkers are invited to read texts aloud and to respond, as volunteers.

Each quote is selected in combination with a particular stopping or recitation point (station) en route. Quotes might be harmonious or discordant with each location and are not obligated to a literal illustration of 'history' or environment. I select quotations in response to 'signs' I have noted during a research period. These can be ephemeral or permanent fixtures along the way. They can be ideologically self-conscious (e.g. a monument) or ideologically unselfconscious (e.g. detritus, the weather, etc.). (80)

Brennan's account produces several resonances and several contrasts between manoeuvres and my episodes. Manoeuvres put into play 'recitation' at 'intervals along a route', and this exegesis—provoked in this connection particularly by writings of Derrida—engages with relations between citing and siting or 'the there'. The exegesis explores such ideas in Chapter Two, particularly in 'Misfitting of the Template' and 'By-play'. The expression 'targeted groups' suggests to me that Brennan may have selected the route, stations, and texts with a particular group of people in mind—if not selected the route, stations and texts *for* that particular group of people. Brennan does not discuss the criteria for 'targeting', but perhaps 'targets' the group insofar as he feels that the people have some particular relation to the route he plans to traverse and the places he plans to designate as 'stations'. Thus, perhaps to some extent the group is formed through Brennan's targeting, and the people in question may or may not have felt themselves to be a group prior to the manoeuvre, though participants may or may not feel themselves to be in a group during or after the manoeuvre. To use an expression of Bruns that I will introduce in Chapter Two, 'basic units' (2002: 209) of a manoeuvre might be: route, stations, texts, Brennan, and participants/group. If so, there emerge

³² In 'Walking Across Disciplines: From ethnography to arts practice,' (2010) their Guest Editor's Introduction to the issue of *Visual Studies* of which Brennan's article is part, Sarah Pink, Phil Hubbard, Maggie O'Neill and Alan Radley introduce ROAM. This was a 'walking arts weekend' (1) that occurred in March 2008 in Loughborough, The United Kingdom. It was organized by the Arts Programme RADAR at Loughborough University, and included contributions from 'seven artists and artist-groups' (1) including Brennan, each of whom led a walking event.

questions of the relation of the ‘basic units’. With questions of targeting, selection, and the combination of what I suggested as ‘basic units’, there emerge questions of who or what a manoeuvre may be ‘for’—questions of the extent to which a manoeuvre is for the texts, the group, the route, Brennan, the stations and so on.³³ This invites me to consider such questions in relation to episodes of my practice, and I hope the ‘Responsibility’ section of Chapter Four goes some way to addressing such questions. Perhaps Brennan may have selected particular groups of people *for* particular stations, texts, or a particular route. In Brennan’s account, his practice of manoeuvres has involved ‘targeting’ ‘groups’ and ‘selecting’ ‘routes’. The sense of ‘targeted groups’ might be explored along similar lines to those initial suggestions I made in relation to ‘selection’ in Kaprow’s (1994) description of the ‘*Guided Tour* or *Pied Piper* kind of Happening’ above. I suggest that each station would also be a designated (and perhaps ‘stationary’) target, and for me this would bring into play choreographic questions of rendezvous, trajectories, hitting or landing, and missing. It seems that the participants traverse the route with Brennan station-to-station, although Brennan’s description leaves open the possibility that differently targeted groups meet the manoeuvre at different stations or other places along the route. In my practice I have tried a number of ways of exploring rendezvous, and differentiations among attendees stemming from differing temporal and spatial relations to the episode, including giving different attendees different starting times and locations to meet the episode. The episodes with a finishing time and location and without a starting time, such as *Rinses* and *Prickles* within Bundle A of *Oct Dec Series* (2011), which I discuss towards the end of the ‘Locales’ section of Chapter Two, are a way I have explored a relation between a punctual temporal ‘point’ and a punctual spatial ‘point’.

If, as Wills (2008) suggests, progress tends to be thought by humans as forward movement, perhaps Brennan’s phrase ‘along a route’ might suggest a movement or ‘progression’ ‘forward,’ or a movement that is primarily one-way. However, Brennan suggests the following example of how he ‘selected a quote in combination with a... station’ (80) on *A Luddite Manoeuvre*: ‘the reading of an historical reference to the term “parliament” (the Icelandic “Ting”) outside the town’s “Iceland” (supermarket) and former site of the Luddite “job”’ (80). Because history or the past might each be thought as, for example, behind, in front of, around, or in me, the relation of quotation and station would complicate a sense of forward progression or one-way movement. Nevertheless, there would seem to be a strong contrast between the movements occurring in manoeuvres and episodes of my practice. The exegesis returns to the proposition that episodes perform turnings-back or relays to-

³³ In registering a question of who or what a manoeuvre or episode is ‘for’, I’m picking up on, in a very general and imprecise way, part of Maria O’Connor’s ‘Night Drifts’ (2012). ‘Night Drifts’ explores, according to Joe Kelleher in ‘Arriving Here Outside: On punctuality and the passerby’ (2012), ‘the prepositionality of any of our performances.... what it means, if anything, to write ‘to’ or ‘for’ another person’ (2).

and-fro among landmarks or among different stationed attendeers, as well different kinds of (self-) interruptions. Brennan reports that he ‘designated’ the route prior to the performance. The word ‘designated’ might also suggest that the participants may also know the intended route in advance, or be informed of it ‘at the outset’ (80)—although Brennan does not explicitly state this. ‘Designation’ raises the question, in relation to the designated route and stations, of the promise, (pre-)script, or choreography in relation to what happens, this would have some relation to what I discuss in relation to *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* (2012) in the section ‘Misfitting of the Template’ in Chapter Two, ‘the template’ and ‘the contingent’. While I prepare a possible route that an episode of my practice may take, the route the episode actually takes is contingent upon comings and goings in the locale, qualities and quantities that cannot be foreseen.³⁴

To offer an oversimplified formulation of the relation between episodes of my practice and Brennan’s manoeuvres, I suggest that my practice tends to problematize or, at least, explore in its locales, the possibility of meeting, moving, stationing, speaking and citing, whereas Brennan’s manoeuvres might perhaps be more concerned with what might occur when meeting and sharing a route, stations, and the recitation of a text are—if not taken as unproblematic or given—at least engaged as ‘basic units’ in what I will tentatively call syntheses, or, at least, creative relatings or graftings, of parts or fragments. Brennan reports, ‘at the outset, walkers understand that their own behaviour en route contributes to the overall work. At times walkers are invited to read texts aloud

³⁴ My most recent performance project *Posteering* (2013a), with contemporary art project space The Physics Room in Christchurch New Zealand, completed just prior to submission of the amended exegesis, incorporated six performance ‘passages’. *Orbits*, one of the passages, was structured in a way perhaps more similar to Brennan’s manoeuvres than were my previous ‘episodes’, insofar as I decided, and designated to myself and the Physics Room programmes manager, a route in advance with thirteen ‘Meeting Locations’ within a day over a period of time approximately corresponding to the opening hours of The Physics Room with a built-in delay to allow for the time I expected it to take for a person to walk from The Physics Room to a Meeting Location. *Orbits* did not quite ‘orbit’ The Physics Room, but performed a loop-and-a-bit, one part of which was close to The Physics Room’s street entrance. Each Meeting Location was within a six or seven-minute walk of The Physics Room. Potential attendeers were informed on The Physics Room’s facebook page: ‘To attend *Orbits*, please ask for directions at The Physics Room front desk between 10am and 5pm on the day.’ When a person arrived at the front desk and asked about *Orbits*, the volunteer or staff member was to give the person a map that only gave the title, time, and location of the next Meeting Location. This meant that, in attempting to fulfil the promise of a Meeting Location, and for each Meeting Location not knowing whether or not someone would be coming to meet *Orbits*, for the most part I kept to the route I had designated in the sense that I remained close enough to the Meeting Location to see it a few minutes before, and for around ten minutes immediately after, the meeting time. However, my ‘route’ between ‘Meeting Locations’ was at times convoluted and indirect. Thinking of Brennan’s targeted group, *Orbits* was perhaps a moving target. Insofar as I adhered to a route decided in advance, it seems that *Orbits* was more like Brennan’s manoeuvres than my previous episodes. However, in contrast to manoeuvres the participants did not know the route taken by *Orbits*, and I did not strictly plan in advance the digressions I would take between ‘Meeting Locations’. I hope the fact that attendeers (a composite of ‘attendeec’ and ‘attender’ that I will introduce in Chapter Two) did not know the route may have induced, or will induce in future, ‘documentation’ processes—that different attendeers might discuss their differing encounters within *Orbits*.

and to respond, as volunteers' (80). What episodes ask or demand of attendees might in some ways tend to be more ambiguous than what this quotation suggests of manoeuvres. However, that is not to say that the other kinds of demands or requests manoeuvres make of their participants are any less ambiguous than what episodes ask or demand of attendees. There may in manoeuvres occur, at some level, a kind of clarity as to what is 'asked' of participants, but there may be much ambiguity as to what that 'asking' means, does, or induces. As I have outlined above, in each of the subsequent Chapters I will explore processes within my practice and practices of others that open questions of participation.

Of the relation between station and text, and the example I quoted above, Brennan writes:

In post-modern (amnesiac) terms this would suggest a collision of textual fragments that conspire to arrive at the cultural surfacings of a place. This would be a world in which all ingredients are taken in equal measure. Nevertheless, the manoeuvre form is a manipulation of a much older genealogy, being rooted (remembered) in approaches to the landscape and prospect poem and at a further stage in the theological formation of the sacred way (Via Dolorosa). In this sense, each text and each station combine as discrete objects of inspection (monads) along a traversed (nomadic) line. (80)

'Cultural surfacings', within the reference-field of this project, recalls Seremetakis's (1994) and Lepecki's (2006) characterizations of 'the still act.' As I noted in the section 'Dance and Dance Studies' above, Seremetakis suggests, 'Stillness is the moment when the buried, the discarded, and the forgotten escape to the social surface of awareness like life-supporting oxygen. It is the moment of exit from historical dust' (1994: 12). If there is some commonality in relation to 'surfacings,' between what Brennan suggests of the 'manoeuvre'—and perhaps the stilled or 'stationed' manoeuvre—and what Seremetakis and Lepecki respectively suggest of 'the still act,' I suggest that a similar differentiation between Brennan's 'manoeuvre' and this project may be made as that I suggested above in relation to the 'still act.' That is, this project, particularly in Chapter Three in its engagement with Levinas's RS, is more concerned with exploring a relation to a kind of suspension of the category of history, than with processes that might induce different surfacings of layers of history. However, one of the ways this project engages with history is that, as I suggested in that section, perhaps exploring such an idea of an undoing—or foundering—of foundation might allow a shifting of sedimented understandings of participation in performance.

In 'LIGNA: The Call of the mall',³⁵ Ole Frahm, member of the group LIGNA, discusses 'Radioballett', a 'format' developed by LIGNA in 2002, in which participants listen to a radio broadcast via headphones. Frahm explains that 'Radioballett... is a programme, a radio drama that proposes observations, gestures and movements' (87). Katrin Ullmann, on The Goethe Institut's

³⁵ Frahm notes that the title of this article comes in part from Paco Underhill's *Call of the Mall* (2004).

webpage on LIGNA writes, 'In shows, performative interventions and installations, they explore the potential for action on the part of collectives that form diffuse and temporary associations.'³⁶

Ullmann suggests that the 'radio ballet' 'genre' was devised for 'the increasingly controlled public domain', in radio ballet, 'a choreography of forbidden and excluded gestures is broadcast on the radio; the listeners bring them back en masse and in uncontrollable fashion.' Listeners or participants of radio ballet listen to LIGNA's radio broadcast via headphones. I suggest that the format explores a translating of a verbal radio choreographic script into the gestures of singular bodies that at times form a kind of collective body. Frahm suggests:

Broadcast in the mall... the dispersed listeners are as invisible as the FM radio waves. Only if they do what the radio voices propose do they become visible, acting beyond the dichotomy between the consumer and the mall rat. The quite normal interruption of walking in front of a shop window gains a different quality when eighty people stop synchronously. (87)

The radio ballet format thus explores possibilities of a dispersed collective. The dispersal first appears as one of empirical distance: distances between bodies that are in principle measurable, while they may, to use terms I will introduce in Chapter Two, be 'audio-vocally-verbally' 'tethered' to each other and to LIGNA by the radio voice and radio waves. In the terms of this project that I will also introduce in Chapter Two, the listener's assenting to a proposal is likely to induce with respect to themselves, a *turning* (that would also be, by proxy as it were, a *tuning in*), of passers-by into attendee(s), or a turning or tuning of passing into attending. Frahm suggests of radio ballet in the shopping mall, 'The active participation of the listeners reflects on the precondition of the individualization the consumers are looking for' (87). In assenting to the radio-earphone call, the listener-performer is likely to become both individualized, and collectivized as a member of the temporary dispersed collective of those making a similar gesture. Frahm suggests:

The simple gesture of opening the palm, like someone who receives something, might evoke not only the fairy tale *Stermentale* [The Star Money] but also the fact that beggars are generally excluded from the mall. A short applause by dispersed people is quite audible, but the source is not to be seen. Thus the Radioballett does not become part of the events the mall produces from day to day to entertain and to expel boredom. Staying below the radar of the CCTV cameras and Security, the *Radioballett* enables a certain agency. The listeners research the rules and norms that are established in the mall, imagine other possible usages of this homogeneous space, and parody not only the gestures that are present in the mall but also the ideological apparatus of interpellation that the mall provides. The communion of

³⁶ Available at <http://www.goethe.de/kue/the/pur/lig/enindex.htm>. Ullman reports that the group comprises Frahm, Michael Hueners, Torsten Michaelsen. Ullman also reports Bertolt Brecht's 'radio theory from the late 1920s' as [t]he fundamental basis' for LIGNA's work.

While Ullmann renders Radioballett as radio ballet, Frahm (2011) retains Radioballett within the English text. Issues of coding, translating (not only from a verbal radio choreographic script into the gestures of singular and collective bodies), and 'natural' languages appear particularly prominent in the Radioballett/radio ballet format.

consumption is transformed in the invisible conspiracy of performers who never come together as a community but act dispersed and synchronous at the same time. (87)

Unlike radio ballet, in this case occurring in the private and commercial space of the mall, I have predominantly carried out episodes of my practice in what are, nominally at least, 'public' spaces. LIGNA's engagement thus has a different relation to property and commerce. If almost everyone has a right to be in a public space, who has a right to be in a mall? A mall may desire me to enter even if I have no intention of making a purchase, insofar as it bets that I will not reduce the chance that others will make a purchase, and bets on the formation of a desire to purchase once I'm there. If I was to map the radio ballet format onto the format of my episodes, the listeners might correspond to attendeers, and the voice on the radio might correspond to 'me.' It seems unlikely that a passer-by-becoming-attendeer of radio ballet would 'detect' the deviant behaviour of the listener or attendee to have been proposed via the headphones, unless the passer-by-becoming-attendeer notices headphones as a common feature of the dispersed radio ballet collective. If so, the inducer of the deviation from normality would be less able to be identified by a passer-by-becoming-attendeer than in an episode in which such a person might identify 'me' as such an inducer—and as the place of the deviant behaviour of whatever kind. However, to identify a person as the locus of deviance is not the same as to see the 'source' of the deviance. The phrase 'staying below the radar' has much resonance with the guises of Richard Long I discussed above, and with feeling I will discuss in Chapter Three of the under-cover-agent. If a passer-by-becoming-attendeer shifts from noticing one person making a deviant gesture, to noticing that variations of this deviant gesture are being performed concurrently by a dispersed collective, it is not possible to say whether or not this would lead them to be more or less interested, concerned, frightened, or amused. As with episodes of my practice, the kind and quality of the gesture in question remains crucial. Perhaps noticing that more than one person is doing the gesture might lead to a categorization 'art-project' or 'stunt'. Or, depending on the mall and the gesture, a collective performing of a deviant gesture might suggest the category of 'protest, which I should join with, oppose, or get away from'. It is not clear how Frahm is able to suggest that there occurs a 'communion of consumption' but not a 'community' of performers in Radioballett. Frahm continues:

To obey the proposals of the radio voices means to exhibit the call of the mall and its theological implications. The invisible ideological apparatus of the mall becomes visible. The radio apparatus stays invisible, clear only to those who are listening, thus parodying the surveillance by CCTV. The aim of the *Radioballett* is not to produce consciousness but to rethink the ideological apparatus that produces subjectivity. By excluding all deviant gestures from the mall, the implied subjectivities are also excluded. The *Radioballett* evokes these subjectivities as well as a sense of a different mode of production: transient, temporary, volatile – and parodic – in a way to portray humour, colour, movement, lightheartedness. (88)

This is an enticing proposal. But in what sense would the ideological apparatus of the mall become 'visible'? What would be the good in it becoming 'visible'? I am unable to pursue these questions of ideology and ideological mall apparatuses here. The feelings Frahm suggests: 'humour' and

'lightheartedness' are of interest in relation to episodes of my practice. To a passer-by-becoming-attendeer, perhaps the radio ballet format would tend to produce occurrences that are curious and not disturbing. If so, such performances would bypass some of the problems or problematics of relations between episodes of my practice and passers-by-becoming-concerned-attendeers that I explore in the section 'Responsibility' of Chapter Four. It is conceivable that the radio ballet format could induce listeners to perform deviant gestures that are unsettling, rather than light-hearted, for passers-by in the mall. There are any number of tones or characters of 'deviant gesture'. If on a footpath I notice a 'deviant gesture' I may tend to be more unsettled than if I saw the same 'deviant gesture' in a mall, because, while I know that the footpath is policed, I know that the mall is policed also by the mall security, and thus my feeling of responsibility to, for, or in relation to he or she who is making a 'deviant gesture' that is concerning and not inducing in me feelings of light-heartedness, might tend to be ameliorated if I think, 'Let the person whose job it is to police the mall take care of the deviance'.

This Exegesis

As I discussed above, Cull, Mullarkey and Minors's (2012) question whether philosophy is 'a kind of performance', and Cull (2013) call us to attend to philosophy's embodiment. As I also outlined above, Kharoubi (2011) proposes a first, 'immanent interpretation' of performance philosophy, 'where Theatre Arts (performance, dance, textual theatre) can be said to exude a philosophy *per se*, construed as a form of gestural praxis: the aim would hitherto be to define what this practical philosophy may consist in' (1). Read in relation to one another, these suggestions call me to encounter an aiming-at-definition, as itself an exuding of a embodied or bodily 'gestural praxis.' In this mode the 'hitherto' might occur as a pivot, or relay to-and-fro. One response to such an immanent interpretation of performance philosophy would be, as Cull suggests, to attend to philosophy's modes of embodiment. Insofar as this exegesis is provoked by Wills's dorsality, Derrida's deconstruction, and Levinas's ethics as first philosophy, *one* such response may be to aim in this exegesis to gesture towards an excess-to-definition or prior-to-definition that interrupts, (or in Levinas's terms as *saying*, would perhaps have interrupted), defining. This might be called a 'dis-aim' that interrupts, (or as *saying*, would perhaps have interrupted), aim. However, this exegesis makes no claim to anything near the level of sophistication of such performances occurring in Levinas's, Wills's, or Derrida's texts. That is *not quite* to say that this exegesis does not attempt a mode of performativity or performance as a philosophical engagement. There occurs a resemblance between this exegesis and episodes of my performance practice, most prominently in referring forwards and backwards in the text. In part this is an attempt to cross-reference as a way of trying to rigorously explore the reference-field. I suggest this also contributes to a feeling that this exegesis, as one of the examiners reports put it, is a 'parallel episode' to my performance practice. At some level there also

occurs a resemblance between the structure of the exegesis, episodes of my practice, and Levinas's writing of *OB* (again, I am not suggesting that this exegesis or the performance practice approach the level of sophistication, or the significance, of *OB*).

There is a sense that the performance practices I discuss are *invented* in this exegesis. The sense of 'invention' I aim to engage is the etymological sense Gregory Ulmer explores in *Heuretics: The Logic of invention* (1994), as a finding of what was already there, picking up on the sense of *inventio* as the commonplaces of a culture. An in-vent-egesis would thus have something in common with the mode Lepecki (2006) suggests of the still-act. With 'invention' I also aim to suggest a performative character of the exegesis. In *Giving an Account of Oneself* (2005), Butler explores the sense in which a subject can bear witness to itself and its actions in the world, bringing into relation different strands of contemporary philosophy and cultural theory including the work of Theodor Adorno, Michel Foucault, Jean LaPlanche, Jacques Lacan, and Levinas, among others. Butler suggests that a number of conditions make the subject opaque to itself, and that this opacity is a ground or unground of ethics on the basis that one must recognize limits of what one can know about oneself, and that this recognition opens a possibility for recognizing others as also conditioned by opacity to themselves. Butler summarizes the problems of giving an account of oneself as follows:

There is (1) a non-narrativizable *exposure* that establishes my singularity, and there are (2) *primary relations*, irrecoverable, that form lasting and recurrent impressions in the history of my life, and so (3) a history that establishes my *partial opacity* to myself. Lastly, there are (4) *norms* that facilitate my telling about myself but that I do not author and that render me substitutable at the very moment I seek to establish the history of my singularity. This last dispossession in language is intensified by the fact that I give an account of myself to someone, so that the narrative structure of my account is superseded by (5) the *structure of address* in which it takes place. (39)

Butler combines psychoanalytic theory concerning primary relations and the unconscious with normativity in the work of Foucault, and concepts that align with Levinasian ethics of an exposure that exceeds my capacity to report, and the addressing of myself to an other which produces, or invents, 'me'. Butler's engagement thus suggests that any account-giving occurs as a production-alteration of that accounted for. While Levinas insists on the asymmetricality of the relation to the other radically other than me, (which nonetheless for the most part in Levinas's writings, involves my recognition of the other as *human* other), Butler takes a positive ethical idea stemming from an idea of recognition that the other is like me, conditioned by a non-knowability with respect to oneself. That is, if I recognize that I am in some sense opaque to myself; then there is an implication that the other must be conditioned by the same conditions of opacity. Therefore I should exercise humility in my relations with others, for example acknowledging that neither I, nor the other, can

be consistent with ourselves.³⁷ I suggest that, at times, the borders or relations between who or what I recognize as ‘other’ and who or what I recognize as ‘me’, and the regime or processes of recognizability or communicability between these, are called into question within the performance practices I discuss. Such borders or relations are also called into question in different ways in Butler’s, Levinas’s and Derrida’s writings among others. Butler’s suggestion, that norms precondition or, to borrow from Read (2008: 170), ‘preform,’ my account, aligns with Wills’s suggestion of the necessity of the figurative or tropological within philosophy insofar as both suggest that truth is always mediated. This suggests that norms or figures conditioning the production of the true should in some way be made to ‘appear’, be remarked or be contested, or ‘appear’ in being contested, so that their historical character might in some way be shown such that other possibilities might be tried.

This exegesis occurs as a document submitted before the law of the examination and the university. If the law is something to which everyone submits, to the extent that it is concerned with Levinas’s ethics, this project is concerned with that which is temporally before the law, prior to the ‘in-common’ of law. In this sense, everyone would have submitted to ethics before the law. In such a submission there would perhaps have occurred a relation between what Levinas discusses in *OB* as a ‘recurrence’, singularized in responsibility, and an ‘anyone’ or anonymity. For Wills, the ‘I’ might be thought of as being spatially ‘before’ Levinas’s other as the other calls the ‘I’ to responsibility from behind: the ‘I’ turns back into responsibility. Such a turning back would also be temporal, as an interruption of chronology ‘back’ into diachrony. This project is before the entrance to the university in submission or in examination for entry. The doorkeeper has so far said ‘not yet’. But in Kafka’s parable *Before the Law*, which Derrida quotes in full and discusses in ‘Before the Law’ (1992a), there is according to the doorkeeper, a succession of doors, and unlike at Brennan’s stations, each doorkeeper is stronger than the last. The project is called both to bring itself to conclusion and remain before the law.

³⁷ One formulation of the way that norms make the ‘I’ substitutable is Agamben’s formulation of witnessing in *Remnants of Auschwitz* (2000). Agamben considers the testimony of survivors of concentration camps with regard to the figure of the ‘*Muselmann*’, the term used for the person in the camps who had reached such a state of deprivation as being unable to speak, who did not respond to her environment, and appeared to have become ‘inhuman’ (47). Agamben formulates the relation between the individual as a living being, a physiological organism, and as a speaking being, an ‘I’. For Agamben, there is a caesura between the living being and the speaking being; ‘I’ refers only to an event of speech. For Agamben, this caesura allows for the possibility of testimony. Agamben formulates the subject as witness, between the living being and the speaking being, as s/he who is located to testify for the living being, to speak for someone else who cannot speak; where at the same time the speaking being’s appropriation of language is also its expropriation by language. In relation to Butler’s formulation, I read appropriation-expropriation, of the ‘I’, as in some way corresponding to a norm that ‘renders me substitutable’.

Considering Cull's proposal of 'performance as philosophy', which, for Cull, might challenge philosophy to engage with its own performance and its own materiality, what is the place or the movement of (this) exegesis in this project? The project is before the law of the examination, the exegesis is called: 'explain!'. I aim to clearly explain how this project contributes to the fields of performance studies, contemporary arts, and performance philosophy. Writings of Derrida, Wills and Levinas each provoke or tempt, but also demand that this exegesis attend to its own materiality as *writing*, or to its taking place in a relation of *saying* and *said*. Rather than being straightforward, to the extent that it engages dorsally it responds to a technology or ethics within itself of bending or bending-back. Etymologically, according to the OED, exegesis is to interpret-out, guide-out or lead-out. This would include a movement from situations or processes 'in' the practice to the extent that there occurs an interiorizing of the practice, 'out' to places or fields of academic research involving journals, books, and the conversations or debates occurring among them. It needs to translate or mediate between these different places and modes. The exegesis is also a leading-in or 'entegesis' in which I attempt to lead myself, and others, into the practice. The examiners read the exegesis prior to encountering the performance for examination, and commented that reading the exegesis in some way prevented them being 'in' the practice as they might have been without such preparation: perhaps there was a pre-vent-egesis, a pre-empt-egesis, or a premature-egesis. Encountering previous episodes, to the extent that they are remembered, are arguably also kinds of prevention or preemption of modes of encounter within a later episode. This is one way of raising a question of *who* episodes are for. In any episode, among invited attendees there is a range of levels of familiarity with the practice. 'I' might be the most regular 'regular'. The differing of levels of familiarity engender dynamics or interactions among attendees. Episodes occur within modes of contingency such that 'regular' attendees, including myself, experience a level of uncertainty as to what will occur. That I should feel uncertainty and be surprised by what occurs might be crucial to the project if it is to occur as other than a 'return to the Same' (Critchley 1991: 165)³⁸, I will pick up on this issue in Chapter Four.

³⁸ In "'Bois"—Derrida's Final Word on Levinas', Critchley (1991) writes of Derrida's ATVM:

Derrida cannot pay homage to Levinas by giving his own text back to him, he must be cautious to avoid rendering to Levinas what is Levinas's, for in so doing, he would make the ethical relation correspond to the time of the 'rendez-vous... where the Other would render itself up and return to the Same. (1991: 165)

This is a danger that this project is subject to. Critchley then quotes Derrida in ATVM:

I would like to do it faultlessly (*sans faute*), with a 'fault-lessness' (*sans-faute*) that no longer belongs to the time or logic of the rendez-vous. Beyond any possible restitution, there would be need for my gesture to operate without debt, in absolute ingratitude. (1991: 13)

That there may have been a pre-vent-egesis also raises a question of the most useful or productive dissemination or sharing over time of a performance practice across different modes and formats. ‘This exegesis’ is at some distance to ‘the practice’, in some way this exegesis is ‘outside’ the practice but is not absolutely outside it or transcendent to it. This suggests Derrida’s engagement with *the pharmakon* in ‘Plato’s Pharmacy’ (1981a): *writing* as a necessary supplement to speech, both father and son, a drug that is both cure and poison. If there was a pre-vent-egesis, it may be possible to argue that the relation between the practice and the exegesis should have been more opaque, that this exegesis should secrete the practice to enable the practice. Perhaps the possibility of pre-vent-egesis means that in remembering and explaining past practice and anticipating future practice, this exegesis must shift or de-centre the practice, as a technology of turning or an ex-cent-r-egesis. Perhaps it should do so to the extent that I am working in a Derridean-deconstructive mode: aiming, as I outlined in the section ‘Derrida and Deconstruction’ above, to *open* a reading (*Of Grammatology* 1976: 158), and to re-mark how, ‘*It deconstructs it-self. It can be deconstructed. [Ça se déconstruit.]*’ (‘Letter to a Japanese Friend’ (1988a: 4).

Contributions

Firstly, I suggest that this project contributes an original engagement with its philosophical reference-field of selected writings of Derrida, Wills, Levinas and others, to performance studies and performance philosophy. I suggest that the exegesis demonstrates that the project performs a more sustained and in-depth engagement with the selected writings of Levinas that it engages in relation to performance than previous engagements with these texts in the field of performance studies and performance philosophy. If this project is performance philosophy, and if performance philosophy is characterized by mutual affectings of each other of ‘performance’ and ‘philosophy’, this project must by definition offer something to understandings of aspects of its philosophical reference-field. Of most significance, in relation to the writings of Levinas that this project engages, is the exploration in Chapter Three of performance practices in relation to Levinas’s engagement with participation in RS. Perhaps this occurs more in the mode of philosophy as performance than performance *as* philosophy. This project also offers an engagement with questions of the relation of ethics to politics within Levinas’s writing. This has been explored in philosophy, for example in Critchley’s *The Ethics of Deconstruction* (1999b) and *Infinitely Demanding* (2007). I suggest that this project, particularly in ‘Responsibility’ in Chapter Four, *begins* a micro-engagement which resonates or opens up *some* of the concerns Critchley explores in *Infinitely Demanding*, for example of the operation of humour in anarchist political performance, and in so doing expands on aspects of Kharoubi’s

I will consider ATVM and Derrida’s neologism *sérialité* in that text to formulate the operation of *OB* in Chapter Five.

(2011) engagement with writings of Critchley and Levinas in performance philosophy. I suggest that this project's engagement with *OB* contributes to engagements with philosophy as performance within performance philosophy.

I suggest that the exegesis contributes, most directly in the section 'Dance and Dance Studies', a brief but 'original' engagement with Lepecki's *Exhausting Dance* (2006) in relation to dance and choreography and Lepecki's engagement with Seremetakis's (1994) 'still-act'. I suggest that this project offers an 'original' engagement with choreography through its engagement with my practice and Hampton and Neath's *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* (2012), Wills's (2008) engagement with 'dorsality' and prosthetics, writings of Derrida in relation to re-cording, and Massumi's writing on becoming and belonging. This engagement with choreography takes place most deliberately in Chapter Two: Becoming and Belonging. I suggest that the project puts aspects of Wills's *Dorsality* (2008)—which I suggest the exegesis shows has much to offer engagements with techniques and technologies of dance—into conversation with choreography, performance studies and performance philosophy within a practice-led performance as research project. I suggest that the project invents a performance practice that, as far as I know, differs in important and productive ways from other related performance practices. I suggest that ways it differs from related practices include: the difficulty of distinguishing it from life in general and so the opening of questions of appearance and enigma; the way that choreographically it opens a question of communicability through interruption and stammering, its engagement with spatial and temporal punctuality in its experimentation with 'finishing time'; and its opening of an exegetical exploration of the reference-field of works of Hampton and Neath (for example in terms of tethering and the audio-vocal-verbal), Nachbar, LIGNA, the manoeuvres of Tim Brennan, and philosophical writings of Wills, Levinas, Derrida, Massumi and others. This claim-staking leads to the question of what, and to whom, a practice-led, performance as research PhD would aim to contribute at all. If it is practice-led, then perhaps one contribution is that it proposes and tests a 'novel' model of practice that others might appropriate, and I suggest that this is also a contribution this project may make.

Two: Becoming and Belonging

This chapter explores becoming and belonging within the practices I discuss in this exegesis, that have been introduced in Chapter One. Becoming and belonging are discussed in relation to selected writings of Brian Massumi, Jacques Derrida, David Wills, and Jean-Luc Nancy, though primarily this chapter attends to locale or the *there* of the performance practices, from within the different encounters I have in and with these practices. This chapter's concern with *becoming* is an exploration of how change or differing occurs in these practices, and the meanings of this change. The key figures or modes of *becoming* I will explore are *passing* and *turning*. This chapter's concern with *belonging* begins with an exploration of processes that, I will argue, bring about some among the 'who-there' and some of the 'what-there' in these practices. It folds an engagement with *passing*, *attending*, *framing*, *tethering*, *prosthetics*, and *by-play* into an exploration of Massumi's (2002) writing of a relationality that would precede the terms related. In this sense this chapter works with a co-belonging of becoming and belonging.

Passing and Attending

This chapter begins with an exploration of *passing* and *attending*, which I explore, as I outlined in the Introduction, as something like 'quasitranscendental' structures. However, I am not working in a rigorously Heideggerian or Derridean mode. Initially, this exploration concerns relations among *passers-by* and *attenders*, or *passings-by* and *attendings*. An initial definition of a passer-by is a someone-who or something that is *capable* of attending-to an instance of my or others' practices, a someone-who or something that is not, or does not appear to be, attending-to it, but *might* do so. Similarly, an initial definition of a *passing-by* is a passing capability or potentiality for attending-to. An initial definition of an *attender* is someone-who or something that is *attending-to* an instance of others' or my practices—or, at least, appears to be attending-to them, whether or not they would call what they are doing 'attending-to' a 'performance practice'. With the nominal forms *attender* and *passer-by* I aim to register a sense of the one who attends or passes-by—carrying with this the sense of a person or subject—but more generally it is to register a body. With the verbal forms *passing-by* or *passings-by* and *attending* or *attendings*, I aim to register an anonymity of a thing's doing, or an anonymity of an occurrence *passing through* a body or *prosthetic* linkage to bodies. I am exploring such anonymity of a thing's doing as occurring other than, or in excess of, the intentional activity of a knowing-subject. In relation to this, I am taking recourse to Wills's writing in *Dorsality* of an automaticity of the *dorsal* as 'technology in the back' (12) as I outlined in the Introduction. Wills's writing of *dorsality* engages senses of becoming as *turning* that I will come back to.

Another way to register the coming about of any *attender* through a kind of anonymity of *attending*, or to register the co-belonging of she or he *who* attends with an anonymous or *dorsal* attending, might be to consider a composite of the ‘passive’ *attende* and the ‘active’ *attender* as *attendeer*. I invent the neologism *attendeer* in my discussion to indicate an exceeding of intention within attending, a relation of passivity and activity in who or what attends.³⁹ By the same token, a composite of *passee-by* and *passer-by* is *passee-by*. However, as passivity is already suggested in *pass* I will mostly work with ‘passer-by’.⁴⁰ *Passee-by* might suggest an undecidability or indifference of passing-by and being-passed-by. For one, this fits with the fact that passers-by or passees-by of an episode can either be already there in the locale and relatively ‘stationary’, for example, sitting on a bench as the episode *passes into* and alters the locale; or, approach from somewhere else and pass-by, bypass, or pass through the episode, or pass between attendeers. The *passive* sense of *passee-by* might, in a similar way to the passive sense of *attende*, suggest that a *passee-by* or *passer-by*, insofar as s(he) does not

³⁹ According to The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) the suffix –ee was ‘adapted in legal use from Anglo-Norman’, ‘denoting the passive party... the derivatives in –ee have not usually a grammatically passive sense, but denote the ‘indirect object of the [verbs] from which they are derived.’ Available at <http://www.oed.com.czproxy.aut.ac.nz/view/Entry/59615?rskey=LrUfj0&result=3&isAdvanced=false#eid>

As someone who has worked in a performing arts and entertainment organization as an ‘Event Services Attendant’, primarily as a barperson and usher, *attendant* suggests to me someone serving or *waiting on* the audience or attenders of, a ‘performance’ or ‘event’ as an *employee*. The semantic field of *attender* seems to me slightly less determined. I have chosen to ‘work’ with the terms *attender attende* (and the composite *attendeer*, which is not in the OED, as perhaps less determined than *attendant*).

My engagement with ‘attendeers’ picks up on and differs from Jon Foley Sherman’s discussion, in *Performance Research* 16(4), (2011) of his participation as a dancer in Felix Ruckert’s *Consulto* (2003), the first section of which involved ‘duets’ between dancers and what Foley Sherman describes as ‘attendants,’ each duet beginning with the two seated on one of eight pairs of chairs facing each other on the stage of the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) in Chicago, while other ‘attendants,’ who might take up a chair when one became vacant, encountered the duets standing or walking on the stage. Foley Sherman picks up the term ‘attendant,’ substituting this for “‘audience members’ and ‘spectators’” (52), from Di Benedetto’s (2007) ‘Guiding Somatic Responses Within Performative Structures.’ For Foley Sherman, ‘attendant,’ ‘accurately describes the manner in which those not performing nonetheless actively participate in making the performance’ (52). The difference between those ‘performing’ and those ‘not performing,’ Foley Sherman describes, is itself made ambiguous in this scene. The opposition ‘performing’ and ‘not performing,’ while discernible in the scene in relation to the conventional terms ‘performer’ and ‘audience,’ invokes a thinking of the social that is correlative with the one that Di Benedetto’s and Foley Sherman’s ‘attendant,’ usefully displaces. However, Foley Sherman suggests that the *activity* of the attendant differentiates her from a traditional audience member. My exploration in this chapter, but more particularly in Chapters Three, Four and Five, in relation to Levinas’s writings of participation in relation to ‘a fundamental passivity’ (RS 132), (Foley-Sherman himself engages with writings of Levinas in his article), will question the sense in which *activity* would become a hinge between ‘performing’ and ‘not performing’.

⁴⁰ *Passee-by* in its containing of ‘seer’, suggests another semantic field. Chapter Three explores passivity in relation to participation. According to the OED, passion and passivity are etymologically related, from the classical Latin ‘passivus subject to passion or emotion, capable of suffering or feeling’.

auto-originate, auto-motivate, or bring itself to pass, is more originarily a *being-carried-along*.⁴¹ In my exploration I seek to attend to inhuman bodies and processes that might not first appear as capable of *attending-to*, a capability I suggested above as defining *passing-by*. Whether within or outside of the sense of prosthesis I will introduce, it would not be unusual to say, especially within the fields of art and design, that all kinds of ‘inanimate’ bodies converse with us. If these things, processes, or bodies attend, their attendings would differ from those of human animals and other animals. They are innumerable but prominent among them for me are pavements, benches, traffic lights, a number of ‘belongings’ such as my mobile phone, graffiti, metal grates on footpaths, wind and other elements of ‘the weather’.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), the etymology of the verb ‘attend’ traces, via Old French, to the Latin *adlendere* ‘to stretch.’ *Attending* is thus related to the French *attendre*, to wait. Among the senses of an *attender*, according to the OED, is ‘One who gives heed or attention; an observer’, and, ‘He (or that which) attends or waits upon, *esp.* to render service; a ministrant, attendant’. Whereas, an *attendee* is perhaps more passive as, ‘One who (merely) attends a meeting, conference, etc’. As Nancy explores in *Listening* (2007) (which I will explore further in Chapter Five), ‘To listen is *tendre l’oreille*—literally, to stretch the ear’ (5). I will explore the proposition that at times episodes of my practice ‘stretch us out’, in such ways that waiting, and turning-away or becoming-distracted or forgetting the episode, enter into a kind of undecidability or indistinction.⁴² I am proposing the fictional character of an *attendeer* as a way of responding to an ambiguity between attending-*in-and-with*, versus attending-*in*, -*with* and -*to* an episode. An *attendeer* might have made a rendezvous with an episode and thus be attending -*in* or -*with* the episode, corporeally involved in

⁴¹ In his PhD exegesis *Performance Test Labour* (2011), Mark Harvey suggests, in relation to the possibility of his ‘exposition’ within the exegesis of his performance art works, that it is the ‘without delay’ or ‘immediacy of an auto-perception’,

that is most question-worthy, that requires a way or method of enquiry that asks not what is this work that I have done, but how am I as the one who supposedly does this work. How am I? This means how do ‘I’ get carried along in the awhile of what ‘I’ am doing. How goes it with me? We again engage a temporality... as modalities of ‘passing time,’ not as time-passed but as ways this ‘I’ gets carried along. (133)

On my reading, an ‘I’, insofar as it is temporal, would always be carried-along in one way or another, even in being not-carried-along. Perhaps any *passing* implies a being-carried-along. On the following page, Harvey suggests, among ‘fundamental structures for performance’, that ‘performance carries us along in particular ways’ (134). Perhaps the frequent repetitions and re-turns of episodes of my practice, perhaps in part—thinking of Wills’s suggestion that we tend to construe ‘progress’ as movement forward—through frustrations of ‘forward progress’, re-marks such a structure of being-carried-along. I will explore such repetitions and re-turns further in Chapter Five.

⁴² There is thus a link to be explored here with Irit Rogoff’s essay ‘Looking Away: Participations in visual culture’ (2005).



and with it and the locale. At the same time, something undecidable may appear, in a somewhat different way to how it might appear in a ‘conventional’ theatre (supposing such a thing exists), as to whether or not, or the sense in which, an attendee is attending-*to* the episode. By ‘attending-*to*’ I seek to indicate a level or extent, or perhaps a mask, façade, or semblance, of intention or intentionality, and so allow a provisional contrast with an attending-*in-and-with* that might be thought of as occurring prior to or in excess of intentionality.⁴³ My exploration of the performance practices picks up on Nancy’s writing of a *with* that occurs neither as fusion nor absolute exteriority of one thing to another. For Nancy in ‘The Political and/or Politics’, (2012) the *with* occurs as *partage*, ‘division and exchange’. And ‘Being is the with’. To be is originally ‘being-together’, the *with* precedes the emergence or ‘temporary effect’ called the individual (2012: 5).

To attend is also to *turn* to someone or something. An invited attendee might ‘forget’ a process, possibility, or potentiality within, or a condition of, their encountering of the episode. If so, an invited attendee might be reminded of, and in this sense remember, be re-turned to, such a process, possibility, potentiality, or condition. By contrast, a *passee*- or passer-by uninvited to the episode would be alerted to or notice ‘the episode’ or a process, possibility, potentiality, or condition within

⁴³ In ‘The Language of Levinas’s Philosophy of Language’, a text I will discuss in greater detail in Chapter Five, John Llewelyn (2002b) notes that the base of intentionality and intending is *tendere*, ‘with the connotations of reaching, tension and tense that are preserved in the stretching and ec-stasis that Heidegger’s analysis of tense develops from the notions of temporal retention and protention employed by Husserl’ (133). In this way attending links with senses of *tethering* that I will propose in this chapter.

it, in a sense as if for the first time. However, to turn to, insofar as it is to recognize, is also to return-to. For Wills, the technological turn is ‘a turning to the back’ (4), a turn to that which was not *foreseen*. I propose that episodes vary, temporally and spatially, in their engendering of turns in which passings-by become attendings and turns in which attendings become passings-by. I propose that attendeers in episodes tend through time to become *familiar-with* and *familiar-to* those that we attend-with and attend-to. The susceptibilities of an attendee, *being-there-with* by way of an invitation ‘correspondence’, (for example in *Oct Dec Series*, with ‘me’ and with ST PAUL Street as the hosting institution) to becoming surprised in an episode, would *tend* to be different to that of a passer-by who, *being-there-with*, ‘happens’ upon an episode. There would through time, across the different passings-by and attendings in an episode, occur differing familiarizations or habituations, and so differing susceptibilities to surprise. An occurrence that draws out or intensifies attending-to in one body might push or drive another, as the saying goes, ‘to distraction’. Later in this chapter via Massumi (2002) I explore performance practice in relation to what Massumi terms ‘tendential movement’ (2002: 73). Rather than forgetting the episode, attendeers, including me, may feel tethered, bound or constrained to the episode (perhaps, if forgetting could be considered an ability, then tethered-to being unable-to-forget-it) and become bored, anxious, or frustrated.⁴⁴ I will explore stretching and the *tensile* through the figure of *tethering* below.

On the one hand, to *pass* is to not-appear. To pass may mean *not* becoming-interrupted, captured, marked or remarked, recognized, tethered or bound, remembered or recollected.⁴⁵ On the other hand, to pass is also to appear and be recognized as acceptable or admissible in relation to conventions, norms, genders, genres, standards or laws. Failing to pass, or being marginal or unacceptable with respect to conventions, norms, genders, genres, laws or standards, would also be modes of appearance. *Time* passes: there is a sense in which time cannot be contained, recollected or made present.⁴⁶ If so, staying, enduring, and persisting, as temporal, are also modes of passing. In

⁴⁴ In *Radical Passivity: Levinas, Blanchot and Agamben* (1999), Thomas Carl Wall suggests that forgetting is not an ability, as the one who forgets is themselves in forgetting, forgotten. I will explore forgetting further in the following chapters.

⁴⁵ In ‘The golden apple: Jennie Livingstone’s *Paris is Burning*’ of *Unmarked: The Politics of performance* (1996) Peggy Phelan explores Livingstone’s film which, Phelan writes ‘chronicles the competitive drag balls staged in Harlem [New York] clubs... between 1987 and 1989’ (93). Phelan suggests that ‘Counter-intuitively, the balls reveal the performer’s longing to be made unremarkable – to pass as ‘normative’ (and thus be unnoticed) rather than to be seen as ‘other’ (and constantly surveyed by the upholders of the normative) (93). In *Bodies that Matter* (2011) Butler suggests ‘performativity not as the act by which a subject brings into being what she/he names, but, rather, as that reiterative power of discourse to produce the phenomena that it regulates and constrains’ (xii). That is, gender and other norms would occur in *différance* in Derrida’s sense.

⁴⁶ In Chapter Five I will explore Levinas’s writing of diachrony as the breakup of chronology. To some extent, Levinas’s writing of *diachrony* would be analogous to the temporality of Derrida’s *différance*.

Chapter Five I explore performance practices in relation to the sense in which, for Levinas, I am absolutely passive in relation to time's passing. Passing might be a condition of possibility for attending, more originary than attending, in that attending is temporal. Maybe each moment occurs in passing between attending and passing.

On the narrowness or width of a footpath, to pass-by and be passed-by also means to take a place or occupy in-passing and being-passed.⁴⁷ In this sense I propose passing and attending as quasitranscendental modes of sharing, picking up on Nancy's discussion in the chapter 'Corpus' in *The Birth to Presence* (1993a), whereby a body or place does not precede sharing [*partage*] as touch and separation:

Thought itself touches itself; but it does so without being *itself*, without making its way back to itself. Here (but where is this 'here'? It is in no place that can be pinpointed, since it is at the point where place first becomes a place, is occupied by a body, is occupied itself as the body of the place: for if there is no body *there*, there is no place)... here, at the body, there is the sense of touch, the touch of the thing, which touches 'itself' without an 'itself' where it can get at itself, and which is touched and moved in this unbound sense of touch, and so separated from itself, shared out of itself [*partage de lui-meme*] (1993a: 202, 203).

Nancy's engagement with touch thus recalls Derrida's *différance* as primordial spacing and temporalizing. Nancy suggests that 'the body is the *absolute* of sense. The ab-solute is what is detached, what is placed or set apart, what is shared out [*partagé*]' (1993a: 204):

It is by touching the other that the body is a body, absolutely separated and shared [*partagé*]. The absoluteness [*l'absoluité*] of its sense, and the absoluteness of sense 'in general' (if there is any such thing), is not kept 'within' it, since it itself is nothing but the being-exposed, the being-touched of this 'inside.' As body, the absolute is common, it is the community of bodies. 'As body': but that is all there is; that is, there is nothing other than this separation and sharing [*ce partagé*] (1993a: 204).

As modes of *partage*, passing and attending would occur as modes of being-exposed of 'the community of bodies.' For Nancy, the sense of touching is not limited to what we often refer to as the sense of touch among the 'five senses', as, 'the skin is always exhibition, exposition, and the minutest look is a touching that brushes against it, and exposes it once more.' (205). And 'here' there

⁴⁷ My exploration of relations among attenders and passers-by draws on and differs from, Read's (2008) idea of an expanded collective, Read writes of his provisional discipline of 'showciology', 'This discipline will give equal consideration to actors and audiences, but also to an amplified collective of other entities, beings and non-human things that characterise the expanded field of performance' (7). Read's exploration of ways of opening what counts as a matter of concern, expanding what is recognized as part of the collective, provokes this project. Read's thinking of the expanded collective, of attending to potentials for reassembly and reassociation, and his provisional discipline of 'showciology' occur in an exploration of works of Bruno Latour. For Latour in *Reassembling the Social: An introduction to actor-network theory* (2005), sociology is 'the tracing of associations' (5). Latour defines 'the social not as a special domain, a specific realm, or a particular sort of thing, but only as a very peculiar movement of re-association and reassembling (2005: 7). This project, in its exploration of *becoming and belonging*, *appearance*, *bending back*, and *saying*, turns to other philosophico-critical resources than the work of Latour.



is another sense of passing, as brushing against—suggesting friction, contamination, aggression or pleasure.

To pass is also to ‘pass on’ or ‘pass away’, to die. Whereas, by contrast for Blanchot, as I will explore in the next chapter, the time of *dying* is a kind of impossibility of passing. But perhaps this may be passed-off as Levinas describing ‘a passage from oneself to anonymity’ (RS 134). Being-passed-off is the mode of the counterfeit. This would be related to a passing-oneself-off that would be ‘acting’ in the sense of a mode associated with an ‘as-if’ which is opposed to ‘real’ action or ‘real’ ‘acts’ or ‘acting’. It also suggests charlatanism or a ‘con’ or confidence trick.⁴⁸ As I will explore below in relation to framing, episodes of my practice involve modes of passing-itself-off as part of a street, and passing-itself-off as a performance practice. A ball in team sports occurs as a being-passed (or a being-intercepted, among other modes), or, as I will explore later in this chapter via Massumi’s chapter ‘The Political Economy of Belonging and the Logic of Relation’ in *Parables for the Virtual: movement, affect, sensation* (2002), as a ‘catalyst’ of the play. The sense of a ball as passing also suggests passing as associating with the different senses of ‘communication’ that Derrida explores in the beginning of SEC.⁴⁹ ‘To come to pass’, means to happen, to become actual or realized, and to

⁴⁸ Derrida explores the counterfeit in relation to the gift in *Given Time: 1. Counterfeit Money* (1992b).

⁴⁹ Derrida notes,

one can, for instance *communicate a movement* or ... a tremor, a shock, a displacement of force can be communicated—that is, propagated, transmitted. We also speak of different or remote places communicating with each other by means of a passage or opening

appear. At the level of self-certainty, of that-I-know, or what I will discuss in Chapter Five as Levinas's writing of *the said*, any process would always to an extent pass-by the 'who' or 'that-which' attends in and with it. In a related sense, I propose *passing* as one figure of an exceeding of intentionality *prior to* the knowable. In recognizing later some things that seem earlier to have passed-me-by, non-appearance appears to me, perhaps, as kinds of spaces, noise, blind-spots, shadows, intervals or gaps. Some passings-by, attendings, and 'unwitting' or surprised performances in episodes first appear to me as I watch audiovisual recordings, or as they are recollected, relayed, or *passed on* to me by attendeers afterwards. This exegesis, in turn, *passes on* or translates, which is to say, betrays, some modes of 'practice' and performance into others—this screen or page and, if this project passes, the library or thesis repository.⁵⁰ I propose that versions of each of the senses of *passing* introduced above condition each history, memorial, and research project. In some ways forgetting would occur as passing and attending would be associated with remembering.

Locales

For Stéphane Mallarmé, as I will discuss in the next chapter, poetry is made of writing's materiality, as spacings and inscriptive marks, what Bruns (2002) calls the 'basic units' (209) of Mallarmé's understanding of poetic language, rather than the ideas of a subjective intentionality.⁵¹ 'Writing's matter' for one of my episodes might include each: interval between lampposts, car, shoe, grass verge, puddle, space between feet, wind, time-interval between traffic cross-signals, space between emailed words, utterance, gesture, or any number of other 'objects' in the locale.⁵² One implication of this idea of the matter of my practice and the other practices that I discuss, in relation to this

This chapter's engagement with the *there* of Hampton and Neath's *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* (2012), and the engagement in Chapter Five with eavesdropping will pick-up-on the latter of these senses.

⁵⁰ I will explore the betrayal of the *saying* by the *said* in Chapter Five.

⁵¹ I will explore Bruns's 'The Concepts of Art and Poetry in Emmanuel Levinas's Writings' (2002) in Chapter Three.

⁵² By 'object' I am suggesting something that is *intended*. For Husserl in the First Book Chapter IV of *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy* (1982), consciousness is intentional in that thought is always aimed towards objects of consciousness. By 'object' in my discussion I am suggesting something somehow named or represented which has predicates. This would differ from the sense of *participation* that I will discuss in Chapter Three. I am including among objects named 'processes,' occurrences or movements, for example a walk, the sequence of traffic lights, a gust of wind, and movements of objects, people, and vehicles. I am not suggesting that a rigorous distinction can be made between an object and a process. In Levinas's reading of Husserlian intentionality, as Llewelyn explains, predication 'is kerygmatic, It proclaims. The intentionality is... a classification and identification where the intending is a meaning in the sense of the German *meinen* and of the French *vouloir dire*: it is an engagement of will or desire as wanting to say (CP 112-13)' (Llewelyn 2002b: 133). Chapter Three explores, in relation to the practices I discuss, a difference between objects and extra- or non-intentional 'things', or, an object's becoming thing. This is also a kind of undoing of a 'wanting to say'.

chapter's exploration of the *there* and locale, is that the 'locale' of the practices may just as much suggest, for example, the locales of email correspondence involved in booking, or the locales of a host institution, or the locales of a footpath.⁵³ It also suggests that a distinction, within the mode of information or 'conceptual commerce' with objects, between an episode and a locale in general may at times for some attendings or becoming-attendings, be difficult to make, or *undecidable*, if something or someone was called-to, and cared-to, make such a distinction. Another definition of attending an episode might be knowing that this street is no longer this street, (or whatever it is) but (this street as) the location of an episode of a performance practice, whereas by contrast, to passers-by this street would be this street, or whatever it is to them. That is, to attend to an episode might be to attend to this street as it appears through what Alan Read (2008) calls the 'minimal parallax condition of putting a frame around [it]' (16). Importantly, Read notes that in his concept of parallax, Slavoj Žižek suggests that a difference in an object that occurs in changing my point of view is, as Read puts it:

Not just one of subjectivity, our problem so to speak, but a shared dilemma in that subject and object are indubitably tied and mediated. A changing point of view for Žižek will always reflect 'an ontological shift in the object itself' (Read 2008:16, Žižek 2006: 17).⁵⁴

That is, if in my perceiving an object, that object is part of what I am as perceiver, and if the existence of any object necessarily occurs as the perception of a perceiver/subject, a change in my position relative to the object is a change in what the object *is*. That is, there is a mutual constituting of subject and object. If an episode is an 'object,' not only is this object multiple depending on innumerable positions or perceptions, but it is, as with any other object, partly constitutive of each

⁵³ In *One Place After Another: Site specific art and locational identity* (2002), Miwon Kwon explores a history of art in relation to 'site' since the 1950s, suggesting shifts, or what I am tempted to call an 'expansion' of the idea of site, from an engagement with geology or land-morphology, to historical senses of site, to site as a network. In general terms, this project engages site as involving each of these senses. I will pick up further on aspects of Kwon's engagement below.

⁵⁴ Read makes this suggestion in 'Part 1: On the Social Life of Theatre: Towards a Science of Appearance', of *Theatre, Intimacy and Engagement* (2008), Read suggests:

The multiplicity of appearances of the 'same thing' are immediately transformed by the minimal parallax condition of putting a frame around them, once referred to in phenomenology as a form of bracketing. This bracketing has been the lot of theatrical art since the inception of the relationship between orchestra and horizon, between wagon and street, and between proscenium and auditorium. But our common awareness of this stage rhetoric requires us to acknowledge now, with most of the interesting performance of the last century, that things can no more 'simply appear', if they ever could, but are always in the process of *appearing to appear*. It is in this tension that the minimal difference, the precise and measurable non-coincidence of a thing with itself, becomes apparent. The point of evoking and conducting this practice of the parallax view is the resistance it might offer to a too easy dialectic or symmetry between performance and its effects, between theatre and the political for example, and the encouragement of a revealing dissonance between previously undisturbed objects and the way we look at them and listen to them. (16)

one who perceives it. If a frame is a ‘minimal parallax condition’ it is thus a change in what that framed *is*. Read’s word ‘minimal’ in this context suggests the operation of a level of con-sensus or common-sense as to the kind of object that the object is in its differing, to use Derrida’s phrase in *Limited Inc*, a ‘minimal consensus’ (1988b: 61). Thinking of Derrida’s SEC, ‘Communication’ of meaning or sense would thus involve a relation between differing and conventions or norms. Perhaps an invited attendee would tend to be encountering, in attending to the episode-as-framed, an ‘episode-street’, while a passer-by-becoming attendee may be more likely to encounter a street-episode. To encounter the episode as ‘acting’ ‘as if’ it is part of the street might be to encounter the episode as feigns, masks or façades of naturalness, *naturalisms*.

An initial definition of a *frame* or *framing* might be the separating-articulating of an interior with an exterior that inaugurates an object or a work. As well as thinking of the episode as a framing of the street, insofar as they don’t ‘belong’ inside the episode, passings-by might be considered as framings of the episode. This reference to those who ‘belong’ or do not ‘belong’ might suggest a proprietorial thinking of art and authorship that I aim to hold in suspension through what follows. Questions of framing are of interest in relation to becoming and belonging in terms of the way that episodes play as relations of appearance and non-appearance to passers-by – or play as a varying capacity to turn passings-by into attendings and vice-versa. An episode might come about as a varying capacity to turn its face (for example to explain itself, to welcome or acknowledge), to turn its back (for example to ignore or pretend to ignore or to become in some way vulnerable), or turn its side (for example to pass-by or pretend to pass-by), to passers-by, and a varying capacity to induce passers-by to turn to face it, turn their backs to it (ignoring would be a mode of attending to), or perhaps sidle past it. In the chapter ‘The Political Economy of Belonging and the Logic of Relation’ in *Parables for the Virtual: Movement affect sensation* (2002) Massumi discusses the way a television can array ‘domestic bodies around itself’ (80). In relation to this Massumi proposes, ‘What is pertinent about an event space is not its boundedness, but what elements it lets pass, according to what criteria, at what rate, to what effect. These variables define a regime of passage’ (85). If an episode of my practice might be considered a ‘regime of passage’ it might be what Massumi suggests of the home—a ‘loose regime of passage’ (85) insofar as many differing bodies pass through and within it. Or alternatively, it might be considered a tight ‘regime of passage’ insofar as the tones or senses of one’s encounter in and with the episode would be strongly conditioned by whether or not one is in the locale having arrived via what, to use a word Joe Kelleher engages in ‘Arriving Here Outside: On punctuality and the passerby’ (2012), the ‘gate’ of the email invitation and booking correspondence.⁵⁵ I will turn back to

⁵⁵ In part, Kelleher’s paper responds to Maria O’Connor’s engagement in ‘Night Drifts’ (2012) with *Ripples*, an episode in Bundle O of *Oct Dec Series*. ‘Night Drifts’ explores, as Kelleher suggests, ‘the prepositionality of any of our performances.... what it means, if anything, to write ‘to’ or ‘for’ another person’ (2). These papers call

engagement with episodes of my practice in relation to the interiorizing-exteriorizing of a domicile in the section 'Recording Prosthetics' below, and I will explore episodes in relation to Massumi's chapter in the section 'Massumi: Belonging and Becoming' below.

One of the senses in which I cannot grasp a street or footpath is that each street and each footpath, each time would be singular, as Nancy writes in *The Experience of Freedom* "each time, only this time" (1993b: 72), and in *Being Singular Plural*, 'It is never the case that I have met Pierre or Marie per se, but I have met him or her in such and such a "form", in such and such a "state", in such and such a "mood", and so on (2000: 8). While in the latter quote Nancy is writing of the possibility of meeting other people, perhaps one might think in a similar way the possibility of meeting a street. In Derrida's terms in 'The Law of Genre' (1992c) there would also occur constitutive traits that would participate without belonging in the 'genres' of 'street' and 'footpath', and genres within these genres, so that each footpath would be its own genre. In Derrida's terms, in 'Plato's Pharmacy' (1981a), I suggest that my project occurs in a 'parasitic' mode in relation to its locales, situations or surroundings. I suggest that a parasitic mode may occur undecidably as a repetition and resistance to the place or body on which it lives. As parasitic my practice would be inside of colonization in its locales, colonized and colonizing. Lepecki considers place in relation to modernity as 'being-toward-movement'. Of the body privileged within modernity, which Lepecki suggests as the white, heteronormative kinetic male subject, he asks:

how could a body move about so spectacularly, so effectively, and so self-sufficiently?... This is where the inescapable topography fantasy of modernity informs its choreopolitical formation: for modernity imagines its topography as already abstracted from its grounding on a land previously occupied by other human bodies, other life forms, filled with other dynamics, gestures, steps, and temporalities. As [Homi K.] Bhabha explains, 'for the emergence of modernity – as an ideology of beginning, modernity as the new – the template of this 'non-place' becomes the colonial place. (1994: 246 cited in Lepecki).... The fantasy of the modern kinetic subject is that the spectacle of modernity happens in innocence (13, 14)

This raises the question of the relation of performance practices, and dance and the choreographic in particular, within history's material. Each locale would be constituted within innumerable histories. My every step or jump colonizes a ground and is colonized by it. The history of a footpath that my project engages is unavoidably the history of my engagement in it, and the history of an episode's engagement in it as rememberings-forgettings in the passing of an episode. That is also to say that my project does not offer any knowledge about its sites or locales that would be independent of its participation with them or situatedness in them. Sports fields (such as the soccer field, which I will discuss later in this chapter), and the 'neutrality' and flat floors of 'black box'

me to other ways of engaging relations of passing and attending and as such offer directions for future research.

theatres or ‘white cube’ art galleries could be considered as places that are in a sense cleared or ‘erased’ again and again for ‘new’ spectacular movement. However, these places must bear and show some of their histories in order to be (recognized as) what they are, to occur as a ‘conventional context’, in the terms of Derrida’s engagement with Austin’s performative. Such studios and galleries are involved within my practice, even if *prima facie* my practice tends to foreground streets and footpaths. Streets and footpaths are also places made flat and smooth, which condition what I feel and identify as others-with-me-in-movement.

‘Framing’ is also a false accusation, in which someone else puts me inside the frame, tries to pass-me-off as responsible for something I did not do. This exegesis might therefore be ambiguously framed as that which makes true accusations about the performance practices I discuss and this research project. One cannot frame the frame. It frames me. This might be in some way analogous to the way that, if I can forget a condition or process within an episode, I cannot forget my forgetting of it because I never first remembered my forgetting. ‘I’ was not there. The fact that there are things other than the episode to attend-to and that are being attended-to, a fact that perhaps passings-by repeatedly remind attendings of, might be considered as displacing framings of the episode and as displacing potentials, thresholds, or what Massumi describes as ‘openings’ for appearances and forgettings of the episode.⁵⁶ Such a framing might tend to *turn* attendings *out* to passings-by *as* a mode of attending to the episode. Such displacing framings would in different ways remark the episode’s difference, or an attendee’s difference in that s(he) is ‘in’ the episode, from passees- and passers-by. The ‘attention-seeking’ episode might be framed by that which might attend to it, but does not.

At the same time, attendees of the episode are most of the time ‘openly’ there in the locale, most of the time in some way attended-to by some other attendees, and continually disposed or exposed to the possibility or potential of being attended-to. Attendees would also be passers-by of the

⁵⁶ This suggests Thomas Carl Wall’s description, in *Radical Passivity* (1999), of the structure of Giorgio Agamben’s *The Coming Community* (1993):

We may wish to compare *La Communita che Viene* to a Balthus street scene where each of the characters in the street quietly occupies its own space and goes about its business but where each seems to be looking into or moving into *different* spaces so that, as we look at the canvas, our gaze is petrified. Our gaze looks into no one space, but rather is transferred from various space to various space, each tangential to the other, but not organically related... Our eye is drawn *into* the canvas, whose ‘space’ is missing, and which itself, then, becomes an enormous eye staring at us with a gaze emptied of sight... One can observe the same thing among children who are each fascinated by, and totally involved in playing with, the same objects but each in his or her own completely singular way. (122, 123)

Wall suggests Antonin Artaud as the first person who noticed Balthus’s technique.

‘dramaturgy’ of innumerable others in the locale insofar as we do not notice these. The attending of attendeers to such conditions might be one mode of ‘turning-out-as-attending-to’ but also perhaps as a kind of turning-in/turning-out in relation to oneself as imagining how one appears or how one might appear to other attendeers and within passings-by becoming attendings. If so, this would only be a modification of the way that one ‘presents’ oneself, how one ‘normally’ sees, hears or images oneself. In general terms, such a condition would occur in many kinds of performance but, equally, in general terms, the ambiguity of an episode—the ambiguity of what an attendee *appears* to be attending-to for a passer-by-becoming-attendeer—might tend to differentiate episodes from more recognizable modes of street performance. To put it differently, the ambiguity of the episode might contaminate the attendee. In the most ‘conventional’ play in a theatre (supposing there is such a thing), there occur innumerable passings that exceed attendings. Even remembering *anything*—a condition of possibility for recognition of anything in the play and thus a condition of possibility for the play to appear at all—might be considered a kind of passing-with and passing-away-from, or in *différance* with, the possibility of, to again use Derrida’s phrase in *Limited Inc.*, a ‘minimal consensus’ that we are at, with, or in, this play (1988b: 61). That said, the apparatuses of theatre tend to perform and, to borrow a term Read (2008: 170) uses in another context, ‘preform’ a separation of drama and audience that is different to relations among passers-by and attendeers in others and my practices.⁵⁷ If I again suppose that a conventional ‘play’ does exist, (that is, to oversimplify), it is not as if in such a ‘play’ one tends often to be in much doubt as to who is in the *place* of the actors and who is in the *place* of the audience.

⁵⁷ As I noted above, Read suggests, ‘In the work of Societas Raffaello Sanzio the *preformed* world of the adult, our constructs for their pleasure, are continuously being broken down and rearranged in the performed world of the infant, animal and actor’ (170). I don’t take this to suggest that the performances of infants animals and actors are not also in many ways ‘preformed’. It may be useful to explore this proposition in relation to Massumi’s engagement with the becoming of a game, which the codings or rules of the game must retroactively legislate for, that I discuss later in this chapter.



A choreography of attending bodies could be considered a frame of episodes in the sense that attenders mark the episode out from ‘the street’ or ‘the street-in-general’, that is, engender passers-by to become attendings. A group of four or five people gathered around ‘me’, or around a choreography tethering or linking ‘me’ with other human and non-human bodies, might turn passers-by *in* to the episode, and turn them towards me as, in Massumi’s term that I will discuss below, its ‘catalyst’. The clearest example of this occurred in *Public end* (2007) when a semi-circle of attenders around me as I spoke on a central city footpath resembled the audience of a busker and two passers-by joined the semi-circle and ‘flock’ of attenders as it moved. More recent practices, such as *Off the Boil* in Bundle 1 of *Oct Dec Series* (2011), have complicated the recognizability to passers-by of episodes as ‘a performance’. In *Off the Boil*, a man was already sitting on a bench in a pedestrian area prior to my arrival there. I engaged with two water bottles and my backpack, with attenders more distantly and disparately spaced from each other, in terms of their attending-to and their distance (in a measurable sense). This scene and sequence was perhaps more ambiguous or varied in its appearing or non-appearing with regard to the category of ‘a performance’.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ After the episode an attendee passed on to me that the man who had been sitting on the bench moved away from me, swapping seats, as I moved towards where he was, and then moved back again as I returned to where I had been. That is to say that there was a mode of *politics* occurring as a *taking place*, as in Levinas’s quotation of Pascal’s *Pensées* in one of the epigraphs of *OB* “‘That is my place in the sun.’” That is how the usurpation of the whole world began’ (cited in Levinas, *OB*: vii). This example perhaps marks and extends a kind of debt episodes have to passers-by being imposed upon in episodes.

In *Oct Dec Series* (2011), the ‘publicity’ and advertising via email and on the project’s page on the ST PAUL Street gallery website gave little information to a prospective attendee. The booking communications over email gave little information to a booked attendee, regarding how the episode might appear to them and how they might recognize it, other than by a time and a ‘starting location’ or ‘finishing location’. Writing or reading the nominating of a meeting place and starting or finishing time is itself enough for the recognizability of ‘an artwork’, especially if one is aware of or acculturated into art since, for example, Vito Acconci’s *Rubbing Piece* (1970), cited in Gloria Moure’s *Vito Acconci* as, ‘A program of simultaneous live performances, by ten artists, in the middle of ordinary restaurant activity’ (2001: 98).⁵⁹ In my practice a booked attendee would ‘meet’ with what appears in the named place at the named time, or not arrive ‘in person’ at all, or arrive ‘early’ or ‘late’. Perhaps it is not possible to arrive late for an episode with a ‘finishing time’ and no ‘starting time’. In such a case, to arrive after the ‘finishing time’ might not be to arrive late, but to ‘miss’ the episode. Nevertheless, perhaps episodes of *Oct Dec Series* (2011) involved a kind of non-appearance *as* the episode, or an ambiguity or undecidability of recognizability *as* or of the episode. To consider the ‘start’ of those episodes that had a starting time, I propose that attendees—including me—were called to attend in the locale to whoever appears there, distinguishing those who resemble for me an *attendeer*, and those who for me resemble a *passee-by* or *passer-by*.⁶⁰ This is not to say it was always difficult to tell ‘who is there’ with regard to such categories. Mostly, especially after the first five minutes or so, it was clearly apparent, especially for those who were regular attendees of episodes. Nor is it to say that attendees always cared about this, nor to say that an undecidability of such ‘basic units’ (Bruns 2009) is reducible to this question of ‘who is there?’ Such an undecidability would be associated with the processual character of the locale, which would be different but related to the processual character of each theatre or gallery each time. In each place anything or anyone arriving can to a greater or lesser degree call the recognizability of what was recognized into question, or remark an undecidability, again.

⁵⁹ Acconci’s text that documents and is part of this ‘piece’, or perhaps, in terms that I will explore below, that tethers or records this ‘piece’, reports that for the hour Acconci sat at a booth rubbing his forearm (Moure 2001: 98).

⁶⁰ In *A Pathognomy of Performance*, Simon Bayly proposes that ‘the opening question of *Hamlet* – ‘Who’s there?’ – is the question with which the theatre invokes its audiences everywhere’ (2011: 16). The question ‘*Who’s there?*’ is not a Levinasian question insofar as for Levinas, the face of each singular other, with their age, gender, ethnicity and singular characters, bears the trace of the absolute other. The (synchronic) point at which it matters *who* the other is, is the moment in which there has been a ‘passage’ from ethics to justice or politics. My engagement with locale in this Chapter would suggest that this exploration of appearance and recognizability is another exploration of locale or the *there*.



If to pass-by the episode is to be ‘outside’ it, then if there were no passings-by, in a sense I could not distinguish the episode from the world-at-large. There would be no frame: the episode would be without limit. If the episode did not pass-*by* or pass *from* that which preceded it, and then proceed and pass-into something that it is not, in a sense it would have no start and finish or *timeframe*. However, any framing would need to be thought in terms of a differing and a deferring, or what, as I noted above in introducing this project’s reference-field, Kamuf describes in her introduction to Derrida’s *Without Alibi* (2002), as an ‘always divisible border’ (2). To the extent that passings-by participate in and belong (if unknowingly, inattentively, or as forgetting of the episode) in the episode—to the extent that they appear to attenders at all—they might be considered as being inside the episode and not as framings of it. If a picture-frame is, as Derrida explores in ‘The Parergon’ (1979), at the side of (par) a work (ergon), then a frame of an episode might be said to be at the side of or by an episode, but the frame would divide or bend.⁶¹ If the episode opens to, and is surrounded by what it is not, then the locale would be para- the episode. If the episode occurs around, or feeds off, a locale, it would be a para-site, recalling Austin’s exclusion of theatre from his engagement with theatre that I outlined in the Introduction. The episode as a *parasite* suggests the locale as a kind of host.⁶² Or conversely, as I suggest above, an episode might frame its street or

⁶¹ In this essay Derrida explores the frame in Kant’s aesthetics in relation to the constitution of an inside and an outside. Derrida suggests, ‘the frame warps as it works’ (34). An engagement with this essay is ‘outside’ ‘the frame’ of this exegesis, but may be a direction for future research.

⁶² This suggests an engagement with the question of locale in relation to Levinas’s discussion of the relation of host and hostage in *Totality and Infinity*.

locale. In this sense a frame of an episode could just as easily resemble a ‘dorsal’-picture-frame, or at least, an inverted framing that turns us ‘outside’ of it—as if it, the episode, is a focus for a field of radiating affects. If the episode occurs around the ‘outside’ of, or para-sitical to, its locale, it would not be in the sense of capturing or containing it. In a sense the locale always passes-by. More generally the relations of interiority-exteriority and framing suggest the co-existence of many different interiorities-exteriorities, each co-exposed to others, and that, attendings and passings-by, including this exegesis, occurs immanently to their locales. Perhaps the attendings to things other than the episode (to the extent that that would be decidable), also point to the invitations as a kind of ‘gate’ and frame of the episode and as a key differentiator of those there. In the case of *Oct Dec Series* the email mailing list of ST PAUL Street Gallery, New Zealand Dance News and my personal email contacts would be part of this gate.⁶³ This exegesis occurs as another gate or border.

*From out of the Crowd*⁶⁴

On Wednesday I make my way to the Auckland Art Gallery for *The Bench or Hello for Dummies*. I arrive at the top of the stairs outside the level 2 espresso bar perhaps two or three minutes early and, as described in the email and text message, see a woman wearing a blue tee-shirt, who greets me, introduces herself as Laura Preston (of Alterations), and positions and orients me.⁶⁵ Arriving there, I am already fitting into ‘my’ place and sequence within the choreography, the role that I had been assigned. Perhaps I have the sense that ‘my’ place, sequence, and role are commensurate with, and in some way necessary to, the place, sequence and roles of three other people. Perhaps this sense is a way in which each of the three others and *the play* call me to do what they ask of me or tell me to do, especially to obey ‘the first rule’ that I am soon to be told: I must not look at the face of my partner. Laura has given me an MP3 player connected to two pairs of earphones. Through one pair of earphones I hear a male voice with an English accent that, a little like what Laura was doing, orients me to *the play*. As this voice seemed to me to be the voice of ‘the artist,’ and even though this play took place under the names of two artists or authors, Ant Hampton and Glen Neath, I will call this the ‘Authoring-Ant Hampton voice’, or ‘AAH voice.’⁶⁶ Subsequently, AAH voice introduces what I

⁶³ That is, in some way initiated into or interested in art and design, AUT, dance, or people who ‘know’ me.

⁶⁴ This section title alludes to Daniel Watt’s (2010) essay ‘The Face in the Crowd: Levinas, Ethics and Performance’, which I briefly outlined in Chapter One.

⁶⁵ She remarked that I was very prompt, and that the other person might take a few more minutes to arrive. I had wanted to be on time, as I knew that the other person was relying on me to be there. If I were not there, then probably the *play* would not go ahead. Evidence for this was that, in the confirmation email that I received, was the ‘instruction’ to inform Alterations with 24 hours notice if I could not arrive.

⁶⁶ Somehow I felt as if this voice has, or is, the character, somehow assured perhaps, of the one who knows this *play* the most, as if the *play* ‘belongs’ to this voice, or to the one who ‘has’ this voice. While this play takes place ‘under’ two authors’ names, Ant Hampton and Glen Neath, the interest I had in Ant Hampton’s work in

will call ‘the actor’s voice’ or ‘A voice’, which with diction and projection suggestive of an actor, says the words that I am to (re)say or (re)play.⁶⁷ ‘AAH voice’ and ‘A voice’ each occur with a kind of collective in which participate, for example, the sound emanating into my ears from the earphones, the ‘recorded’ speaker, and the authors-artists-scriptwriters, whose absence from *the play* is not quite complete, or who have phantasmatic or ghostly presences. They were ‘around,’ and in each ear. After the onset of A voice, AAH voice occurs less frequently, and as if attempting to pass-itself-off as something like ‘my’, or an, ‘inner’ voice, or like words-thoughts that aren’t to be vocalized. AAH voice’s tone, slightly severe, calm, and recorded somewhere quiet, (for some reason at times I imagine a cellar, at other times a recording studio, each I imagine somewhere in England), seems involved with this ghostly sense. The phrases, ‘to have someone’s ear’ and ‘to be in someone’s ear,’ mean to be able to exert some influence on what that person does.

It seems that at 12.30pm, two rendezvous of participants and guide would need to have been made in locations that did not allow we two ‘strangers’ to ‘see’ each other’s face. Or rather, that if the face of the person who was to become my partner or their guide had been visible to me, it would not have belonged to the experience I was about to undergo, or would have been a *passee-/passer-by* rather than an *attendeer*. That is, my attention would not have been drawn to the fact that an anonymous or unremarked person in the surroundings was soon to become my partner, or was the other guide whose existence, and movement behind me on the arrival of my partner from behind me, I had only surmised, until a friend who in another iteration of *the play*, had played the role my partner played, described being led by her guide towards the person, (himself a mutual friend) playing the role I had played, from behind him. This ‘not-seeing’, or perhaps, a possibility of seeing but as ‘seeing-and-not-recognizing’, would have been necessary to avoid the possibility that one or both of us ‘recognize’ the other as the stranger we were to be partnered with *and* see the other’s face. A difference of the rendezvous places would also lower the possibility that we would recognize each other or work out that we had been partnered together. If the person I had been partnered with was

similar formats, arising from my participation in Ant Hampton and Tim Etchells’s *The Quiet Volume* (2010), and my feeling that this is one of the voices I had heard as a participant in this or that I recognized it from a talk as part of *Ciudades Paralelas* led me to hear this voice in *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* as that of Ant Hampton. It could also be AAHGN voice. For all I know AAH voice could just as well be a recording of someone else. In the invitations and publicity materials ‘Ant Hampton’ is prioritised in the sense that it is always, as far as I have seen, given before ‘Glen Neath.’ The PDF document attached to the email confirming my booking for Saturday 21 April, says that the play is ‘BY BRITISH ARTIST ANT HAMPTON in collaboration with Glen Neath.’

⁶⁷ While in a sense it might be true that, as the booking confirmation emails stated, the play is for an ‘unrehearsed guest audience,’ there are many ways in which I was rehearsed within the play. In hearing A voice speak, ‘my’ rehearsal is perhaps a listening to a model in expectation of repeating-iterating, resaying, or replaying it. My listening to A voice might be a kind of ‘dummy run’.

not a stranger, I might recognize her or him as someone known to me in other ways than by seeing his/her face, ways allowed or prescribed in *the play*, by seeing her clothes, hands, the way he moves, hearing his voice, and many other qualities or predicates I might recognize of someone about whom I say 'I know.'

As I noted in the Introduction, Wills (2008) suggests that the trope or figure of a turn occurs in different accounts of the formation of a subject. In the chapter 'Facades of the Other', he gives particular attention to the figures of turning in Heidegger's thinking of technology, then Althusser's (1971) and Levinas' theories of subject formation. Wills discusses Levinas's writing in *TI* of 'the face with which the Other turns to me' (215), continuing his reading to suggest, 'The Other doesn't appear in front of me, facing me, so much as turn or incline itself toward me, summoning me as responsible from outside my consciousness or perception' (45):

The idea of a 'face' that drops from a great height to stand before us, confront us, and stop us in our tracks cannot avoid falling into, and reducing to the regime of, visibility... A "face-to-back" relation... more powerfully connotes, I would argue, the nakedness, destitution, hunger, and vulnerability of which the other speaks in summoning the ethical. The nudity of the face is said to be defined by the fact of a turning: 'The face has turned to me-and this is its very nudity'. (2008: 46)

There are some readily made associations between Wills's discussion and *The Bench*. My partner and guide arrive from behind me after the guide has told me to look straight ahead, which is like saying, to face forward. I am reminded (by the guide or AAH voice) that I will not need to look to the side as I walk with my partner to the bench as I will be walking forwards. This is a questionable claim or prediction, in relation to the way that Wills notes that walking necessarily occurs as turning. On Wednesday, the gallery is behind us as we sit on the bench. The gallery is where we have been, and from where the guide-curator comes out to meet us after 'the parting gesture'. As my partner and I are sitting on the bench the curator-actor-guides are presumably in the neighbourhood too. They are *probably* not watching us sit there the whole time, and it appears that they cannot hear us. But, presumably at least, one of them is not far away, ready to re-collect the MP3 players at the end. If they are in the art gallery, they are behind our backs as we face out to Albert Park, with the gallery at our backs. After 'the parting gesture' on Saturday, Laura emerged from the café at the left of us. Those inside the café were potentially within my field of vision but perhaps less easily in my partner's, to my right, if he was following 'the first rule'. The difference in sensing what is taking place in front of me and what is taking place behind me would seem to be accentuated when hearing audio via headphones. Insofar as 'behind me' is the opposite direction to which I am 'facing', and my eyes are at the front of my face, normally I might hear but probably not 'see' what is approaching, receding or happening behind me. In *the play* my hearing of or listening to the locale is, to an extent, mixed-with or masked-by the sound from the headphones. However, I was less aware of this diminution, concerning what was happening behind me during the play, than I thought I would be.



Bear in mind that you are tethered

I remember or think I remember hearing this instruction, request or warning, through the MP3 player that being connected to two sets of earphones ‘tethered’ my ears to my partner’s in *The Bench or Hello for Dummies*.⁶⁸ To the extent that I did bear it in mind—carry it along ‘between my ears’—perhaps it itself was an ‘audio-verbal’ tethering. Or in that that the verbal of the audioverbal occurred each time from out of one of two audio recorded voices, each seemingly a ‘male’ voice, with differing English accents from one another, suggesting different geographic and social-cultural *locales* of sending or projecting of this *play*, and different tones, timbres and projections, and to the extent that these characters and locales of these voices were part of the tether, it would have been an audio-vocal-verbal tethering. In naming my relation to my partner as tethering, the audio-vocal-verbal perhaps produced a tethering as an interdependent doubling or intertwining of the ‘audio-vocal-verbal’ and the ‘physical’—plastic-coated wire connected to earphones lodged in ears. Perhaps more so in my remembering or fictioning-recollecting of it now, this ‘audio-vocal-verbal’ makes-appear or remarks-remakes tethering as a kind of theme of *The Bench*.⁶⁹ A tether is a species of

⁶⁸ Perhaps this first suggested that my partner and I were tethered to *each other*. Afterwards I think, tethered to the script, and tethered to the ‘collective’ of the play consisting of at least: the two voices I hear via the MP3 player AAH voice, and another voice, which I will call the ‘actor’s voice’ or ‘A voice’, ST PAUL Street Gallery, Alterations, Laura Preston, my partner’s guide, my partner.

⁶⁹ Among the senses of the noun *tether* in the OED, are; ‘a rope, cord, or other fastening by which’ [for my purposes I will say a ‘non-human animal’] ‘is tied ...so as to confine it to the spot,’ ‘a tow-rope,’ ‘The cause or

bond, and tethering and being tethered are species of belonging and becoming. A tether, perhaps, implies more elasticity, softness, or ‘give’ than a chain. Intervals can tether one body or bodies to another body or bodies, for example, the spaces between words in a sentence. In this way tethering is both spatial and temporal. A tether might keep one hanging on, but a broken, distended or extended tether might leave one hanging. One may be tethered-to something or someone, or tethered-away-from something or someone. The stretching-us-out, that I earlier suggested occurring in episodes of my practice, might be a stretching of our tethering to the episode or to one another, or a stretching of our tethering-away-from this street as this street in the way I suggested above of a passing-by. Episodes might be considered as playing-with or playing-as a stretching of such tetherings among the ‘basic units’ (Bruns 209) in terms of speeds, rhythms and distances.

In this case, tethering would perhaps occur as stretching-us-out or stretching-the-episode-out such that we notice how human and other bodies pass through it. Any tethering among any bodies would only emerge in relation to (other) forces, for example, of attraction or repulsion. Perhaps one tends not to feel a tether so much in moving towards that to which one is tethered, and to feel it increasingly strongly as one is repelled, attracted or tethered away from it. The figure of ‘tethering’ in *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* appeals to me in relation to the way that attendeers of my practice seem to be mildly bored or uncomfortable in episodes, and remain there, moving along with the other attendeers. If in noticing this boredom or discomfort I am doing something other than projecting my own desire to become un-tethered from the episode onto others, or more generally, if there is some adequation between what appears to me as mild boredom or discomfort and how attendeers would describe their experience of episodes, I might consider this as a conflict of opposing desires within attendings. (Many of the communications I have had with attendeers after episodes suggest that boredom and mild discomfort do occur, *and* that my sensing of the moods of attendeers may often be inaccurate). That said, attendeers can and do leave episodes and, in so doing, possibly becoming ‘un-tethered’ to the episode. Or perhaps in the stretching of our tethers or the approaching-the-end-of-our-tethers we are e-ttendeers or ex-tendeers, or e-tendings or ex-tendings. However, becoming un-tethered would be a modification of being-tethered as a mode of belonging (and becoming). Even if I can change my relation to and feeling about my past tetherings I cannot untether myself from the past, I cannot untether myself from my having been-there. Every un-tethering would be a re-tethering to something or someone else, one would be always-already tethering. Perhaps tethering would be an originary possibility of return in general. And in another way, perhaps it would be not only a possibility, but also a tending to return, unless that to which I

measure of one’s limitation; the radius of one’s field of action; scope, limit,’ and a bond or fetter. To be at ‘the end of one’s tether’ [is] ‘the extreme limit of one’s resources.’ The verb to *tether* is ‘to fasten.’

am tethered differs from or as itself in such a way that the only re-turn I could make in re-lation to it would be a (re)turn (or relay) into difference. In *The Bench or Hello for Dummies*, the audio-vocal-verbal tethering, perhaps most clearly as my partner and I walk to the bench, might have been a relation that brought about my partner and I as bodies that move-towards or move-away-from one another, or brought about my body as a potentiality to be clumsy or to become untethered. That is, in a way, the audio-vocal-verbal tethering might have preceded and produced the bodies related. In any case, I will explore such an idea of a relation that precedes the terms related in relation to writing of Massumi (2002) below.

Episodes of my practice, whether those with a starting-time or a finishing-time, do not have a plot or sequence in as strict a sense as some performances by which one can calculate how far ‘now’ is from the end, unless one has attended a number of episodes. In an episode with a starting-time, perhaps to an extent, this turns the question of when the end occurs from ‘Brent’ to those attending as a question of when they are finished with the episode. For me, the end of an episode with a starting-time is perhaps the point at which it no longer tethers me. Perhaps that is when I am already somewhere else, that is, when I am not-there in being-there. Such a somewhere else would be an elsewhere enabling the passing of the event. Perhaps the tensile bond between those attending and me has been stretched to the point of breaking, or occluded, masked or dissolved by other forces in the locale. I might become more intensely tethered to something or someone as the measurable distance between us increases, or less intensely tethered as the measurable distances reduce. Being tethered to that which bores me might be a version of or have some similarity with what Heidegger discusses in *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* (1995) as ‘held fast by that which is boring’ (92).⁷⁰ A

⁷⁰ Giorgio Agamben discusses this in *The Open: Man and Animal* (2004). Agamben explains that Heidegger proposes ‘two characteristics or “structural moments” (*Strukturmomente*) that, according to Heidegger, define the essence of boredom’ (63). Agamben continues:

The first is *Leergelassenheit*, being-left-empty, abandonment in emptiness.... While we are usually constantly occupied with and in things ... in boredom we suddenly find ourselves abandoned in emptiness. But in this emptiness, things are not simply ‘carried away from us annihilated’; they are there, but ‘they have nothing to offer us’; they leave us completely indifferent, yet in such a way that we cannot free ourselves from them, because *we are riveted and delivered over to what bores us*: [Agamben quotes Heidegger 1995: 138:] ‘In becoming bored by something we are precisely still *held fast* by that which is boring, we do not yet let it go, or we are compelled by it, *bound* to it for whatever reason.’ (Agamben 63, 64, second and third emphases mine)

The figures of being ‘riveted’, ‘held fast’ or ‘bound’ might suggest a relation that is stronger and not as flexible as being ‘tethered’. Agamben quotes Heidegger in relation to the sense of *indifference*, ‘Dasein thus finds itself delivered over to beings that refuse themselves in their totality.’ (Heidegger: 210, in Agamben 65). Agamben continues:

In boredom, Dasein can be *riveted* to beings that refuse themselves in their totality because it is constitutively, “delivered up to its own proper being”, ‘factically thrown and lost in the world of its concern. But, precisely for this reason, boredom brings to light the unexpected proximity of Dasein and

the animal. *In becoming bored, Dasein is delivered over (ausgeliefert) to something that refuses itself, exactly as the animal, in its captivation, is exposed (hinausgesetzt) in something unrevealed.* (65).

Agamben suggests that in profound boredom the human is revealed as being that which is most properly ‘*open to a closedness*’ (65), and that such an experience appears to place the human in its ‘closest proximity’ (Heidegger quoted in Agamben 65) to the animal as captivated by what is ‘never revealed to it’ (Agamben 65). Agamben explains that, for Heidegger, the “second structural moment” is being-held-in-suspense, in which Dasein’s ‘possibilities’, ‘now stand before Dasein in their absolute indifference, both present and perfectly inaccessible at the same time.... But this deactivation of the concrete possibilities makes manifest for the first time what generally *makes* pure possibility *possible*’ (Agamben 66). ‘For which’, Heidegger suggests, ‘we apparently have no content’. (Heidegger quoted in Agamben 67).⁷⁰ Furthermore, Agamben suggests, ‘this potentiality or originary possibilitization constitutively has the form of a potential-not-to... of an impotentiality, insofar as it is *able to* ... only beginning from a *being able not to*, that is, from a deactivation of single, specific, factual possibilities’ (67). Agamben notes that for Heidegger, the animal is ‘unable to ... suspend and deactivate its relationship with the ring of its specific disinhibitors’ (68), where ‘disinhibitors’ are the things in the animal’s environment which the animal senses (perhaps which it ‘attends-to’ reflexively in a similar sense to Massumi’s sense of reflexivity that I will explore below) and which inhibit particular behaviours. In this way, Agamben suggests of Heidegger’s argument, such a disclosure of a ‘being able not to’, shows the human as, in its being, that to which such an ‘undisconcealment’ of the animal is shown.⁷⁰

If we subscribe to Heidegger’s and Agamben’s propositions, such an experience of boredom could happen anywhere. However, as far as I can tell, episodes of my practice tend to engender modes of boredom for those attending, except for me, a little more than life in general. However, episodes may be boring without being boring in the sense of the first or second ‘structural moments’ that Heidegger describes. Heidegger’s first ‘structural moment’, in which I am delivered over to that to which I am indifferent, on the face of it, seems to resonate with how attenders of episodes appear to me. Perhaps within a kind of vocabulary of behaviours that I have established within an episode or within a bundle or series of episodes, and within the rhythms of comings and goings and other processes in the locale, there is a sense in which attenders are indifferent to whether I do this or that, whether we walk one way or another, and so on. In ‘Night Drifts’ (2012), Maria O’Connor writes of her encounter with *Ripples*, ‘The demand does not lie in the unpredictability of things. Rather, the demand becomes infinite, impossible, precisely because it is made on what is most ordinary, most common, and everyday, what is most predictable, knowable, seeable and sayable’ (5). I will return to O’Connor’s discussion later, but in this context it seems that boredom would have something to do with the ‘demand’ that, O’Connor suggests, episodes make on attenders, or at least, made on O’Connor in her attending-to and passing-of it. Perhaps it is possible that attenders are tethered to the episode in the way of being-held to that to which they are indifferent, but also anticipating, within a *there* which to a great extent seems predictable, that something to which they will not be indifferent, might happen. In which case, attenders might in a way be ‘indifferent’, but not absolutely indifferent so much as biding their time. Particularly in episodes with a starting time, such a sense of anticipation seems to increasingly dissipate and my unpredictability tends gradually to diminish. This is not to say that predictability/unpredictability is *necessarily* related in any way to boredom. Or perhaps attenders’ investments of time and energy to rendezvous with the episode produce one kind of tethering to it such that attenders stay—for a while—even if the episode bores them, rather than being ‘held fast’ *in* or *as* the boredom. Or perhaps attenders, like me, in encountering ‘art’, sometimes do not like to admit to others to being bored, rather than being held fast *in* or *as* the boredom. It seems that I cannot eliminate any of these possibilities. However, a ‘structural moment’ may occur among other ‘structures’ or ‘moments’ or modes – it would not be as if anyone is exclusively within the first or second ‘structural moment’ for any measurable or chronological time. I imagine that episodes can be ‘riveting’ for attenders, but this word first suggests moments of anxiety or excitement rather than boredom. But that is not to say that boredom of episodes may not also be riveting. While I might get the sense that attenders may be bored, I cannot remember being bored in my practice, which might suggest that my animal captivation is not revealed to *me* within episodes. Or maybe it would be revealed to me insofar as I identify with attenders, that is, insofar as I am not myself. Insofar as I identify with attenders in their boredom, I am

‘stock-scene’ of movie ‘Western’ genres involves the throwing of a horse’s ‘tether’ over a horizontal—hitching—rail outside the saloon before he who had been riding the horse enters the saloon. In this sense tethering includes binding by agreement, wear, belief, habit, or desire, rather than obvious or overt force. It differs from the stronger bond or ligature of religion, and I explore something related to this in relation to temporality in Chapter Five.

Perhaps my hearing or listening to the audio recording, of MP3 player and earphones, to which perhaps I am ‘tethered’, draws my attending to my hearing of or listening to others who have been audio-recorded in another *there*, or other *theres*. They would not have been recorded, or recorded themselves, in these other *theres* only for the sake of the *there* of the Auckland Art Gallery terrace on the Wednesday, or Lorne Street on the Saturday, but for the set or series of such *theres* in which each playing of the play occurred and occurs.⁷¹ Such a playing of recordings would be among other playings of recordings, or playings of the ‘script’, choreography, or programme of *The Bench or Hello for Dummies*. Such a script, choreography or programme would include the playing of the guides. These playings of the guides appear as involving kinds of ventriloquism of ‘Ant Hampton’ and ‘Glen Neath’, (among others), and the guides’ negotiation of themselves and my partner and I in relation to a kind of ‘template’. Below, I will explore such a negotiation as involving a ‘mis-fitting’. Perhaps *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* draws my attention to others having been recorded in other *theres* for the sake of replayings, among which are the replayings that I attended. By contrast, perhaps episodes of my practice draw attention to potentials and possibilities that ‘here and now’, others and I may become audio-visually re-corded for the sake of other, future *theres*.

not identifying with any quality of an attendee, but, if I subscribe to Heidegger’s and Agamben’s engagements and there occur among or for attendees the ‘structural moments’ of boredom Heidegger suggests, I would be identifying with a being-left-empty, or a being-held-in-suspense. In Chapter Two ‘Levinas’s ethics’, of *Radical Passivity*, Wall suggests:

I do not identify [with someone in pain]... as someone in particular. I identify, very much to the contrary, insofar as the sufferer is *not* other-than-I, is *not* alter-ego. That is, I identify insofar as the other is precisely no one in particular, is beyond himself and not equal to his suffering. *I identify with the other precisely to the extent that the other is anonymous, and thus I identify with no one.* (47)

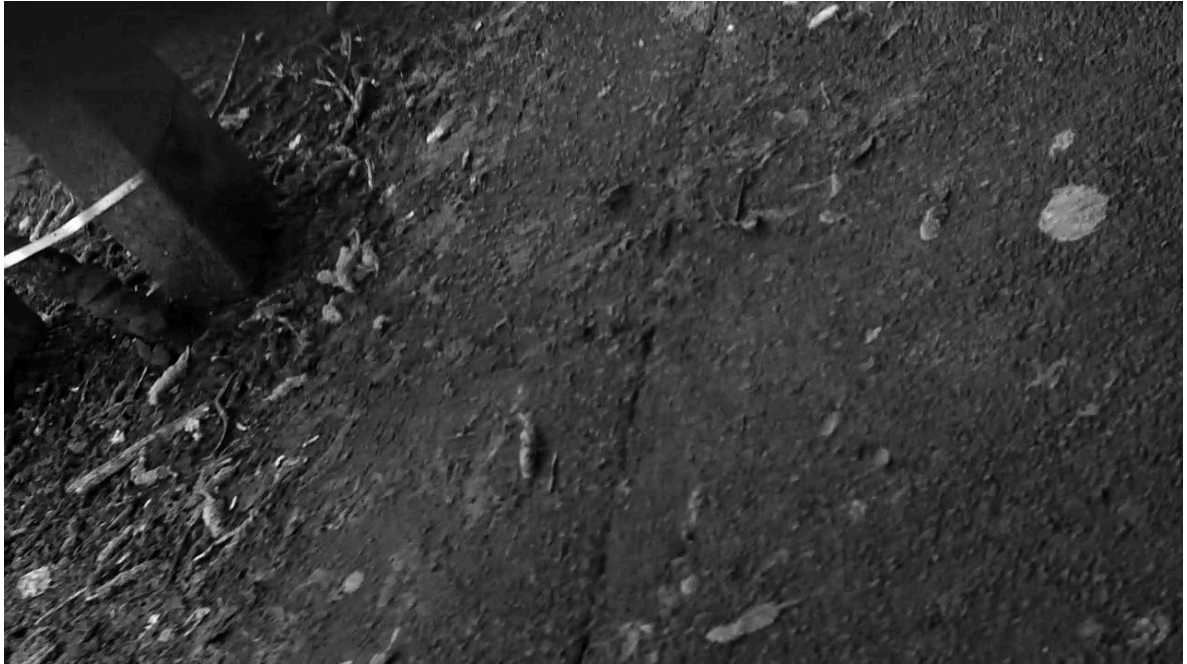
⁷¹ ‘The bench’ on which we are sitting in Lorne Street is part of another artwork. We are sitting on the straight part of an ‘R’, part of the word *Reo*, each letter of which is street furniture, or, a ‘bench’. Thus there is an association between the audio-vocal-verbal character of *The Bench* and this ‘bench’. These bronze letters are nearby (and part of the title of) a poem *Kawe Reo / Voices Carry* by Robert Sullivan (2011), written on the risers of the nearby stairs between the street and Central City Library (‘Poetry on the Lorne Street Steps’, <http://www.aucklandlibraries.govt.nz/EN/About/Highlights/Pages/poetryonlorne.aspx> . Michael Barrett notes that the poem and ‘Reo’ are part of an upgrade of the street by Architectus, with the project led by Henry Crothers <http://architecturenow.co.nz/articles/lorne-street-by-architectus/>).

The Bench on which my partner and I sat on the terrace of the Art Gallery is also an artwork, Jeppe Hein’s (2011) *Long Modified Bench Auckland*, see <http://www.aucklandartgallery.com/whats-on/events/2011/september/jeppe-hein-long-modified-bench-auckland> .

Why memorialize a performance practice? In Levinas's terms, a memorializing, whether in audio, the kinaesthetic, or any other medium, would involve totalizing and infinitizing, *said* and *saying*. However, for Levinas in 'The Trace of the Other' (1986), which I will discuss in Chapter Four, memory (and perhaps by extension memorializing), insofar as it is 'in truth' (345), denies the otherness of the other. This suggests that memorializing, if it is to do something other than 'return to the Same' (Critchley 1991: 165), must (remark its imbrication in) fiction. Whether in a Levinasian register or not, memorializing a performance practice might occur as an attempt to recollect or recoup that which has passed. Memorializing concerns a relation between remembering and forgetting. Perhaps it occurs as an attempt to remember what may be forgotten, while acknowledging a condition or necessity of forgetting. Memorializing might ostensibly occur as a second-order process in relation to memory, a deliberate or intentional project of remembering and remaindering, even if conditioned by unconscious or unknowable processes. A memorial re-tethers me, re-cords me, to something passed. It cites, disseminates, and supplements the event. Making a memorial of an episode of my practice for my own re-ference only, would, in different ways, already be to make it for others, for example for the others that I might become, or for the others who encounter me having made, and been made by, my engagement, or re-cording, in the memorial. Perhaps in memorializing my practice I must imagine whom I am addressing the memorial to, but any receiver or reader of my memorial, even if it is I, will differ from my idea. Even if it might also tend to be locked away, kept safe for me or from me, (not exactly 'cordoned-off', as a cordon is temporary and intended to stand out from the background, to show itself as a prohibiting border) from me as I pass-it-by or attend-to it.⁷²

In what follows in this section, I pick up senses of the *prosthetic* that Wills explores in *Dorsality* (2008), in terms of a 'technology in the back' (12) of the human animal, which itself picks up on Derrida's engagement with prosthetics. Wills (245) quotes Derrida in 'Nietzsche and the Machine' (2002b):

⁷² With keeping safe for me and from me I am provisionally suggesting, in relation to memory and memorializing and an exceeding of memorializing, the structure of the crypt in Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok's '“The Lost Object Me—”: Notes on Endocryptic Identification' in *The Shell and The Kernel* (1994). Such an association may be an area for future research.



Any living being, in fact, undoes the opposition between *physis* and *technè*. As a self-relation, as activity and reactivity, as differential force, and repetition, life is always already inhabited by technicization.... A prosthetic strategy of repetition inhabits the very moment of life: life is a process of self-replacement, the handing down of life is a *mechanike*, a form of technics.... At the origin there is technics. (Derrida 2002b: 244, 248)

Insofar as ‘a prosthetic strategy of repetition inhabits the very moment of life’, life would occur as a possibility of return. In this sense, life would be tethered to itself. Another implication of Derrida’s thinking of prosthetics is that speech, writing and choreo-graphy—movement-writing—are prosthetic. For Wills, one of the implications of figuring ‘technology in the back’ (2008: 12) is that my animation, as *physis-technè*, occurs prior to or behind my conceptual perspective, and it deconstructs my forward progress. Wills suggests, ‘Memory might be called, after all, the first artificial intelligence, and it comes to be recognized explicitly as such once Freud discovers the unconscious like some self-produced biochip that controls (and derails), as if from behind, the conscious’ (10). This suggests a train moving on a track, but how could it be derailed from behind? Or, if an episode of my practice might be in some way ‘on-track’ or ‘on-script’, what would constitute a derailling, or how would I recognize it? The ‘from behind’ in this passage suggests a sense of memory in its becoming, and in its belonging-to-me and not-belonging-to-me, catching-up-with-me. Aside from ‘my’ memory, an *episode’s* memory, or the memory of an episode, might include all the dispersing-gathering traces of its having-been-attending-to. Some of which might also catch-up-with-it and derail it. Insofar as episodes live from the contingent occurrences or passings and attendings of the locale, it might be difficult to say whether or not a derailling occurred. That is, de-railings would be re-railings even if they were railed-against. The re-cordings, or memorials within this exegesis, of my attendings of the practices I discuss, would occur as one kind of counter-signature, in a sense,

bringing about or betraying these practices ‘within’ the exegesis.⁷³ The belonging of a performance practice within the genre of research would seem to be conditioned by the existence of some kind of memory, remembering, re-searching or reconnaissance of it. It would be difficult not to consider this exegesis as in some way a memorializing of the practices I discuss. In Chapter Five, I explore how my practice occurs as an exploration of relations between remembering and forgetting.

Choreographies, like language in general, would occur as a prosthetic neither completely outside nor inside any individual. Each material ‘belonging’ occurs *with* or *as* choreographies or gestural programmes. For example, the ‘belonging,’ of ‘traffic lights’, means a tissue or bundle and programme incorporating road, traffic, a place to cross, street markings, safety, risk, precaution, law, rights, seriality, times, pathways and traces of pathways, machines, hierarchy, codes, and communication. These elements might belong to a being-in-common of traffic signalling. In Althusser’s sense in ‘Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses’, (1971) the signal *hails* a driver to-be-driver and the pedestrian to-be-pedestrian. In Heidegger’s terms, the signal’s disclosure is always already within a horizontal disclosure of being-in and being-with.⁷⁴ The traffic signals occur as sentenced, programmed, sound and light. ‘Traffic lights’ is a belonging that is both, or ambiguously, nominal and verbal. Or, in Levinas’s terms, traffic lights might occur as an ‘amphibology of being and entities’ (*OB*: 38). That is, an amphibology of ‘belonging’ and a particular belonging. There would also occur an undecidability of whether the belonging belongs to a someone or a someone belongs to the belonging. In a different way, the ‘belonging’ ambiguously nominal and verbal, of my mobile phone, invokes or occurs-with, for example, gestural sequences, as does the belonging of my backpack that in ‘normal’ ways can be taken-off, left-shoulder then right-shoulder or vice-versa, partially or fully-unzipped, put-down to reveal some of its contents to some of those attending, and re-zipped, then put-back-on or placed somewhere in a particular orientation and to which I might thus be tethered. Other prosthetic memories, choreographies or programmes are invoked in our standing-together or apart, or walking-next-to, towards or away-from one another in a suburban or urban locale. Such programmes occur as the locales for any further recording and are also the locales of becoming. In ‘The Political Economy of Belonging and the Logic of Relation’, Massumi (2002) suggests that plays which work against (without breaking) such programmes as codes or codifications, occur as the becoming of the programme.

⁷³ I will explore Levinas’s engagement with betrayal in Chapter Five.

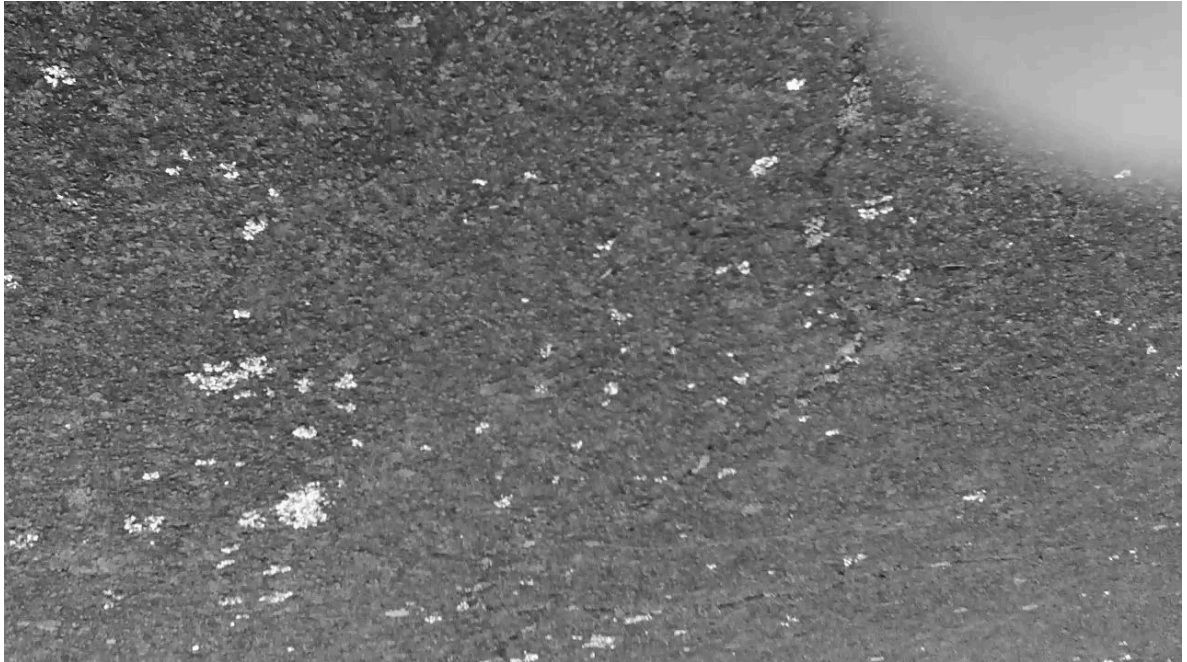
⁷⁴ In *Being and Time* Heidegger writes, ‘Being-with existentially determines Da-sein even when an other is not factically present and perceived. The being-alone of Da-sein, too, is being-with in the world’ (1996: 113).



My memories of my watchings-of-and-listenings-to audio-visual recordings of episodes of my practice belong-with and do not belong-with other modes of memory of these episodes. If these other modes were determined by exclusion in relation to the audiovisual, they would be memories of occurrences that were not, at least in a ‘conventional’ sense, audiovisually recorded, in the sense of leaving a trace on a mini-DV tape or SD card. But what is not traced in this way might be traced in a kind of inverse relation to what is traced: that which is not recorded, whether avoided or unnoticed, might be recorded as an absence in relation to a ‘positive’ trace. But such distinctions between modes of memory, and the traced and the not-traced, are not rigorously decidable. The audiovisual recordings would also occur as an example of a very common memorial strategy in choreographic practices: the audiovisual recording of ‘a performance’ or what happens, in order to—better or differently—see—and hear—what happened in order to refer or *turn back* to it, perhaps to *reflect* on it. In this sense the audiovisual recordings occur as displacements, re-flections and re-sonances that are one way in which my practice encounters itself differently, again and again, losing its place from behind, in order to be placed somewhere else. Or at least, these recordings are there where they belong in my filing cabinet, at arm’s length, such that I am able to defer referring to them. The possibility of the audio-visual recording being played in future, but perhaps more particularly, the possibility of it being played in a future to people other than myself who were not-in and not-with the episode ‘at the time’, is one reason in an episode for holding the camera in my hand with the lens pointing towards the footpath. Those other people might be the readers of this exegesis to the extent that audiovisual recordings are included in it. ‘Within’ the episode, such an organization of camera-hand-arm-body or frame-hand-arm-body perhaps has less power to affect

those attending in relation to a feeling of becoming-re-corded, where this might be a potential of being brought back to mind, re-minded, or figured but somehow an extra, or re-maindered. Aurally, a registering of rhythms of gait and other movements occur in the rhythms of footsteps, the rubbing of clothing items over each other, and sometimes the rubbing of the camera on a clothing item. Visually it is produced by rhythms of accelerations of movement in the frame, produced as the lens moves over surfaces, usually the footpath, in a back-and-forth or fast-and-slow alternation. In this organization, the camera-hand-arm-body perhaps tends towards forgetfulness, re-appearing at unpredictable times. My feet and legs are often figured 'directly', while those attending and passers-by are figured 'directly' less frequently, and when they are, it is often their shoes and lower legs.

In this way the recordings through lens and microphone are recordings of the holding and situating of the camera that might be said to be 'outside' the frame. This includes my hand-arm-body's relation to the camera, affecting the position, orientation, and rhythms of movement of the frame, as well the movement of the built-in microphone, its proximity to emanations of sound and to the aural rhythms of walking and other movements of others and myself. This might occur as a kind of 'indexical' registering of rhythms of gait and other movements, except when the camera has been left or placed at a distance from the hand-arm-body. This way in which the hand-arm-body holding and situating the camera is recorded, is one mode of a relatedness that might be described as *prosthetic*. Within one frame of this composition or linkage, within one frame of prosthetics that would often be a prominent mode, the movement of the camera is contingent on the movement of my body, and the camera is prone to a kind of forgetting by 'me.' In other words, I forget that I am holding it. Through a different frame of prosthetics more prominent at other times, the movement of my hand-arm-body is contingent on the movement of the camera which itself is contingent on the movement of what is inside, or may become inside, the video frame, or what may become more or less prominent within the audio range. As prosthetic, this mode would not occur via my voluntary decisions to record this and not that, but through a choreographic programme neither completely inside 'me' nor outside me—and so itself a prosthetic. That is, my hand-arm-body may be programmed, or drawn-out-to-record or avoid-recording, to turn-towards or turn-away-from, particular bodies. That is, 'I' prosthetically may be choreographed to tend to let some bodies pass-by without passing into a 'history' as an audiovisual recording, even if that recording is still where it belongs or does-not-belong in 'my' filing cabinet. But insofar as the sense of prosthetic here would be *dorsal* or a 'technology in the back' (Wills 2008: 12), it would always be re-choreographing me—changing in ways that exceed calculability. Prosthetic relations might be said to occur among the camera and other bodies and processes which condition and affect its position, orientation, movement, and rhythm; other people, pavements, traffic lights, and vehicles. In terms of measurable distance, it is possible to say that the hand-operating-the-camera is in a closer relation to it than other bodies or processes. In another way the operations of the camera, for example in *Oct Dec Series*,



(2011), were perhaps just as closely conditioned by or related to the hand as to, for example, ST PAUL Street Gallery as ‘site’, or the nearby traffic-lights.

Such a thinking of prosthetics enables a reversion of my exploration of tethering above. Tethering also suggests a sense of domestication and domesticity. Perhaps the assembling of attendeers and belongings, different kinds of bodies, produce a kind of provisional territory or kind of interiorizing, and therefore also exteriorizing, of episodes of my practice. Such a suggestion of a kind of interiorizing-exteriorizing would perhaps be most readily made of my placing and replacing or adjusting of my two water bottles ‘in front’ of me (behind me was a wall) in a pedestrian area in *Off the Boil*, in Bundle 1 of *Oct Dec Series* (2011), alluding to a spatial format of busking and of the ‘frontality’ or facing of a stage.⁷⁵ More generally, perhaps such interiorizings-exteriorizings occur, whether or not they allude to such, to cite Read’s (2008) term, performance performat-‘preformats’ (2008: 170), in each of my arrangements, usually on the footpath, of what might provisionally be described as ‘my’ belongings such as mobile phone and water bottle, and attendeers. More generally again, interiorizings-exteriorizings would occur within each of the belongings of each locale, such as lampposts or traffic lights. In the section ‘Interiority and Economy’ of *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas suggests ‘the domicile holds back the flow of the liquid element ... then it is from out of the domicile that one plunges back into the element (Wills 53). Wills argues that in *TI* the house is a first solidification that precedes the solidification that is the body as hypostasis, and so the house

⁷⁵ I heard from an attendee later that another attendee had remarked something like ‘Now he’s busking.’

inaugurates interiority and exteriority. For Levinas, in *TI*, the house is where the separated being ‘recollects’ itself among movable objects or furnishing (*TI* 157). My arrangements of ‘belongings’ (initially, whether ‘belongings are understood more narrowly as ‘my’ belongings, or more generally understood as materialities-choreographies-programmes), might be considered as a minimal mode of the being-at-home-with-itself of the episode, or of me in an episode, (or in a locale visit, or on my way to or from an episode, and so on) in the sense that the episode’s arranging-of ..., or arranging-itself, produces a separation of the episode from the locale as ‘the element’. Wills continues, “‘Interiority and Economy’ reads as the elaboration of the idea that because a house is built, because there is that technology, interiority can be defined. And exteriority also; and by extension, infinity’ (2008: 60).⁷⁶

Times of Recording & ‘Right of Inspection’

In *Common Series* (2008), insofar as the camera-hand-arm-body, or the ‘Blue Oyster Performance Series-Brent Harris-frame’, appeared to the collective—differently among passers-by, attendeers and me—as actually-recording, or capable-of-recording the scene, perhaps it suggested that this scene is not only among ‘you’, ‘me’, or ‘us’ ‘here’ and ‘now’, but that through its audio-visual recording, in which we each figure in different ways, it will be playable and readable in any future.⁷⁷ For me this recalls the way that in SEC Derrida argues that any context cannot be closed or ‘saturated’. Rather, the citationality or *différance* that is constitutive of its constituents opens the context to its outside. The camera-hand-arm-body is one mode, with particular characteristics, of the potential for future readability that would include anecdote and memory, even as a communication of a subject to itself. Perhaps one of the camera-hand-arm-body’s or ‘Blue Oyster Performance Series-Brent Harris-frame’s’ particular characteristics is that, at a glance in a very conventional way, its specialization as recorder tends to be apparent (in contrast to the less ‘apparent’ audiovisual recording in more recent of my projects). Depending on the configuration of attendeers and their recognizability as ‘an audience’, it tends to turn passers-by into attendeers, at least in the sense that passers-by might notice something like a performance, even if in becoming increasingly ubiquitous, cameras are less and less remarkable. While each of us commonly has the potential to recount interactions with others verbally in a future, and to remember, the fact that I held the camera may have suggested that I felt that the scene had some potential future significance

⁷⁶ In ‘Interiority and Economy’ in *TI*, Levinas poses the feminine other as inaugurating ethical moment of the domicile or interior belonging that is not yet an opening or inauguration of or to language. This second inauguration to language as an exteriority is a masculine other. That is, there is an ontology of sexual difference embedded here with Levinas.

⁷⁷ *Common Series* was part of The Blue Oyster Performance Art Series in Dunedin (2008), curated by Jenna Todd.

for me or as one perhaps appearing as ‘artist’. The recording is thus likely to be replayed or shown in some way, at least to myself, and possibly to others, in a future. The expressions ‘seeing is believing’, and ‘a picture is worth a thousand words’ might suggest that in some senses, we understand the visual of the audio-visual to have more capacity to effect belief-in, or a capacity to transmit information faster, when read or played in a future, than any anecdote.

The parts of the video recordings that include images of people feel to me, when I watch them, as if they should not so readily be ‘released’, that they should not be seen and heard by people other than me. Or at times, when the person in the image appears uncomfortable, that I also should not watch and listen to this part of the recording. However, the camera, as I suggested above, was probably, more so in *Common Series* than in later of my projects, a readily recognizable recording apparatus, and at least one attendee, in the example I will discuss in *Common Series* (2008), was drawn-into, or chose to position-herself-in, the frame. Attendees would probably have known that they may have been audiovisually recorded and, if they did not want to be recorded, could have either avoided the frame or microphone or told me at the time. However, one may ‘go-along-with’ being videoed ‘in-the-moment,’ ‘being-carried-along’ and then later have reservations, and not wish this recording to be seen by me or others. This may especially be the case in contexts where a future harbors unknowable others—a future-to-come-in-general.⁷⁸

But it is not just attendees of an episode who might be inspected in the recording. Or rather, the recording questions or opens the who or the what that would be inspected in an episode. In ‘Right of Inspection’ (1998), translated by David Wills, Derrida engages with a series of black and white photos, a ‘work’ by Marie Françoise Plissart, which Derrida writes, ‘recalls a photo-novel’ (7).⁷⁹ In relation to a question posed within the previous part of this polylogue text concerning who addresses, or who is addressed by, ‘these words’ (4), the subsequent passage suggests:

⁷⁸ This for Derrida, for example in SEC, is the general condition of the trace and *writing* as iterable mark. The mark is there for any reader-in-general in the radical absence of an author or any intended recipient of the writing. Such is the iterability and undecidability of the trace, re-cording or tethering structure, any structure of re-turn: they can never saturate the possibility of any future context in general.

⁷⁹ This (1998) publication of *Right of Inspection* does not include page numbers. In the book, Derrida’s text follows Plissart’s work and Wills’s ‘Translator’s Preface’. The ‘page numbers’ for quotes I give for this text take the first page of Derrida’s text as page 1.

– It perhaps amounts to the same thing: here you are positioned, defined, determined, some addressee assigns you a place, somewhat as if you had been developed then fixed by a photographic operation, after being surprised in front of the lens: it captures, fixes, and looks at you with its impassive eye (although the film is very sensitive). Here you are framed at the unexpected moment when, surprising the apparatus that has surprised you, you fall motionless before it. (1998: 4)



A double passivity pertains to such a being-framed-by-‘some-addressee’, in some other *there*. There in the passage is a ‘you’ ‘framed’ and an ‘addressee’, but no apparent addressor, unless it is the camera. But the passage says ‘here you are positioned... somewhat as if’. ‘As if’ is a mode of acting or feigning. (The photographs of which Derrida writes might be described as *pretentious*). With its ‘here’ the passage cited above acts or feigns itself as ‘somewhat as if’ a camera. But the somewhat ‘as if’ a camera addresses ‘you’ supposedly framed, to no one in particular. Neither ‘you’ framed nor the someone or something addressed has positioned or posed herself or himself fully with regard to the frame. The ‘apparatus’ or ‘somewhat as if’ camera was surprised as well, perhaps in being surprised becoming an attendee of the ‘you’ and framing and falsely accusing the ‘you’ within its feign or act. No one was outside the frame. Or at least, that is what I have to say about it. ‘In the photo-novel’ writes an interlocutor, ‘[T]he word given to the author, narrator or character forces the image, it filters it, such as occurs with a voice off-stage or a cinematic voice-over’ (1998: 7). Such a word suggests the AAH and A voice in *The Bench or Hello for Dummies*, in voicing off-stage or voicing-over and so in some way distantly grasping whatever or whoever I happen to see, hear or touch in the locale. It also suggests these words of this narration in relation to whatever would be its figures. However, the same (it seems) interlocutor suggests, that unlike the photo-novel, ‘the work... analyzes... who possesses this right, who possesses the other, holding it as the object of its gaze or

within its sights?’ (1998: 7) Wills’ *dorsality* engages otherwise than the right (*droit*), vertical or straight, and perhaps the ‘work’ or ‘the other’ may involve a bending-away from anyone who might hold it.

I suggest that the modes of audiovisual recording in episodes of my practice, and ‘the first rule’ in *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* each are associated with differing kinds of ‘effacing’ of attendeers, passers-by and I. Perhaps in doing so, such effacings would turn other human and inhuman bodies or body-parts towards being faces or towards modes of faciality. In contrast with my feeling that I should not watch or record attendeers, a desire to ‘efface’ might occur against a desire, or chance, if not a ‘right’, to be inspected, or at least, represented, in the scene. Or my desire to efface might occur against the chance—within the chance of being-inspected—to inspect oneself or represent oneself. However, such ‘effacings’ would not occur only as subtractions. In ‘the first rule’, *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* negatively isolated the face of my partner, suspending for a moment Levinas’s sense of ‘face’, by a prohibition that I obeyed, to ‘subtract’ it from my vision. This draws out my attending-to different ways that I might say of someone that ‘I know’ them. ‘Subtracting’ my partner’s face from my vision does not mean that the faces of these ‘attendeers’, or participants, were simply absent. In *The Bench or Hello for Dummies*, as I obey ‘the first rule,’ the location of my partner’s face relative to ‘me’ and to the rest of my partner’s body, perhaps presences more strongly or distinctly than in a ‘normal’ conversation, supposing such a thing exists, insofar as my partner’s face is a moving location that I am audio-vocally-verbally tethered to locate in relation to, with a greater or lesser margin for error (abdomen, chest, neck), in order to avoid ‘looking at.’⁸⁰ Thus in a sense it conditions everything that I look at. Or, perhaps, it is something I must ‘look at’ ‘in my ‘mind’s eye’ so to speak, as a kind of non-figure or blank, in order to (remember to) avoid looking at. And a non-figure or blank is, or becomes, the place of fantasy. This recalls Wills suggestion of the *dorsal*, and a proscription or distancing-from, or perhaps ‘effacement’, of it, ‘as the source of the most stimulating fantasy’ (2008: 12). At times the ‘characters’ we enact in *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* discuss extreme possibilities for how each other’s faces and bodies might look. Thus I suggest that *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* and episodes of my practice involve a kind of presencing-absencing of that which is to be avoided *as to-be-avoided*. I will return to *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* below.

Audio-visual recordings, writings, and performances have different capacities for effacement, deletion, editing and dissemination from one another. As I suggested above, audio-visual recordings, tapes, SD cards, and files hopefully still intact on my external hard drives, held in reserve, are locked away in my ‘private’ store.⁸¹ Delay and deferral are prominent characteristics of the interrupted

⁸⁰ Chapter Five engages with a relation of hearing and obedience

⁸¹ In a sense these recordings might resemble what Levinas describes in *TI* as ‘movable goods’ (*Bien-meubles*) (157), their material otherness having been drawn into the home and studio by the action of labour. Earlier in

processions of episodes. In relation to this, the audio-visual recordings would occur as other modes of delay and deferral with different durations. This research engages recording as ‘writing’ in Derrida’s expanded sense, in which writing, as innumerable modes of iteration-citation is constitutive of ‘experience’. In a Levinasian engagement, and not in contradiction to iteration-citatoriality, the time of *Off the Boil* in Bundle 1 of *Oct Dec Series* (2011) has passed absolutely. This project thus in some way occurs as an engagement between a Derridean deconstructive practice that deconstructs the binary between the live and the recorded, the living and the living-on, *physis* and *techné*, and a Levinasian thinking of time as that which *passes* irrecoverably, in excess of my powers of re-collection and re-presentation. This difference might be figured, to some extent, as different engagements of Derrida and Levinas, with the figure of *the trace*. I will explore Levinas’s engagement with the trace in relation to memory and research in Chapter Four.

Reading a book or watching a film is also a ‘live’ encounter, concerning which I may get carried-along. Whether or not I get carried-along with others or my practices, I am still carried-along in something. In this sense, in relation to a Heideggerian engagement, not-getting-carried-along would be a modification of a more primordial getting-carried-along. Getting-carried-along in a book, I might read a passage that I later regret reading, and I cannot unread what I have read. Perhaps in episodes of my performance practices there occur bodily commitments that are different in an essential way to reading a book, even if I can have a strong bodily response to what I read. The necessity to move in relation to other bodies including vehicles in a performance on the street is of a different order to the necessity to orient myself in relation to what is there to be read in a book. Refusing-to-assent-to-something in an episode or leaving-it-before-it-‘finishes’ is often apparent to me and to others, in ways that putting-a-book-down is not.

Massumi: Belonging and Becoming

During an episode of *Common Series*, one of the attendeers took over the role of cameraperson as I had requested her to do prior to this episode. Her more ‘conventional’ operation of the camera, following ‘the performer’s’ face, recording other attendeers in the process, perhaps engendered spatial relations and calculations among attendeers more, or at least differently, than when I held it at my side with lens ‘pointing’ at the footpath. This proposition invites consideration of a scene or field of an episode in relation to the relationality, or in the terms of my discussion, passings and

TI, Levinas had made a distinction between the otherness of the material world, land and food, what Levinas calls the elements, and the ‘absolutely other’ (33). For Levinas, I can consume food and acquire materials, and in this way negate their otherness by absorbing them into my possession or me. If the ‘absolutely other,’ is traced in any material, *that* otherness could not be acquired or moved in the way that a movable good’ could be, as it would have already disappeared.

attendings, of ‘part-objects’ and ‘part-subjects’ that Brian Massumi discusses in ‘The Political Economy of Belonging and the Logic of Relation’ in *Parables for the Virtual: movement, affect, sensation* (2002). Massumi proposes a priority and exteriority of a relation to the terms of that relation, for example the terms ‘individual’ and ‘society’, as a way of thinking change, or that ‘they might be seen as differential emergences from a shared realm of relationality that is one with becoming – and belonging’ (2002: 71). Massumi picks-up-on the work of Michel Serres, Bruno Latour, and Pierre Lévy, to propose the concept of a ‘part-subject’, using the example of a soccer-ball as part-subject in a soccer game. In Massumi’s parable the soccer game differs from how we might normally think of it. For Massumi, ‘the condition’ of the game is ‘a field’ which is ‘more fundamentally a field of potential than a substantial thing, or object’ (72). This field is ‘polarized by two attractors: the goals [which are] inducers of directional movement’ (72). The ball, Massumi suggests, ‘catalyzes’ the play (73). Massumi suggests that the ball, as,

the point of unfolding of a tendential movement... is the subject of the play.... The ball arrays the teams around itself.... To be more precise, the subject of the play is the displacements of the ball and the continual modifications of the field of potential those displacements produce. Since the ball is nothing without the continuum of potential it doubles, since its effect is dependent on the physical presence of a multiplicity of other bodies and objects of various kinds; since the parameters of its actions are regulated by the application of the rules... [it] may be called a part-subject. (2002: 73)

Picking-up-on Massumi’s discussion, I will provisionally propose the camera as a part-subject insofar as it may have drawn-out or ‘ex-pressed’ tendential movements from other bodies in relation to it; for example, attracting or repelling bodies into or out of the part of the locale that was ‘in the frame’ as the frame moved, and perhaps affecting the bodily or gestural ‘tones’ of attenders as the frame moved. Insofar as its role as ‘part-subject’ would have been conditioned on it appearing within the play as operating on itself, producing a recording—in its passing into a digital tape—the camera might also be said to be an attendee (the sense of ‘part’ or quasi- suggested in the ‘extra’ ‘e’).⁸² However, the camera might also be considered an attendee if there were no tape in it. That is, although the camera could not ‘record’ in the usual sense; it might attend insofar as it traces or records somewhere its having-been-there. This might suggest that attending is premised on the possibility of recording. That would be to say that insofar as *any* body remembers or traces its participation in an episode it is an attendee of an episode. It could not be said of the camera in this episode, as Massumi writes of the soccer ball, that it ‘is the focus of every player, and the object of

⁸² Massumi’s engagement with ‘part-’ picks up on a ‘quasi-’. Massumi suggests ‘Bruno Latour is well known for taking up [Michel] Serres’s concept of the quasi object, introduced through the example of a ball in a sports game’ (2002: 73).

every gesture' (2002: 73).⁸³ However, the camera, or rather as Massumi argues of the soccer ball, its displacement, at times, could perhaps be considered a subject 'as the point of unfolding of a tendential movement' (73). Similar, to an extent, to the soccer ball, the effect of the camera was 'dependent on the physical presence of a multiplicity of other bodies and objects of various kinds', as well as different codes, and so would have appeared not as a 'full' subject, but a *part-subject*. Perhaps the camera also operated the attendee-camera-woman's hand-arm-body in a related but different way to how it had operated my hand-arm-body when I had held it earlier, in each case drawing out particular movements, for example, of hands and eyes. The other attendees may have been more loosely or elastically bound or *tethered* to 'me' in terms of bodily distance and the orientation of their attending-to within the locale, than the camerawoman. If so, insofar as the camera catalyzed, drew-out, or ex-pressed (74) movements from attendees, we, or parts of us, perhaps became the camera's *part-objects* (73). For Massumi, 'The play is an event-dimension doubling the empirical event-space' (75). Perhaps the displacing camera, its displacing visual frame and audio range, (as looking-listening, seeing-hearing of the attendee-camera-woman)⁸⁴ at times subtly, at times more strongly, arrayed my and other bodies, engendering 'reflexive' calculations of *part-objects*' individual or collective movement relative to the movement of the frame and range, and to the displacing spaces of in-front-of or behind the camera, and inside, outside, or on the edge of the frame, and closer or nearer in the audio range.⁸⁵ The audio and the visual of the audiovisual may have occurred differently in

⁸³ The camera in such a play associates with the terms Massumi writes in considering the televisual migration of the (professional) soccer (or other sports) game into the home, where, Massumi suggests, 'In spite of multiple operations attached to it, the television is a less powerful catalyzer than the soccer ball.' (2002: 85)

⁸⁴ In *Listening*, a text I will explore further in Chapter Five, Nancy writes in relation to listening as '*tendre l'oreille*—literally, to stretch the ear', (5) which I pick-up-on in my engagements with *attending* and *tethering*,

Every sensory register thus bears with it both its simple nature and its tense, attentive, or anxious state: seeing and looking, smelling and sniffing or scenting, tasting and savouring, touching and feeling or palpating, hearing and listening. (2007: 5)

⁸⁵ Massumi makes a distinction between a *reflective* sense of oneself that retains a sense of a subject that is conscious of itself, and a *reflexive* sense,

The separate sensory impressions are synthesized not into a subjective whole but into a state of intensive readiness for a reflex response.... The player must pare himself down to a channelling of the play. The player's subjectivity is disconnected as he enters the field of potential in and as its sensation. For the play, the player *is* that sensation (2002: 74, 75).

I don't take this to imply that there was in any simple or substantial sense a subject who then pared herself down as she laced her boots or attended-to the play. Rather, she would have *passed into* the soccer game from another play and another readiness. Perhaps in this sense one would always be reflexive. In this connection it may be useful to consider somatic engagements with contemporary dance technique, turning-myself-back, being-turned-back, or being-tethered, to the technique classes of Warwick Long and Sean Curham, themselves informed in part by The Feldenkrais Method (Long and Curham) and Klein Technique (Curham), that I attended (and which passed-me-by) as a student in the late 1990s and early 2000s. In such engagements, in differing ways, as far as I understand, the dancer aims to engage with, attend to, or allow a being-affected-in-and-with, or a becoming-in-and-with, what might be described as a somatic or choreographic 'regime of

terms of what Massumi discusses as a ‘regime of passage’ (85) that I outlined in the previous section. Perhaps the visual sense of the field of potential—or regime of passage—catalyzed by the attendee-camera-woman, occurred with tighter and sharper thresholds, in terms of directionality, than the audio sense. Perhaps the audio sense of the field of potential—or regime of passage—catalyzed by the attendee-camera-*microphone*-woman increased in strength more sharply the closer part-objects were to it, and occurred more vaguely in terms of direction or orientation. While a part-object may be in front of, behind, beside, above or below the ball, a ball (unless we consider the brand name or other writing, or the valve if it has one) does not have a direction of ‘facing’ or ‘backing’ as does a lens, and as does, in a different way, a microphone.

The fact that the camerawoman followed me perhaps produced among attendees the prosthetic relation or conjunction, ‘Blue Oyster Performance Series-Brent Harris-frame’. For attendees, and passers-by or passees-by becoming attendees who saw the camera, whatever or whoever was near me depending on the orientation of the camera, was likely to be visually figured and recorded ‘in’ the frame. Two processes suggest that attendees recognized something like this. In the footage produced by the attendee-camera-woman, another attendee seems to self-consciously stand behind me in the frame smiling at other attendees who are behind the lens, as the two of us stand at an intersection waiting for the cross signal of the traffic-light. Just prior to this, attendees had positioned themselves in a two-thirds circle around me in the Octagon in the centre of Dunedin as I hesitatingly speak. ‘Blue Oyster Performance Series-Brent Harris-frame’ then moves in the two-thirds circle as I stand next to an attendee, who appears in the audio-visual recording as a mixture of amusement and embarrassment, perhaps in relation to my vocalization and gestures, and perhaps also at becoming audio-visually recorded. Such a play among attendees, camera and other bodies would be less overt or apparent in most of *Oct Dec Series* (2011) in which I held the camera myself. When I did give the camera to attendees the attendee-camera-person was much less attentive to

passage’. Whether or to what extent such a being-affected might be called reflexive or reflective might depend on the limits of the field of play as it borders, and is contaminated by, other fields of other plays. Such a way of attending was considered as somehow having a capacity to engender ‘kinaesthetic empathy’ with the mover on the part of the watcher. As I noted in the introduction, kinaesthetic empathy has in recent years become a concept of exploration in dance and performance. See Susan Leigh Foster’s book *Choreographing Empathy: Kinaesthesia in performance* (2011).

Thus there are resonances that might be explored between Massumi’s sense of reflexivity and Wills’ (2008) engagement with ‘the technological turn’ (3) and ‘technology in the back’ (12). I noted in Chapter One that in relation to his discussion of Althusser’s (1971) engagement with hailing or interpellation, and Butler’s (2004) engagement with this, Wills suggests,

to conceive of a body and then a subject that are constituted... by the very figure of the fact of a turn or the fact of the figure of a turn... means in the first instance that the subject is formed by means of what we would call a knee-jerk response [a ‘stretch-reflex’], as a function of some endocrinal or corporeal automaticity. (2008: 38)

‘me’ and so did not frame me as strongly as in the example above. *Oct Dec Series* involved a smaller camera that resembles a mobile phone that is not readily as recognizable as a camera as the camera in the example above. Its play has expanded into modes that work against or complicate its coding as an ‘inductive sign’ of audiovisual recording by relating it in terms of similarity of size and shape to my mobile phone. In recent years, recent models of mobile phones have themselves increasingly become signs or ‘catalysts’ of audiovisual recording. Episodes have played the camera as a not-so-recognizable body that, placed on the footpath or other surface, might, as I discussed above with other bodies of different kinds, produce a kind of interiorizing-exteriorizing, territory, or even a



sense of ‘domesticity’ of an episode in its locale.

Massumi suggests that the player ‘looks past it [the ground] and past the ball, to the field of potential.’ (2002: 75) The field of potential in my practice is less clearly regulated or defined than it would be, *prima facie*, in a soccer game that is charged by the polarization of the two goals. A field of potential in episodes might occur in relation to how I reflexively–sensately–orchestrate, or choreograph (‘orchesograph’), modulations or modifications of intensities–extensities, where provisional circumstances are harnessed (tethered) to affect things. For example, that the traffic light walk signal is red brings everyone close, or the direction from which attendees first arrive, or the direction in which they have walked, enables me to stretch–attendees–out at intervals along a street, separately or in groups. None of this is, in any simple sense, intentionally planned or choreographed. Another mode of the field of potential in episodes might include imagined future playing of audio-

visual recordings among other potential assemblings and disassemblings, or more generally, future 'communications', in a general sense, among attendeers, passers-by, traffic, weather and other processes in the locale.

Within a different frame, with other conditions of prostheses, considering the role I take up within the force field of 'play' within an episode, 'I' might be considered to take on something like the ambiguity of the ball in Massumi's (2002) parable, in being a part-subject that draws out the play. The ball is not a player, nor is it something that is simply played. It has a relation to the binary active/passive that is curious and perhaps 'I' occur in episodes in such a strange engaging/disengaging mode as that which engenders the possibility of a play. From the point of hearing-viewing of the camera I might be the attendee to which it is most intensely tethered or related but if 'I' was to be considered the displacing point of feeling of the performativity of an inflective tensor with respect to the other attendeers and passees-by becoming attendeers, perhaps I am neither an attendee nor passe-by, neither attending nor passing, but a differentiator that precedes either as a relationality that makes that difference itself possible. That is, the essential being-becoming of the episode itself.

Misfitting of the Template

With the explorations of recording, prosthetics and becoming and belonging above, before, or behind me, I will explore relations between what might be described as 'the recorded' and 'the contingent' within *The Bench or Hello for Dummies*. Questions of the relation of 'the who', 'place' and time arise through the way that *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* opens relations between what I will provisionally call 'the recorded' and 'the live', or 'the template' and 'the contingent'. When I listen to 'recorded' music I am always in a 'live' 'place', for example, in a room listening to a song on the radio. This place has different conditions of liveness-recording from that of the song I am hearing. Any room or other place is also a recording insofar as *any* being-in a locale and being-with in a locale occurs as citation and iteration. As writings of Derrida alert us in different ways, the modes of 'recorded', re-turned or re-tethered music or performance include that played from a written score, or even that played from memory, or heard and 'recognized' from or in memory.⁸⁶ One

⁸⁶ In 'Solo Solo, Solo' (2005), Rebecca Schneider explores what she encounters as the canonizing in twentieth century western art of the solo male original and originating artist. For Schneider this is exemplified by the construction of abstract expressionist painter Jackson Pollock as 'Founding Father of performance art' (38). Schneider explores this in relation to black American culture's foregrounding of repetition, particularly in music. In elucidating a relation between repetition-citation and solo artist she discusses Yves Klein's (1960) *Leap into the Void*. Schneider describes the work's non-location across different times,

the staging was directed both toward a future (an audience to witness the photograph as evidence) and in a reference to the past (an event that had already taken place and had even already been

particularity of *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* is that the AAH voice, in distinction to most ‘recorded’ music, describes this particular scene in which I am. Elements of the *mise en scene* or locale of *The Bench* might be considered along a continuum of readiness in which they appear as this particular instance of the ‘template’ of the play. The bench on which we are sitting would seem to be at one pole. As one might expect, in each iteration I attended, the bench allowed a view onto some kind of place in which bodies move in and through: a park in the first iteration I participated in and a shared pedestrian and vehicle way in the second. *The Bench* involves *play*-correspondences-misses of a template-script, most prominently a ‘recorded’ audio description, and what happens.⁸⁷ I have a sense at times of not knowing whether something I see happening is scripted by the authors, or is ‘just happening’. As I outlined above, the AAH voice and A voice address ‘me’ as the player, taker or occupant of the role for which A voice is the sonorous model or template. These addresses, which as I discussed in the section ‘Bear in Mind That You are Tethered’ above, as what might be described as a double audio-vocal-verbal and ‘physical’ tethering, which include instructions or prescriptions, single me out here, *and* place me among a series of others who have taken, played or occupied this role, and probably others who will take, play or occupy this role in a future, and still others, who have taken, played or occupied roles in other ‘autoteatro’ plays. Perhaps particular kinds of *contre-temps*, anachronism, or senses of time being ‘out of joint’, as well as senses of distance, are opened in these modes of description and address. Such addresses or modes of reference-suggestion-prescription-proscription perhaps engender for me an awareness of contingency in this situation, for example when we discuss (with me repeating the words spoken by A voice, and I imagine my partner repeating the words of a counterpart to A voice), where ‘we’ live and our occupations, or most comically, when A voice refers to a dog that ‘I’ (my ‘character’) could see, whereas ‘I’ (Brent) did not ‘see’ a dog in either iteration (it failed to appear), other than in ‘my mind’s eye’, via A voice’s reference to a dog, and my subsequent reference to a dog as I replayed, occupied or took my role to which I was tethered on the bench, (perhaps like a dog might be tethered on a lead). Why most comically in relation to the dog? The dog might be a figure of a trainability-tetherability, or of obedience as *ob-audire*, as Mladen Dolar discusses of Nipper, the dog of the His Master’s Voice (HMV) label, in *A Voice and Nothing More* (2006), and a perhaps ‘playful’ recalcitrance, not-attending, straining-at-the-leash, or stretching-towards-un-tethering, perhaps provoked of attendeers in this *play*. Thus we attendeers might have become more dog-like either in

witnessed as having taken place). This leap was, that is, not for a present audience but for a photograph that would record an event that had taken place at a prior time for a future audience that would see the leap on Theatre of the Void Day, November 27, 1960 in the pages of the tabloid *Dimanche*. (30)

⁸⁷ Laura remarked that Alterations chose the locations.

being more obedient, or in straining at the audio-vocal-verbal tether.⁸⁸ A voice's reference to 'a dog' associates with the dog in the publicity photograph of *The Bench*.⁸⁹ The sense of fitting-misfitting gives rise to a sense that while to take-place the *play* necessarily takes a place or places, it seems that it did not have to be *this* place, or *that* place *then*.⁹⁰ In a similar way it could probably just as well be anyone else, and not that particular guy repeating his skateboard relay, starting each time a few metres in front of my partner and me, who supplements, impinges on, or realizes in some way the generic pro-vocation replayed by the MP3 player that tethers me, my memory of whom is unknowingly enrolled into this exegesis.⁹¹ Or perhaps passees-by were the protagonists of this work

⁸⁸ I suggested above that my practice sometimes opens modes of boredom. Both boredom in my practice, and the humour that I felt in this moment of *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* has something to do with a *being-tethered*. This part of *The Bench or Hello for Dummies*, at least for me, opened something humorous in relation to animality. In *On Humour*, Simon Critchley discusses relations between humour, humanity, and animality. Critchley suggests:

If being human means being humorous, then being humorous often seems to mean becoming an animal. But, paradoxically, what becoming an animal confirms is the fact that humans are *incapable* of becoming animals.... There is something charming about an animal becoming human, but when the human becomes animal, then the effect is disgusting. All of which confirms the human being's eccentric position in the world of nature. (2002b: 34-35)

In relation to this, Critchley's suggestion in *On Humour* (2002b) that humour might confirm 'the human being's eccentric position' should be considered in relation to the sense of boredom and im-potentiality that opens the difference between humanity and animality in Agamben's engagement with Heidegger's exploration of boredom discussed in relation to my practice in footnote 70 in this chapter above. I will consider Critchley's (2007) engagement with humour in relation to politics in Chapter Four.

⁸⁹ In the photograph that is part of the invitation email and the booking form there is a park with two people sitting on a bench, and a dog standing just in front and at the side of the person on the right, looking behind and to the right of them. It seems as if the dog is looking directly at the camera or perhaps more likely, the camera-person, and so almost as if looking 'straight' back at or 'inspecting' me as I inspect the photo and the two people from behind them. See <http://www.stpaulst.ac.nz/2012/curatorial-season-2012>.

⁹⁰ There occurred for me a sense of fitting-misfitting between the section of the recorded audio that seemed to be designed for the walking-to-the-bench-tethered-to-each-other of my partner and I; and the duration of our walking in *this* iteration, produced in the particularities of the distance, terrain, and conditions of the locale at the time, and our speed of walking-tethered, among other variables.

⁹¹ In *One Place After Another: site specific art and locational identity* (2002) Kwon suggests Nancy's *The Inoperative Community* as a model for thinking site oriented art otherwise than in terms of the production of the commonality of community in a work. Kwon writes in the final two sentences of the book:

addressing the uneven conditions of adjacencies and distances *between* one thing, one person, one place, one thought, one fragment *next* to another, rather than invoking equivalences via one thing *after* another. Only those cultural practices that have this relational sensibility can turn local encounters into long-term commitments and transform passing intimacies into indelible, unretractable social marks-so that the sequence of sites that we inhabit in our life's traversal does not become genericized into an undifferentiated serialization, one place after another. (2002: 166)

Kwon's claim is that engaging with differences in terms of spatial contiguity or dis-position is a privileged mode of a critical practice, and she assigns an uncritical role to temporal succession that, for Kwon, invokes equivalences. Care is necessary in discussing Kwon's work in relation to my practice, and examples such as

or *play*. Or passers-by-and-I am/are like ‘ready-mades,’ (or participants in a ready-made play-locale), or perhaps like players of ‘bit-parts.’

Similarly, the booking processes might suggest that for the play to take place it was necessary for someone to take, play or occupy the role I play, but it did not have to be *me*, but since I am here now, (or was there then), I had better take, play or occupy the role in *the play* that, as A voice says early on, we have ‘signed up for’, particularly as my partner calls me to do so. If I didn’t, the whole structure would break down or at least be very different. It would probably matter less if an attendee of my practice became un-tethered and did not rendezvous in person with the episode, even if they were one of only two booked attendees. There is both an independence and a dependence among the successive iterations of *the play*. In one way, it does not matter where, when, or how many times this recording has been played before. In another way, the iteration and iterations of *the play* are, each time, part of its material and part of its sense. In this sense perhaps the interest (or ‘inter esse’, as I will discuss in the next chapter) of this work does not so much occur in my engagement with a stranger-partner, or with in some sense a stranger becoming familiar, as through my engagement in and with a locale that includes myself, my partner, and other passings-by and attendings through which appears a kind of misfitting between a script, programme or, to cite Read’s engagement, per-format-pre-format and what happens (2008: 170). However, just because a sense of artificiality emerges within the locale, perhaps does not mean much. I can feel the iteration and iteration of *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* (2012) but one might argue that this might

Hampton and Neath’s *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* (2012), as there are some large differences between these and the site and community-engaged projects that she discusses. Kwon’s book seems to conflate critical efficacy with ‘long term commitments.’ What would be the temporality of the ‘long term’? ‘The long term’ might imply an uninterrupted thread, and in this sense in Levinas’s terms, chronology and synchrony, the time of politics rather than the time of ethics. In this sense a ‘long-term commitment’ would occur in the mode of intentionality and consciousness. In *Existence and Existents*, in relation to fatigue, Levinas writes, ‘a being that is as it were no longer in step with itself, is out of joint with itself, in a dislocation of the I from itself, a being that is not joining up with itself in the instant, in which nonetheless it is committed for good (1995: 35). A not joining up with oneself in fatigue might be a figure for a not joining up with oneself in general, recalling the ‘being beside itself of consciousness’ of *différance* Derrida suggests in ‘Différance’ (1982a), or a version of what Wills figures as ‘technology in the back (2008: 12), or a reflexivity in a field of play that Massumi (2002) explores. Being committed ‘for good’ might be related to what Levinas describes in *OB* as ‘recurrence’ which would have occurred prior to the ‘long-term’. I will explore ‘recurrence’ in Chapter Four. Insofar as it suggests chronology, a ‘long term commitment’ would be undone in the diachrony, saying or *contre-temps* of, or as, what might perhaps be described as a having-been-committed. In the remaining part of this chapter I will suggest that a *contre-temps* opens in the ‘misfitting of the template’ of *The Bench or Hello for Dummies*. In the following Chapters I will explore ideas of ‘critique’ and ‘criticism’ in selected texts of Levinas where these might occur as a commitment to responding to the undoing of commitment. This is not to argue for or against ‘long term commitments’ but to question the way Kwon (2002) associates them with an ethics or politics. In the following chapters I will explore relations between the performance practices and Levinas’s ethics in more depth.

occur as a kind of escapism, irresponsibility or alibi in relation to my responsibility in, with, and to, this particular locale.⁹²

For Levinas in the section ‘The Dwelling’ of *TI*, knowledge or know-how becomes a like moveable objects that are grasped. This grasp takes place on the basis that knowledge, in the framework of *TI*, has the kind of otherness attendant to the material world, of possessions or movable objects brought into the interior of the home, rather than the otherness of the absolute other who will exceed any grasp. However, Wills (2008) points out that for Levinas, labour’s grasp is itself conditioned by chance. Wills suggests, ‘if the hand dedicated to labour and the acquisition of possessions is to be in any way distinguished from the automatic movements of a machine, it will be thanks to... [a] softening... whereby grasping remains a type of groping, whereby it fails to eliminate uncertainty’ (61). Wills quotes Levinas in *TI*:

The hand ventures forth and captures hold of its goal with an inevitable share of *chance* or of mischance, since it can miss its try. The hand is by essence groping... groping is not a technically imperfect action, but the condition for all technique ... The body as possibility of a hand, and its whole corporeity can be substituted for the hand—exists in the virtuality of this movement betaking itself toward the tool. (2008: 167)

Wills had just explored how in *TI*, the house, as a technology of solidification that inaugurates interiority, and so exteriority, is like the body that as a solidification, a hypostasis, that bathes in the element – a first solidification that differentiates the oneself. Wills suggests that the body first comes about by way of the technology of interiorization-exteriorization of the house. Wills suggests that the house therefore has a pivotal role in *TI*, subtitle of which, Wills reminds us, is ‘An essay on exteriority’. This suggests the groping-grasping of the hand-body, as ‘the condition for all technique’ is another associative field of *tethering*. Wills, in relation to the chancy character of technology, writes:

Technology thus retains something of the unseeable or unforeseeable other; our relation to it has something of the structure of our relation to the absolute other. If it never shows us its face or speaks to us through its eyes, that is because it exists to some extent outside our vision and our grasp. But it also means, conversely, that the other that is encountered as it were by chance, outside visibility, and turns to show itself as if first showing its back, enabling its eyes to speak thanks to some special effect, retains something of technology. (2008: 61)

⁹² *Différance*, insofar as it suggests I am always differing and deferring, can be accused of always providing me an alibi. In *Without Alibi* (2002) Derrida aims to explore a *différance* without alibi. I will register Levinas’s engagements with art in relation to escapism in Chapters Three and Four.



The audio-vocal-verbal, as discussed above, would be among modes of sensibility that might be suggested as in some way ‘outside’ or other than vision, visibility or grasp. Insofar as the kind of vision associated with the action of grasping might be described as what Levinas describes in *EE* as ‘the perspective of the world’ (52), Wills’ engagement with technology pre-empts my exploration of Levinas’s engagement with participation in the image and the *saying* and the *said* in the following chapters.

But what would be the significance of the sense of contingency, and my feeling myself as contingent, that opened in *The Bench or Hello for Dummies*? In ‘Is Narrative Fundamental? Beckett’s Levinasian Question in *Malone Dies*’ (2009), David Sherman explores Samuel Beckett’s exposure of narrative contingency through a meta-narrative mode in his novel *Malone Dies*. In this story the narrator ‘Malone’ composes his story as we read, Sherman quotes *Malone Dies*:

The man’s name is Saposcat. Like his father’s. Christian name? I don’t know. He will not need one. His friends call him Sapo. What friends? I don’t know. A few words about the boy. This cannot be avoided (Beckett 211, cited in Sherman 2009: 74)

Sherman (2009) proposes that the condition of contingency appears when Beckett’s Malone creates a character to fit into the pre-existing category or abstraction that is narrative. Sherman links narrative contingency exposed above in *Malone Dies* to Levinas’ argument in ‘Is Ontology Fundamental?’ (1998b), attending to an incident of groping-grasping, that we always do things by accident in excess of our intentional actions. Levinas writes:

The comedy begins with our simplest gestures. They all entail an inevitable awkwardness. Reaching out my hand to pull a chair toward me, I have folded the arm of my jacket, scratched the floor, and dropped

my cigarette ash. In doing what I willed to do, I do a thousand and one things I hadn't willed to do. The act was not pure; I left traces. Wiping away these traces, I left others. (1998: 3)

Sherman argues that contingency calls attention to an exchangeability of our 'being,' 'the contingent is not only unique and unpredicted, but also non-essential, replaceable' (2009: 67). Perhaps this would be somehow analogous to, the paradoxical structure of Levinas' ethics; 'I' am the unique one in that 'I' am singled out, in the accusative case, in responsibility for the other, and at the same time there is a constitutive contingency about me. Constitutive contingency would also call to be thought in relation to Levinas' writing of substitution in *OB*. Both contingency and substitution for the other would suggest that I am constitutively out of place.

By-play

In SEC Derrida argues that nothing *takes place* in a discrete or simple sense: any determined place constitutively opens to the outside, siting is citing. The fact that benches, libraries, art galleries, cemeteries, parks and many other parts of the urban or suburban fabric exist, with differences, in almost every city in the world indicates site as constituted in *différance*. Each bench is different to each other bench, and to be recognized as a bench, each bench is constitutively different to itself. Each bench is similar to other benches, even if only in it being called a bench. In this way the site of *the play* each time opens to other sites. This would be a deconstruction of the sense of mimesis as a relation of an ideal form to a copy in that deconstruction would make undecidable the priority of the idea/blueprint in relation to the thing made, including scripts and choreographies of theatre and performance.

Citation involves temporal differences and spatial differences. Another way of considering the relation of performance practices to site or locale may be in relation to concepts of *exemplarity* or *by-play*. In relation to a question of the singularity of others' and my practices, it may be useful to register the senses of *singularity* and *belonging* in Agamben's discussion of the *example* in *The Coming Community* (1993). For Agamben, an example is at the same time *excepted* from the set it exemplifies. Agamben suggests:

On one hand, every example is treated in effect as a real particular case; but on the other, it remains understood that it cannot serve in its particularity. Neither particular nor universal, the example is a singular object that presents itself as such, that *shows* its singularity.... Exemplary being is purely linguistic being. Exemplary is what is not defined by any property, except by being-called. (1993: 10)

Might *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* or episodes of my practice tend to produce sensings of exemplification of the *there*? Agamben notes that 'example', as the German *beispiel* (byplay), 'plays alongside'. In relation to this, *by-play* may be one mode of belonging and becoming of us attendeers

in the locale or *there* as a movement of becoming-example or exemplification—of the locale or of ourselves-there.⁹³ That is, the performance or episode might frame, or be the frame of, the locale as an instance of itself—one instance among innumerable instances. The locale might become an example of itself insofar as we attend, not to any difference that ‘the performance’ makes in the locale, but to the locale’s being-framed. Or rather, the difference that the performance makes in the locale that matters in this connection may be the framing of itself in and as the locale. In relation to this, ‘a frame’ might be described as a sense of exemplification of the *there*. Such an appearing and becoming-recognized of ‘an artwork’ or ‘a performance’ might be associated with what I have discussed above in relation to the ‘reality’ of performance—Read’s description of ‘a minimal parallax condition of putting a frame around [it]’ (2008: 16).

Or, in relation to the other differences that ‘the performance’ does make, differences in relation to normative or expected goings-on that might induce shifts from passings-by to attendings, perhaps the performance, insofar as it occurs to attenders as a making-example-of-itself of that locale, occurs as a play-alongside-in its locale. In that sense, perhaps episodes involve—for the attendee—a kind of partially exempted-exemplification of a locale. Sometimes this might be a caricaturing of a locale. For example, a framing as ‘an artwork’ or ‘a performance’ might be associated with the sense that, through this frame, our actions are exempt and exemplary with regard to the commerce or ‘reality’ of this street. (I did not *really* place my water bottle on the footpath; we are not *really* walking somewhere). But there could be no consensus as to ‘the reality’ of the street—the realities of the street would be innumerable. Perhaps in this way *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* opens a sense of taking-giving place or being placed. In the next chapter I will discuss Levinas’s exploration in ‘Reality and its Shadow’ (1987b), of a detachment of the image from the object that would in a sense occur as an occlusion ‘on top of’, rather than at the side of, the locale or the object.

⁹³ Wall explores something like in his exploration of ‘the community’ of ‘character actors’ in Hollywood films as those who ‘show us their anonymity’ (1999: 133). Character actors are neither defined by particular roles, nor by their ‘real’ selves:

They are nothing other than their types, mannerisms, and gestures, and yet they *are not* these qualities. They have assumed their manner of being *improperly*, habitually, without assuming this or that quality as definitive of their identity... They are themselves the erosion of the distance that would properly distinguish the real from the image. They are not possessed by ‘another me’ but instead are neutral with regard to identity because assuming one’s not-otherwiseness means assuming that which does not refer back to a self, an ‘I,’ that one would truly be. (135)

Three: Appearances or Epiphanies

My engagement with the *there* in Chapter Two ended with the proposition that a sense of contingency came about in my encounters with Hampton and Neath's *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* (2012). Feeling myself to occur contingently may be a kind of remarking that I did not and cannot intentionally determine the *there* in which I occur. In this chapter, my engagement with the *there* in Chapter Two will revert to an engagement with Levinas's 'there is'. This chapter's exploration of the 'there is' occurs as an exploration of my practice and practices of others in relation to *appearance* and *recognizability*.⁹⁴ It proposes a novel reading of appearance and recognizability in relation to Levinas's writing in the 1948 essay 'Reality and its Shadow' (RS) (1987b), of *the image* as a thing or existent's resembling of itself, where resemblance is the mode of appearance as such. *Participation* in the image, for Levinas, occurs as radically passive, prior to identity and consciousness. I will explore this idea of participation in relation to my and others' practices and Levinas's philosophy of ethics. As such, this chapter is concerned with appearance in relation to the priority of a non-appearance. The 'resembling itself' of a thing does not appear: it is an enigma. This enigma would in some way be analogous to the way—in writings of Levinas subsequent to RS—the ethical is that which does not appear, having never been present.⁹⁵ In this sense, in 'Language and Alterity in the Thought of Levinas,' Edith Wyschogrod notes, 'The face is not an appearance but rather the epiphany that resists conceptual grasp, rending the sensible through which it appears' (2002: 195).

⁹⁴ In its engagement with appearances and epiphanies in relation to Levinas's concept of the *il y a*, this chapter can be read as a response to Read's (2008) call for a shift in discussions of an ontology of performance, from what Read suggests as an emphasis since the 1990s on death and disappearance, towards birth and appearance. Read suggests, 'The *trouble* for performance is not death, as E.M. Cioran said in another context, but a far more "inexhaustible abyss", that is: being born' (*The Trouble with Being Born* [Cioran 1998, cited in Read 2008: 66]). Levinas's engagement with the *there is* that I explore in this chapter, as a measureless suspension of concepts and consciousness, would in some sense be 'abyssal'. As I noted in Chapter One in relation to Lepecki's (2006) engagement with metaphor, Read makes his call for attendings-to births and appearances in part, in critical dialogue with Peggy Phelan's *Unmarked: A politics of performance* (1996), and *Mourning Sex: Performing public memories* (1997), in which, according to Read, Phelan suggests that sometimes performance's disappearance might be thought as having a metaphorical relation with 'real' deaths 'outside' the theatre. Responding to his own call, Read picks-up-on writings of Agamben, and explores the status of the (bare) life of 'liveness'. Read suggests, 'It is the question of what 'a life' might be that has had to be presumed for other significant debates to get underway.... But failing to address this most primordial and critical dimension of performance has squandered the political and ethical imperatives that might be recognized within it. That is, in other words, the way a life is immanent to performance shapes what we recognise and realise in, and through, performance' (2008: 69).

⁹⁵ In *TI*, Levinas differentiates ethics from the real where the real is that which may be perceived:

If the resistance to murder were not ethical but real, we would have a *perception* of it, with all that reverts to the subjective in perception. We would remain within the idealism of a consciousness of struggle. The epiphany of the face is ethical. The struggle this face can threaten *presupposes* the transcendence of expression. (199)

The il y a or there is

In 'Art and Poetry in Levinas' (2002), Gerald L. Bruns begins by marking a relation between Levinas's writings on art in the late 1940s and early 1950s and writings of French poet Stéphane Mallarmé (1842-1898), an instigator of literary modernism. For Mallarmé, 'one does not make poetry with ideas, but with words'.⁹⁶ Bruns notes that for Mallarmé,

the *materiality* of language is... the essence of poetry as such. For Mallarmé, poetry is made of writing (*l'écriture*) so that the basic units of the poem not only include the letters of the alphabet but also the white space of the printed page, the fold in the middle, and the typographical arrangements that the letters inscribe. (209)⁹⁷

For me, such a typographic engagement with the materiality and spatiality of the page calls to the scenographic. That is, such an engagement would seem to associate the materiality and spatiality of the page with the materiality and spatiality of each scene of writing-reading or attending and passing. In this way the poem might become an object relating to other objects but Blanchot and Levinas pick up Mallarméan aesthetics and write of 'experiences' of things prior, after, or other to, objects and world. The crucial point for Mallarmé is, as Bruns writes, 'poetry is not a form of mediation that brings something other than itself into view' (209). And further, Bruns remarks that Mallarmé claimed for 'the materiality of poetic language the power to obliterate the world of objects and events' (209).⁹⁸ In relation to my discussion in Chapter Two, its others would always already contaminate poetic language, and so 'quasi-': pure presentation would be impossible. Bruns notes that Blanchot, in 'The Myth of Mallarmé' in *The Work of Fire* (1995), suggests that language, as propositional, 'destroys the world to make it be reborn in a state of meaning, of signified values; but, under its creative form.... The real presence and material affirmation of language give it the ability to suspend and dismiss the world' (37). Bruns interprets Blanchot's suggestion to mean that 'poetic language... is a discursive event that interrupts the logical or dialectical movement of signification and thereby opens up a dimension of exteriority or worldlessness – a world without things, or perhaps one should say: things free of the world' (2002: 210).

⁹⁶ Mallarmé quoted by Paul Valéry in 'Poetry and Abstract Thought', in Kransy (2004).

⁹⁷ This description of the materiality of language also describes Derrida's understanding, informed by writings of Mallarmé among others, of '*écriture*,' as 'writing' in the general sense – whereby, as I outlined in the Introduction, speech and experience are understood not as self-presence but as *writing* - as constituted by iteration, by differential marks.

⁹⁸ 'When I say, 'a flower!' then from that forgetfulness to which my voice consigns all floral form, something different from the usual calyces arises... the flower which is absent from all bouquets' (Mallarmé, *Oeuvres Complètes*: 356 cited in Bruns 2002: 209).

Bruns suggests that in *Existence and Existents* (1987b) (*EE*) Levinas ‘takes recourse to Mallarméan aesthetics’ (211) in writing of the *il y a* or *there is*. Levinas begins the section of *EE* ‘Existence without Existents’: ‘Let us imagine all beings, things and persons, reverting to nothingness.’ In this nothingness, Levinas finds an ‘indeterminateness’ of “‘something is happening’” (57). This would be ‘the *there is* [of] ‘the darkness of the night.... Being remains, like a field of forces, like a heavy atmosphere belonging to no one, universal, returning in the midst of the negation which put it aside’ (58).⁹⁹ The French *il* is the third person neutral ‘he/it’, for Levinas in *EE* the *il y a* occurs without substantive, *there is* neither subject nor object, ‘*There is* is an impersonal form, like in it rains or it is warm. Its anonymity is essential’ (58). For Levinas, the *there is* is not an inability to foresee things approaching, or the threat of nothingness or death, but of ‘indeterminate’, ‘anonymous’ presence (*EE*: 59). Further, Levinas suggests:

The rustling of the *there is*... is horror.... To be conscious is to be torn away from the *there is*, since the existence of a consciousness constitutes a subjectivity, a subject of existence, that is, to some extent a master of being, already a name in the anonymity of the night. Horror is somehow a movement which will strip consciousness of its very ‘subjectivity’. Not in lulling it into unconsciousness, but in throwing it into an *impersonal vigilance*, a *participation*, in the sense that Lévy-Bruhl gives to the term. (60, first ellipsis Levinas’s)

Levinas suggests that ‘What is new in the idea of participation Lévy-Bruhl introduced to describe an existence where horror is the dominant emotion, is in the destruction of categories which had hitherto been used to describe the feelings evoked by “the sacred”’ (*EE*: 60).¹⁰⁰ The *there is*, Bruns

⁹⁹ What relation would such a ‘field of forces’, which Levinas likens the *there is* to, have to the field of immanence in Massumi’s parable of the soccer game? This may be a question for future research. The ‘field’ with which Massumi engages also belongs to no one. My provisional suggestion, considering the *there is* in relation to the other of Levinas’s writings engaged in this exegesis, is that the *there is* would be ‘before’, or prior to, the partiality of part-objects and part-subjects.

¹⁰⁰ See Lévy-Bruhl, Lucien (1975) *The Notebooks on Primitive Mentality* (Peter Riviere, Trans.), Oxford: Blackwell. In relation to this connection with Levinas’s writing of participation, Chris Braddock suggests that the important thing to note is that Lévy-Bruhl’s writing on ‘mystical participation’ proposed that so-called primitive thought is not ‘irrational’. Rather, it has its own characteristic organization, coherence and rationality. This organization was ‘the law of participation’. In this way, as Braddock writes, “‘mystical participation’ is *already* contaminated and not a verifiable or rational play between elements, living or dead or inorganic. In this realm, “substance” is an infinite essence that equals participation because it is participated *in*’. ‘Moreover’, Braddock continues with reference to Lévy-Bruhl, ‘*things* (and their substances) cannot be determined by a “series of antecedents which result in some event” ’ (Braddock 64). In *Performing Contagious Bodies: Ritual participation in contemporary art* (2013), Braddock writes of Lévy-Bruhl: ‘His profound contribution to ethnographic ideas on a concept of “participation” was to introduce the possibility of a relationality that precedes the terms related’. That is, as I suggested in the previous footnote above, there would occur an association between Massumi’s engagement in *Parables for the Virtual* (2002) and Lévy-Bruhl’s engagement with participation. Braddock continues, again, referencing Lévy-Bruhl:

For example, in discussing the participation between a corpse and its ghost, Lévy-Bruhl asserts that: ‘It is equally true to say that the corpse is the deceased, and that it is not.’ ‘This proves’ he continues, ‘that neither expression is correct’. He qualifies this statement by affirming that the notion of

notes, ‘turns the subjectivity of the subject, his particularity qua entity, inside out’ (*EE*: 61). Levinas continues, ‘participation in the *there is* [is a participation in that which] has “no exits”’ (61). This might seem to contradict Levinas’s suggestion that ‘To be conscious is to be torn away from the *there is*’ (60), but such a being-torn-away would not be an exiting; Wall writes in relation to Levinas’s ‘Reality and its Shadow’ (1987b) which I will discuss below: ‘This general dimension of profound participation would... subtend consciousness and industry at every moment’ (1999: 15-16). I suggest that, in participation as Levinas figures it in *EE*, one is one’s doing, where my doing occurs prior or other than my consciousness or intention. In this sense, it is not that I am and then I do, ‘I’ am in the exposure of myself to the naked *there* of my doing, the *there is*. Levinas suggests that for Lévy-Bruhl:

Mystical participation is completely different from the Platonic participation in a genus; in it the identity of the terms is lost. They are divested of what constituted their very substantivity. The participation of one term in another does not consist in sharing an attribute; one term *is the other*.... We *recognize* here the *there is*. (60, 61)

Levinas ‘recognizes’ the *there is* in Lévy-Bruhl’s text. If a recognition of the *there is* is possible, it would occur at the limit of recognizability, or, perhaps, at the limit of appearance-epiphany. Perhaps the ‘destruction’ of categories to which Levinas refers in relation to Lévy-Bruhl’s ‘participation’, would be somewhat like Blanchot’s idea of a suspension and dismissal of the world. A few pages earlier Levinas had suggested that the artwork, ‘opens up this possibility of existence without being’ (Bruns 2002: 211), and extracts things ‘from the perspective of the world’ (*EE*: 52). Such an extraction from perspective suggests, as Bruns notes, that for Levinas, modern art cannot be thought of as ‘an art of the visible’ (Bruns 2002: 211). It is in this context that Bruns notes that ‘world’, here, for Levinas, ‘is that which comes into being as a correlate of intentionality, cognition or conceptual determination’ (Bruns 2002: 211). Bruns continues, ‘[t]he point to mark here is that the experience of poetry or art is continuous with the experience of the *il y a*’ (213). Thus Bruns suggests that for Levinas, ‘the work of art is now defined precisely as a limit of consciousness’ (211).

‘participation’ presupposes a connection or representation, it occurs simultaneously with them: ‘participation is not established between the more or less clearly represented deceased and corpse (in which case it would be of the nature of a relationship or connection, and it should be possible to make it easily comprehensible); it does not come after these representations, it does not presuppose them: it is before them, or at least simultaneous with them. What is given *in the first place* is participation.’ (Braddock 2013: 73)

As I outlined in Chapter One, Levinas’s ethics is concerned with the absolute *priority* of the other. In ‘Enigma and Phenomenon’ (1996a) Levinas asks ‘Are not religions said to come to us from a past which was never a pure now?’ (72) Thus the temporality of the *before* in Braddock’s quotation of Lévy-Bruhl above is suggested as an ‘enigma’ to engage in future research.

‘Reality and its Shadow’ (1987b) (RS), Levinas’s 1948 essay on art, does not mention the *there is*, which, though, resonates with this essay’s theme of darkness. ‘The most elementary procedure of art’ Levinas writes, ‘consists in substituting for the object its image. Its image and not its concept’ (132). Whereas, ‘A concept is the object *grasped*, the intelligible object.... An image marks a hold over us, rather than our initiative, a fundamental passivity’ (132). For Levinas, sound is the exemplary modality for the detachment of the image from the object. ‘An image’, writes Levinas, ‘is musical. Its passivity is directly visible in magic, song, music and poetry’ (132).¹⁰¹ Levinas might be said to ‘expand’ the concept of rhythm, such that it designates ‘the way the poetic order affects us, closed wholes whose elements call for one another like the syllables of a verse, but do so only insofar as they impose themselves on us, disengaging themselves from reality’ (132). In RS, ‘Our consenting’ to the elements of these closed wholes,

is inverted into a participation. Their entry into us is one with our entry into them. Rhythm represents a unique situation where we cannot speak of consent, assumption, initiative or freedom, because the subject is caught up and carried away by it. The subject is part of its own representation. It is so not even despite itself, for in rhythm there is no longer a oneself, but rather a sort of passage from oneself to anonymity. (132, 133)¹⁰²

In RS Levinas figures ‘participation’ as radically passive, and, as in *EE*, no longer the participation of a subject or substantive—but rather a ‘passage’ in the quote above.¹⁰³ It seems for Levinas in this

¹⁰¹ The suggestion that passivity is *visible* in song, music, and poetry, if not magic, might be questioned or complicated in relation to questions of hearing or listening. I will explore hearing and listening in Chapter Five.

¹⁰² That Levinas proposes that the subject is ‘carried away by’ rhythm, recalls the sense of being-carried-along I discussed in Chapter Two in relation to Harvey’s discussion of ‘ways this ‘I’ gets carried along’ in performance practice (2011: 133, <http://aut.researchgateway.ac.nz/handle/10292/2018>). Harvey asks, ‘[W]hat is essential in carrying? Perhaps it is that what is being-carried is itself without movement, is itself an essential stilling such that being carried along can essentially take place’ (2011: 147). If such an idea of ‘essential stilling’ is analogous to the sense of ‘participation’ in RS, it would perhaps not be that the ‘I’ would be ‘without movement’ but rather without capacity to move itself, as absolutely passive in relation to that which moves it.

¹⁰³ The idea of ‘passage’ here resonates with the sense of ‘passing’ I discussed in Chapter Two, in which the oneself only occurs as or in movement rather than as a substantive that moves. In RS the idea of ‘passage,’ with regard to which the ‘oneself’ remains a term opposed to, or prepositionally related to, anonymity, as ‘a passage *from* oneself *to* anonymity,’ (italics mine) suggests that the self is not completely ‘carried away.’ ‘Passage’ might be read as ‘indistinction,’ though as a kind of movement. Such a movement would be involuntary and as ‘*from* oneself *to* anonymity’ it is unidirectional, or any or all directions away from oneself (I am thinking here of O’Connor’s engagement in ‘Night Drifts’ (2012) with differences between responsibility *for* and responsibility *to* in performance practices in relation to Levinasian ethics). However, it would seem to imply ‘a sort of’ obscure counter-movement as well, from anonymity to oneself, not as a ‘return’ to the same self or selfsame. One way of interpreting this, in terms of later of Levinas’s writings that I will introduce in Chapter Four, is to say that such a passage would occur in or as ‘diachronic’ time.

part of RS that, as Bruns suggests, ‘art turns the sovereign ego out of its house in a deposition that anticipates the trauma or obsession of the ethical relation’ (2002: 214).

For Levinas, ‘An image is interesting... in the etymological sense’ (133), in the sense, as Seán Hand’s prefatory note to RS points out, of ‘inter-esse.’ (129) That is, ‘the subject... is among things as a thing, as part of the spectacle’ (132). Levinas expands from sound and musicality a general sense of aesthetic participation. That is, ‘the whole world with its elementary and intellectually elaborated givens, can touch us musically, can become an image’ (134).¹⁰⁴ ‘Reality would not be only what it is, what it is disclosed to be in truth, but would be also its double, its shadow, its image’ (135). An image, for Levinas, differs from a symbol, sign, or word in that it refers to its object in the way of resemblance, which is, ‘the very movement that engenders the image’:

Here is a person who is what he is; but he does not make us forget, does not absorb, cover over entirely the objects he holds and the way he holds them, his gestures, limbs, gaze, thought, skin, which escape from under the identity of his substance, which like a torn sack is unable to contain them. Thus a person bears on his face, alongside of its being with which he coincides, its own caricature, its picturesqueness. The picturesque is always to some extent a caricature. Here is a familiar everyday thing, perfectly adapted to the hand which is accustomed to it, but its qualities, colour, form, and position at the same time remain as it were behind its being, like the ‘old garments’ of a soul which had withdrawn from that thing, like a ‘still life’. And yet all this is the person and is the thing. There is then a duality in this person, this thing, a duality in its being. It is what it is and it is a stranger to itself, and there is a relationship between these two moments. We will say the thing is itself and its image. And that this relationship between the thing and its image is resemblance. (135)

Of this passage, Bruns suggests, ‘An image is, so to speak, not a piece of consciousness but a piece of the *il y a*: it is a materialization of being’ (215). Such caricature, picturesqueness, and resemblance would be the most common *and* extremely obscure. The ‘duality’ Levinas describes in the quotation above is not Platonic: it is not a duality between *eidos* as reality and *aesthesis* as mere appearance. Rather, the image ‘extends to the light itself, to thought, to the inner life. The whole of reality bears on its face its own allegory, outside of its revelation and its truth’ (136), that is, outside its realization, and ‘[r]esemblance is... the very structure of the sensible as such’ (137). Unlike with the transparency of a sign, Levinas suggests, resemblance is opaque. Levinas likens this to what occurs in a fable ‘Those animals that portray men give the fable its peculiar colour inasmuch as men are

The significance of Levinas’s suggestion that the oneself remains a term in such a passage is perhaps indicated in Wyschogrod’s ‘Language and Alterity in the Thought of Levinas’. Discussing Levinas’s thinking of the ‘phenomenon or enigma’ of the face, Wyschogrod suggests, ‘In relations of pure sensibility the boundaries between self and other are blurred, thereby blocking out the alterity of the other human being’ (2002: 195).

¹⁰⁴ Discussing Levinas’s engagement with the image in *Radical Passivity* (1999), Wall suggests that ‘Reality and its Shadow’ (1987b) ‘is thus an introduction to the important recent work done by Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe on radical, or non-Platonic (i.e., nonrestricted, that is to say, *general*) mimesis.’ Wall refers to Lacoue-Labarthe’s ‘Typography’, ‘Diderot: Paradox and Mimesis,’ and ‘Transcendence Ends in Politics’ in *Typography: Mimesis, Philosophy, Politics* Ed., Christopher Fynsk 1989; and *Heidegger, Art & Politics: The Fiction of the Political*.

seen *as* these animals and not *through* these animals; the animals stop and fill up thought' (135). In this, for Levinas, lies the power of *allegory* as 'an ambiguous commerce with reality in which reality does not refer to itself but to its reflection, its shadow.... An image, we can say, is an allegory of being (135). Reading a fable, perhaps one identifies with 'characters.' Wall suggests in relation to Levinas's ethics, 'The self... consists of its absolutely passive being-formed which makes possible its (ambiguous) ability to identify with others and also to imitate them' (1999: 42). In this sense, perhaps one would 'see' oneself *as* the animal character, perhaps becoming opaque to oneself in this identification. In episodes of my practice, ostensibly for the most part there are no such 'characters' other than us attenders 'ourselves'. We might identify with ourselves, each other, with passers-by, or things in a 'locale.' Below I will explore the idea that locale visits and episodes of my practice, in feigns or framings, engender modes of resembling of ourselves that 'stop and fill up thought' (RS: 135) which may be modes of 'becoming image,' 'becoming character' or becoming fabulous.

Affirmation

If for Mallarmé, poetry is made of writing rather than the ideas of a subject, what Bruns calls the 'basic units' (209) of my and others' practices, as I suggested in Chapter Two, might include each; interval between lampposts, car, shoe, grass verge, puddle, space between feet, wind, time interval between traffic cross-signals, space between emailed words, utterance, gesture, or any number of other 'objects' in the locale.¹⁰⁵ 'The real presence and material affirmation of' (Blanchot 1995: 37) *an episode* 'give it the ability to suspend and dismiss the world' (Blanchot 1995: 37). This substitution of 'an episode' for 'language' in Blanchot's reading of Mallarmé discussed above, proposes 'an episode' as an example of the poetic language that Blanchot suggests. This is like saying that in some way 'an episode' is, (or occurs as, or involves), the image as 'a piece of the *il y a*' (Bruns 2002: 215). If we read 'real presence and material affirmation' as similar to Levinas's proposition of the way the *there is* 'touches us' in the image, and if for Levinas, the whole world can become image, (become an artwork), in terms of RS perhaps we might substitute any entity, 'artwork' or not, for 'language' in Blanchot's formulation. If so, the shadow of any entity, insofar as any entity is (poetic) language, would be participation as 'a passage from oneself to anonymity' (RS: 133). This calls me to ask of the 'particularity' or 'singularity' of 'an episode' (or of others' and my practices) with regard to the 'touching us' of the *there is* that Levinas imagines. Exploring this in this chapter I aim to open or alter both Blanchot's claim and the performance practices. The 'basic units' of an episode I listed above

¹⁰⁵ I take as a key distinction arising from RS the difference between an object as named and conceptual, and a *thing*, which in this discussion invokes a sense of a 'shadow' and 'material presence' a participation that undoes the subject. A thing would not yet, or no longer, be nameable. On 'objects', see footnote 52 in the 'Locales' section of Chapter Two.

might name ‘what’ ‘becomes image’, but as soon as ‘something becomes image’, *there is* no longer or not yet a ‘what’.

Levinas suggests, ‘[i]n utilizing images art not only reflects but brings about this allegory. In art, allegory is introduced into the world, as truth is accomplished in cognition. These are two contemporary possibilities of being’ (136).¹⁰⁶ If art is not a mode of revelation and if, as Bruns suggests, ‘the experience of poetry or art is continuous with the *il y a*’ (2002: 213); this means that art or poetry, continuous with the *il y a*, does not reveal or mediate the *il y a*, that is, does not occur within a dualism of appearance and reality or *eidos* and *aisthesis*. If so, a recognition of what I am encountering, or have been ‘participating’ in, as ‘an artwork’ could not occur in the artwork but perhaps at most somehow as a resonance or glance at or as its border with the world. The moment the name artwork is applied would be the moment of consciousness as the being ‘torn away from the *there is*’ (*EE*: 60). As I noted above, consciousness, Wall suggests, would be subtended by the *there is* at every moment’ (1999: 16). Art-the *il y a*-poetry, (or others and my practices as ‘art’) could not introduce anything into cognition as they would be the interruption of cognition and mediation. Perhaps encountering such a *limit* brings allegory into cognition. If such a limit was a border in Derridean terms as that which always divides, this might provide a way of reading the ‘two contemporary possibilities of being’ (RS: 136) as each always in play. This would have some similarity to Levinas’s formulation in *OB* of ‘the other in the same’ (25). Wall (1999) suggests that the *I* does not forget, the subject of forgetting is itself forgotten and so anonymous. Such a time, as forgotten, is impossible to think. However, as Wall points out, ‘Only a brusque resentment against the very motif of primordial passivity could possibly ignore what is in fact a commonplace of human existence. No one is born into the world from out of one’s own self’ (1999: 43).

In the thinking of image and poetic language that I have outlined, concepts and memory and so the possibility of description, would have been suspended and perhaps in some sense dismissed, even if conceptuality almost always returns (but in Derridean terms, each would always already be contaminated by the other). In this sense ‘the artwork’, (as participation in the artwork), does not appear. Therefore to approach the particularity of ‘my and others’ practices’ in relation to Levinas’s thinking of the image might necessarily be only to engage with how these approach the *il y a*, or approach what Blanchot suggests as an affirmation of their obscure materiality, or at least, approach the limits of conceptuality.¹⁰⁷ The question emerges of how to ‘figure’ such limits or relations to such

¹⁰⁶ Levinas’s later engagements with diachrony and synchrony, for example in *OB*, would suggest that the contemporaneity, or the ‘with’ each other of these possibilities would be an enigmatic or difficult proposition. I will explore Levinas’s engagement with temporality in Chapters Four and Five.

¹⁰⁷ Blanchot writes (a passage Wall also quotes), in ‘The Future and the Question of Art’ in *The Space of Literature*, ‘if the sculptor uses stone, and if the road builder also uses stone, the first uses it in such a way that it

limits. This problem provokes the title of the exegesis but is itself a problem of naming. To register a kind of necessary indirectness or obscurity, an encounter with a border of the artwork might be figured as echoing or glancing, (it would not be the viscosity of perspective). Perhaps an artwork would ‘distend’ an encounter with such a limit.

The enigma of participation in the image, or radical passivity, would seem to be ‘the same’ enigma—even if it would have been a ceaseless undoing of the self-sameness of the same—whether ‘the artwork’ is a book in this or that language or style, a performance or episode on a street (in Point Chevalier or Ponsonby in Auckland, or the central business district of Zagreb), or some other entity. In that sense no entity and no particular kind of art, would be a privileged mode of affirmation of ‘reality’s shadow.’ But in what sense might the ‘how,’ the mode, and the locale of such an affirming, glancing, echoing relaying, passing, or tracing; its tones, categories, or genres, *matter*? The different locales listed indicate that appearance and recognizability always occur in relation to codes, norms, economics, and ‘natural’ languages. What I was ‘faced with,’ ‘backed with’ or ‘sided with’ to calculate and modulate in episodes would differ between locales. The feel, semantics, and syntax of ‘communications’ among us attenders and us passers-by would differ as well, so the extent to which and the ways in which episodes appeared and were recognized would differ between these locales.

Clearly, in the mode of conceptual commerce, artworks appear, there are ‘artworks.’ I do not read RS as suggesting a propriety of the artwork, as saying that in any strict sense there are entities that are artworks and that there are entities that are not artworks. Rather, I read Levinas’s position as saying that, insofar as, or when, it or I becomes *thing*, becomes ungraspable material, any object, or the world, becomes an artwork, which is also the limit of the appearance, recognizability, and nameability of an artwork. This would occur as a deposition of subject, object and concepts into a mode that does not *work* in any economic sense, in which there is no ‘I’ that could work.¹⁰⁸

is not used, consumed, negated by usage, but affirmed, revealed in its obscurity, as a road which leads only to itself’ (1982: 224).

¹⁰⁸ A direction for future research may be to explore this in relation to Nancy’s *Inoperative Community* (1991) in which being-with or the essence of community could not be a work or shared project as this would attempt to collapse into immanence the sharing and separation of *partage*.

The list of 'basic units' (Bruns 2002: 209) of my performance practice that I suggested at the



beginning of this section, 'Affirmation', suggests, as I suggested in the discussion of locale in Chapter Two, that a distinction, within the mode of objects and conceptual commerce, between an episode and a locale in general may at times, or each time, have been difficult to make, or be *undecidable*, if one was called-to and cared-to make such a distinction. I also suggested that perhaps *Oct Dec Series* (2011) involved a kind of non-appearance *as* the episode, or an ambiguity or undecidability of recognizability *as* or of the episode. Sometimes, or in some ways, or to some of us, performances and other artworks appear (present themselves or are presented) readily and clearly such that there could be, in Derrida's terms in *Limited Inc.*, a 'minimal consensus' (1988b: 61) as to their belonging in the genre of 'a performance' or 'an artwork,' (in a theatre, gallery, museum or with a costume).¹⁰⁹ Those 'same' artworks, and others, sometimes or in some ways, or to some of us, do not appear as artworks so readily or clearly. If I procede otherwise than via a distinction between *eidos* and mere appearance or *aesthesis*, then to appear as 'an artwork' is to *be* 'an artwork'. But I cannot ignore the sense in which I speak in my everyday commerce with people and objects, and in my use of the word 'seems' in this exegesis, of 'appearance' as that which is subordinated to underlying reality. If 'the elementary procedure of art is to substitute an image for a concept,' (RS: 132) perhaps episodes

¹⁰⁹ In the context of an engagement with the philosopher John Searle in relation to SEC, Derrida suggests, 'What convention will have insured... the contract of a minimal agreement? Iterability' (*Limited Inc.* 1988b: 64). In relation to the terms introduced in Chapter Two, iterability would have been the quasitranscendental condition of (im)possibility of such a consensus.

would bring into play an undecidability of what such concepts (objects) are that would become substituted. That is not to say that such an undecidability would not attend an encounter with a statue on a plinth in a gallery or with a framed painting—the ‘concept’, occurring through *différance*, would differ and defer with each part, each moment, each angle and so on *ad infinitum*. Nonetheless I propose that the performance practices that I explore in this chapter each in different ways make (their) appearance, recognizability, and nameability a question.¹¹⁰ To pick up in an imprecise way on Read’s ‘minimal parallax condition’ (2008: 16), perhaps in minimally or obscurely differing from the locale, or as a minimal or obscure differing of the locale, perhaps sometimes episodes occur as a kind of doubling-itself or resembling-itself.

Some attendeers tell me verbally after episodes, that episodes are *strange*. Other attendeers ‘tell’ me this gesturally and verbally during episodes. At times, my sense of attendeers during episodes is consistent with such a feeling of strangeness. Asking after this strangeness, I wonder if *I* might have been like its moving ‘catalyst’ or enabler (thus, in relation to Massumi’s (2002) engagement, perhaps suggesting such ‘strangeness’ as a tensile force within a field of immanence), but I suggest this would be an *I* thought as in some sense with or as a *there*, rather than as an individual thought as distinct from the locale. Thinking of the strangeness of episodes, Levinas’s writing of the *there is*, and Blanchot’s writing of poetic language *appear* to offer some explanation. Or perhaps at times episodes and Levinas’s writings in some way resemble each other. Such a resemblance would have to be thought first in the more usual sense of the similarity of two different things, rather than as the resemblance of the thing to itself, especially if I am insisting on a sense of particularity of my and others practices with regard to the way the *there is* would touch us. Perhaps too at times this exegesis resembles episodes of my practice. I propose that the strangeness in episodes might to some extent occur in a mode in which a ‘suspension and dismissal’ of categories points to an undecidability of the category or genre of what I have *participated* in or of *what* happened.¹¹¹ If so, perhaps to some extent or at some times, this would point to or call to an undecidability or making opaque the recognizability of that which (perhaps) appeared, insofar as anything can appear independently of some kind of recognition of what it is.¹¹² I propose that this might be described as or ‘resemble’ a

¹¹⁰ I am working with an idea of partial correspondence between recognizability and nameability insofar as they each involve the belonging of that which appears within a category.

¹¹¹ By ‘genre’ I mean an ‘expanded’ sense of genre, not only in terms of genres within ‘art’. This also suggests the sense of Derrida’s engagement in ‘The Law of Genre’ (1992c) that I outlined in the Introduction.

¹¹² For Derrida in ‘Performative Powerlessness,’ ethics, as event, occurs ‘precisely when I am in performative powerlessness’ (2000: 467). In ‘performative powerlessness,’ perhaps the conventions and genres that performatives iterate, or the conventions that are performatives, somehow don’t work for me or are suspended from me. If we for a moment make an assumption that one could recognize and refer to such an occurrence it may be useful to ask, ‘When have I found myself in a situation in which I don’t know what conventions apply, or in which I find myself without a recognizable model?’ Cross-cultural or cross-language situations come to

kind of becoming-image in the sense suggested in RS. I suggested in Chapter Two that at times episodes of my practice ‘stretch us out’, especially as time goes on in episodes with a starting time, in such ways that waiting, and turning-away or becoming-distracted or forgetting the episode, enter into a kind of undecidability or indistinction. Perhaps such an indistinction between ‘episode’ and ‘locale’, an undoing or forgetting of their conceptual distinction from one another, might suggest a kind of becoming-image.

The Meanwhile

In the fourth section of RS entitled ‘The Meanwhile,’ Levinas (dis)figures participation in the image in temporal terms, ‘an image is an idol... every artwork is in the end a statue – a stoppage of time, or rather its delay behind itself’ (137). Levinas suggests, ‘In this situation the present can assume nothing, can take on nothing, and thus is an impersonal and anonymous instant’ (138). In this essay Levinas poses criticism as a kind of counter and counterpart to such a stoppage, which would ‘integrate’ the artwork into the world of concepts.¹¹³ While RS suggests that art’s completion occurs as a disengagement from the world of concepts, in ‘The Transcendence of Words’ (1989) (ToW), Levinas suggests, ‘an incomplete, rather than complete state, paradoxically is the fundamental

mind, but so do average or banal ongoing uncertainties of daily sociality. Levinas’s sense of participation in the image might occur as one radical mode of performative powerlessness. Perhaps ‘performative powerlessness’, and ethics in this sense, ‘subtend’ (Wall 1999: 16) life in general. The capacity to recognize anything, including an absence of power with respect to convention, in itself implies a conventional framework. Perhaps a situation of performative powerlessness that could be recognized is that in which a recognizable ‘performative’ continues to be performed but its effectiveness is suspended, and is in this sense without ‘power’. Massumi’s engagement in *Parables of the Virtual* (2002) seems to be pertinent to Derrida’s formulation of the relation between the event and the performative. There is a resemblance between Derrida’s figuring of the performative with what Massumi calls a ‘definitional framework’ as ‘a selection from a repertoire of possible permutations on a limited set of predetermined terms.’ (2002: 3). The context in which a performative is cited is never completely a proper context but rather an opening or differential context, so iteration occurs. On my reading, the problem in SEC and ‘Performative Powerlessness,’ is not that becoming does not occur, but one of recognizability. This is a problem of appearing, not in the sense of a dualism of reality/appearance, but appearability.

¹¹³ In his prefatory note to RS Seán Hand suggests that ‘Levinas appears to be replying to Heidegger’s ‘poetically man dwells’ (in *Poetry, Language, Thought* [1971, cited in Hand]) with the view that criticism is the basic capacity for human dwelling in so far as the term signifies a primordial relation with the other’ (129). As I have discussed in Chapter Two, Wills discusses how for Levinas the building of the house occurs as an inauguration of interiority and so exteriority. Insofar as the house inaugurates exteriority it inaugurates conversation or discourse. As I will explore in Chapter Five, as Bruns (2002: 229) notes, in relation to Levinas’s ‘The Transcendence of Words’, for Levinas ‘To speak is to interrupt my existence as a subject, a master’ (1989: 149).



category of modern art' (147). Bruns suggests that this is the incompleteness of the meanwhile (*entre-temps*).¹¹⁴ Bruns likens Levinas's *meanwhile* to Blanchot's writing of *dying*. For Levinas in RS:

The time of *dying* itself cannot give itself the other shore. What is unique and poignant in this instant is due to the fact that it cannot pass. In *dying*, the horizon of a future is given, but the future as a promise of a new present is refused; one is in the interval, forever an interval.... It is as though death were never dead enough, as though parallel with the duration of the living ran the eternal duration of the interval – the *meanwhile*. (140, 141)

And, for Levinas in RS, 'time' in 'the non-plastic arts such as music, literature, theatre and cinema,' does not 'shatter the fixity of images... the characters in a book... can be narrated because their being *resembles* itself, doubles itself and immobilizes... By its reflection in a narrative, being has a non-dialectical fixity, stops dialectics and time' (139). Insofar as the 'non-plastic' work resembles itself within its temporal succession, it is immobilized in the meanwhile. Whereas earlier, it seemed that the image, as Bruns suggests, 'anticipates the trauma of the ethical relation,' by this part of RS Levinas suggests that, as a stoppage of concepts and dialectics, the artwork is potentially irresponsible. Levinas's engagement with theatre here seems to be continuous with his discussion of the novel in that there seems to be an assumption of a performance's fidelity to, or reproduction of,

¹¹⁴ Levinas suggests an irresponsibility of art in that it does not 'give itself out as the beginning of a dialogue' (RS: 131). In this sense dialogue would occur in or as a relation to conceptuality that the image expunges. The necessity or responsibility of criticism in RS would have something in common with the necessity of the *said* in later writings of Levinas such as *OB*. I will pick up this issue in relation to the *saying* and the *said* in Chapter Five.

in terms of truth as adequation, narrative and character.¹¹⁵ I like to imagine that my practice occurs less as a reproduction of a narrative or other programme or sequence, than as an engagement between programmability and calculability on the one hand, and chance, contingency or alterity on the other. The latter might be considered in relation to Wills's *dorsality*, Derrida's *différance*, or the way for Levinas, that the other exceeds totality. Even if this is so, it does not mean that such a practice would resemble itself in the sense Levinas suggests any more or less than do dramatic characters in a book. By the last pages of RS the value of stoppage of time in art is ambiguous, and potentially irresponsible and escapist. Art occurs as a disengagement, a myth insofar as it is fixed or closed, with an ambiguous value. The charges of irresponsibility Levinas lays are against art that is 'separated from the criticism that integrates the inhuman work of the artist into the human world' (1989: 142). For Levinas 'the artwork can and must be treated as a myth: the immobile statue has to be put in movement and made to speak' (142). 'Responsibility' in RS seems to belong more to conceptual commerce than to the sense of a response or 'response-ability' as affirmation to the infinite demand of the other that is constitutive of my being in later writings such as *TI* and *OB*. If so, my practice may be, in a sense, irresponsible in the former sense in that in a certain way it disregards attendees' desires to know what is happening, and perhaps what we have, to quote A voice in Hampton and Neath's (2012) *The Bench or Hello for Dummies*, 'signed up for'. Perhaps episodes of my practice *resemble* what Barbara Johnson describes of Derrida's 'The Double Session' in that they frustrate our desire to 'get to the point' (1981: xvi). If at times episodes occur in some way as an opacity, by-play, or delay of our senses of 'what is happening', in some way resembling or allegorizing themselves in which such resemblance stops and fills up thought (RS: 135), delaying nameability in terms of category or genre, then perhaps this would remark a relation between 'ethics' and 'politics' in the sense Levinas writes of these terms.

The meanwhile might also be analogous to the temporality of Blanchot's *everyday* that forever escapes detection. Blanchot's writing of the everyday in 'Everyday Speech' (1987) registers a kind of anonymity similar to that of Levinas's writing of participation in the image. Blanchot writes,

The everyday escapes. Why does it escape? Because it is without a subject. When I live the everyday, it is anyone, anyone whatsoever, who does so, and this any-one is, properly speaking, neither me, nor, properly speaking, the other; he is neither the one nor the other, and he is the one and the other in their interchangeable presence, their annulled reciprocity-yet without there being an 'I' and an 'alter ego' able to give rise to a *dialectical recognition*. (1987: 18, 19)

¹¹⁵ This refers us back to the discussion of contingency in Chapter Two in relation to Hampton and Neath's *The Bench or Hello for Dummies*, and Wills's and Sherman's engagements with Levinas's 'Is Ontology Fundamental?' (1998b).

In this text first published in France in 1959, Blanchot suggests ‘the street’ as the privileged or paradigmatic place of the everyday:

The street is not ostentatious, passers-by go by unknown, visible-invisible, representing only the anonymous “beauty” of faces and the anonymous ‘truth’ of people essentially destined to pass by, without a truth proper to them and without distinctive traits (when we meet someone in the street, it comes always by surprise and as if by mistake, for one does not recognize oneself there; in order to go forth to meet another, one must first tear oneself away from an existence without identity). (18)

The participation that art works to affirm in undoing the subject would appear to be like that which ‘one must tear oneself away from’ to meet another, to rendezvous with another or an episode at a named time and place. Insofar as an episode withdraws into the everyday, it itself is risked. It seems that this exegetical writing must in some way occur as a historicizing if not memorializing of the practices I discuss. The readiness in which an object is named, appears and is recognized, would not necessarily make its capacity, in becoming ‘image,’ to depose conceptuality any lesser. A ‘becoming-image’ of that, or in that, which is commonly nameable, but in its commonness tends not to appear, that is, something about which recognizability tends not to be in question when one points at it, may perhaps be ‘powerful’ *because* insofar as it appears in its common nameability or usability, it might tend to appear as far from enigmatic. Such a becoming-image would seem to affirm the idea that ‘the whole of our world, with its elementary and intellectually elaborated givens’, as Levinas writes in RS, ‘can touch us musically’ (134). In a sense, the ‘basic units’ (Bruns 2002: 209) of an episode of my practice are, as Maria O’Connor in ‘Night Drifts’ suggests in relation to *Ripples* in *Bundle O* of *Oct Dec Series*, ‘the most ordinary’ and ‘knowable’, the commonality of which, for O’Connor, perhaps opens onto something like ‘a things’ nothing’ (2012: 5). O’Connor suggests, in relation to the demands of episodes on attendeers:

The demand does not lie in the unpredictability of things. Rather, the demand becomes infinite, impossible, precisely because it is made on what is most ordinary, most common, and everyday, what is most predictable, knowable, seeable and sayable. The infinite demand is on what we have in common with each other more than anything unique or particular. This all-too-knowable—collectivized mass-individual—is the desire to know that something is in what it is, to escape the trauma or perplexity of a thing’s nothing, elide it, glide past it, drift over it, thicken the fog around it. (2012: 5)

Martin Nachbar’s Incidental Journey (2006) and *The Walk* (2012)

In ‘We Always Arrive in the Theatre on Foot: a walk to the theatre in sixteen steps and eighteen footnotes’, Esther Pilkington and Martin Nachbar ‘continue an enquiry begun in’ (30) Nachbar’s May 2011 workshop at Brut Theatre in Vienna, as part of ‘research for his performance *The Walk*’ (2012: 30). Within this article Nachbar discusses his earlier *Incidental Journey* (2006). I will explore *The Walk* via Pilkington and Nachbar’s article following a detour into *Incidental Journey* (2006). In footnote ‘a’, Nachbar also discusses *Incidental Journey* (2006) as,

a series of guided tours that were structured around sites of historical and anecdotal interest in several European cities. My aim was to perform an act of archaeology, as the events that had occurred in them had been largely forgotten. This piece took the theatre onto the streets, and the spectators became performers for passers-by, playing the role of tourists following a tour guide. (2012: 30)

Nachbar's entry in the Teachers' Directorate of The Inter-University Centre for Dance Berlin describes the events in question as *Incidental Journey* as '...events traumatic to various cities'.¹¹⁶ In a self-published article 'Travelling, Fleeing, Passing (The Artist as "Transient")' (2006), Nachbar writes of *Incidental Journey*,

...a city tour along the invisible traces of accidents and incidents which had taken place in each city and had had lasting repercussions ...For this purpose I interviewed inhabitants of each city, wandered around the streets to locate the stories I'd been told, and gave the locals a new perspective on old matters by means of my outsider's point of view. In its transience and fleetingness, the 'choreographic memorial' staged at the end of each tour by means of a map of the tour painted on the ground can also serve here as a symbol for the passing of *Incidental Journey* through six European cities: a trip through the city, but a trip which was itself on the road. Travel was here particularly demanding (getting around each city touched not only everyday matters but also the artistic production), but, in the context of the project, it was an inevitable part of the job and thus it made sense. http://www.e-tcetera.be/UserFiles/File/Etcetera-104-Nachbar_Eng.pdf¹¹⁷

From these brief descriptions I will explore *Incidental Journey* as I *imagine* it. As with my description of my practice in this exegesis, the descriptions are the artist's. Internet searches I have carried out have provided no reviews of *Incidental Journey*. The last part of Nachbar's description of *Incidental Journey* in 'We Always Arrive in the Theatre on Foot,' 'This piece took the theatre onto the streets, and the spectators became performers for passers-by, playing the role of tourists following a tour guide' (2012: 30), suggests a sense among spectators that there was a recognition or misrecognition of themselves as tourists by passers-by. That is, there may have been an awareness among spectators of a double-appearing of themselves whereby they are tourists to passers-by, and 'tourists,' and performers, to each other, where the quotation marks around tourists indicate spectators' consciousness of a mode of citation that we might associate with acting and theatre. The performer or performers (who it seems from the description, was like a tour guide) may also have recognized such a doubling among spectators, and an associated doubling of themselves in appearing as tour guide in this scene. The kind of doubling would not be so much a doubling in the sense of resemblance and the image in RS discussed above, but a doubling in the mode of an 'as if,' a kind of relation between two names or categories (among any number of other names or categories). In a

¹¹⁶ Available at <http://www.hzt-berlin.de/?z=3&p=86&pp=22&lan=en&PHPSESSID=0081c6ce49274006512c81d0c8ac8381> 'Incidental Journey [was] a series of performances that took to the streets to investigate events traumatic to various cities.'

¹¹⁷ The phrase 'invisible traces of accidents and incidents' suggests that the traces in question—invisible—may have been audible, tactile, kinaesthetic, olfactory, or in some other way sensible. 'Choreographic memorial' suggests a relation to Boris Charmatz's proposal for a 'Dancing Museum', in relation to which I referred briefly in Chapter One to Lepecki's (2012: 18) discussion of.

way, this is extremely common, for example, conversing with two other people, sometimes I am aware that I appear differently to each of them. If the awareness of a double appearing that I am imagining in *Incidental Journey* does have a particularity, it may be to do with something like what Read describes as a ‘minimal difference of theatricality’ (2008: 17) occasioned by or as *Incidental Journey*.¹¹⁸ Part of this might be to do with the fact that it occurred in a public urban scene. That might suggest that for any one spectator or attendee, at least some of the other spectators (and passers-by) may have been strangers. I am imagining that if such a consciousness of doubling¹¹⁹ occurred in relation to strangers, it may have suspended more strongly a sense of a ‘proper’ or a habitual sense of identity. ‘Strangers’ might not recall to me in the same way or to the same extent as someone who knows me well, a sense of what I habitually do. However, my sense of whom or what I am would seem in part to come about in relation to ‘strangers’. Insofar as my ways of encountering strangers are already choreographed, such encountering would occur as citation-iteration. Such ways of encountering ‘strangers’ may be very familiar. Perhaps the significance of the ‘strangers’ I imagine in *Incidental Journey* pertains to a sense of being-observed-by-others. Perhaps such a sense contributed to a differentiation—perhaps what Read might call a ‘minimal parallax condition’ (2008: 16)—of *Incidental Journey*, as its framing, feigning or differing within the locale. Insofar as *Incidental Journey* appeared to them, these strangers would themselves occur as becoming-attendees. In *Incidental Journey*, perhaps spectators may, in part, have occurred as relays between: tourists, ‘tourists,’ performers, and spectators. There would be no strict rule of delineation between them, for example, between being(-called) a tourist and being(-called) a spectator. It is not citation that I am concerned with here, as with citationality as an impropriety that would be a capacity to identify-with. The previous sections of this chapter suggest that *there is* no propriety to me. As I noted above in relation to Levinas’s discussion of allegory, Wall suggests, ‘The self... consists of its absolutely passive being-formed which makes possible its (ambiguous) ability to identify with others and also to imitate them’ (1999: 42). In relation to participation in the image discussed above, my question is as to whether an awareness of such a doubling, an appearing as both or either this or that, would open onto a more radical impropriety of appearing and being.

¹¹⁸ As I discussed in Chapter Two, Read discusses the non-coincidence of a thing with itself in relation to theatre and performance and his reading of Slavoj Žižek’s (2006) concept of parallax.

¹¹⁹ My imagining of a ‘consciousness of doubling’ appearing in *Incidental Journey*, and a related sense in my discussion of *The Walk* below, and its resonances within this project, is inspired in part by the English translation—*Consciousness of Semblance*—of Alexander Garcia Düttman’s (2011) book *Teilnahme: bewusstsein des scheins*, according to Düttman’s web page on the University of London website, <http://www.gold.ac.uk/visual-cultures/a-duttman/>. Thus, my engagement with *Incidental Journey*, within its relation to the problematics I explore of, for example feigning, passing, attending and tethering, is also *the most initial and provisional* engagement with Düttman’s book—imagining what the title might mean. In this sense it may be an area for future research.



Attending a ‘conventional’ play, to the extent that there is such a thing, ‘normally,’ I know that it is an occurrence that involves particular species of doubling, relays, or negotiation, for example between that named as ‘stage space’ on the one hand and ‘scene’ on the other; and between that person or machine (with a name), named ‘actor’ on the one hand, and ‘character’ on the other. That is not to say that any of these identities or ‘names’ is fixed: they are themselves produced in *différance*, in difference with that which they are not. Such doubling, relays, or negotiation might in some way be more ambiguous in ‘conventional’ contemporary dance, if there is such a thing, which is often not premised on a scene different to the performance space on whose ‘naming’ spectators might—as readily as with such a ‘conventional’ ‘play’ (supposing such a thing exists)—form what Derrida in *Limited Inc.* calls a ‘minimal consensus’ (1988b: 61) on the name of, nor the playing of a character that is intentionally delineated from the dancer ‘herself.’ In a ‘conventional’ play or dance, this knowledge—that what I am spectating has the kind of reality of ‘a performance,’ or of occurring as something like what Derrida in SEC, in relation to Austin’s (1962) exclusion of theatrical uses of language from his discussion of the performative, describes as ‘the determined modification of a general citationality’ (Derrida 1988c: 17)—is perhaps suspended when I identify with a ‘character’ more than with the corresponding ‘actor.’ However in each of these cases over-simplified here, perhaps the sense in which ‘I know’ that what I am spectating has the kind of reality of ‘a performance’ differs from conditions of knowability, or appearance and recognizability, in *Incidental Journey*. Perhaps Nachbar’s performance was at a greater risk of passing-by in the senses I discussed in Chapter Two. It is not clear from Nachbar’s description, the extent to which ‘passers-by’ (2012: 30) identify *Incidental Journey* as ‘a performance,’ with the kind of reality of a performance suggested

above, and whether in the case of *Incidental Journey*, they identified the spectators as tourists or as ‘tourists.’

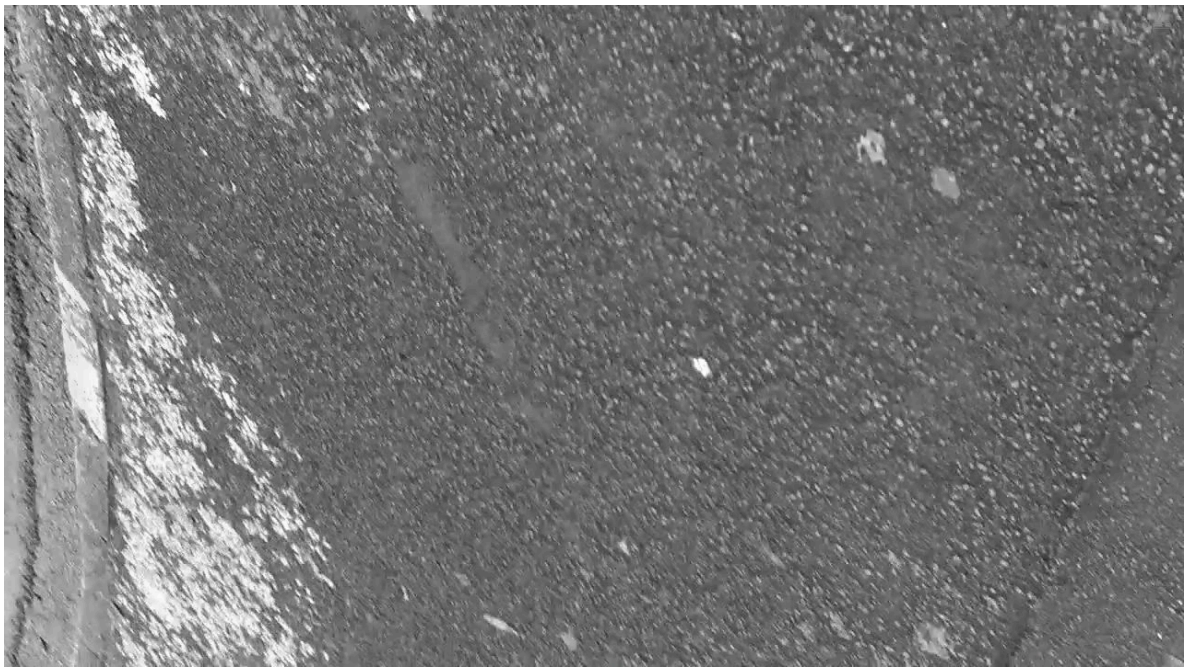
Under-Cover-Agent

If the spectators are tourists to passers-by, and ‘tourists’ to each other, then perhaps there was a kind of subterfuge or ‘under-cover-agent’ feeling amongst spectators of *Incidental Journey*. This claim extrapolates from my experience of performing episodes in my practice. At times, particularly just before and after the time named as the starting time in episodes that have a named start time, I feel my gestures taking on a kind of ‘under-cover-agent’ feeling. These situations seem to appeal to an ‘egotistical’, perhaps ‘ten-year-old-boy,’ sense of myself as a protagonist, or both character and actor, of a film, perhaps a spy film. My engagement with the video camera, that perhaps could be described as ‘fugitive’ in the sense that, as I discussed in Chapter Two, it mostly refuses to figure myself or others ‘directly’, seems paradoxically involved with this feeling of myself to be an ‘under-cover-agent’ in a film. Such an under-cover agent would be taking, making, or giving footage, foot-path-age and ‘shoeage’. The drawing-out of the foot-path-age there would be a coding that would perhaps make it difficult for a future viewer to ‘identify’ the characters involved. Unless, that is, one ‘recognizes’ people or things by their shoes, or unless the appearance and recognition of shoes or footpaths is of greater relevance—to whoever or whatever in the future might encounter this audiovisual recording—than the appearance and recognition of people. The footage taking, making, or giving is also contingent on comings and goings in the locale, as the camera gets forgotten or abandoned while my attention is drawn elsewhere, or an attendee has been ‘given’ or ‘lent’ the camera). How would the passing-myself-off or feigning of the under-cover-agent relate to Massumi’s (2002) parable of the soccer game I discussed in Chapter Two? Massumi suggests that the game changes or evolves through the emergence of a novel style of play that is the disguising of the telegraphing of the move, engendering surprise and thus an advantage. The sense of myself being an under-cover-agent may be an emergence of ‘character’ in my practice, a way in which my character would happen to me.¹²⁰

The ‘under-cover-agent’ feeling seems to involve a kind of subtle amplification, or perhaps a sense of by-play or being-beside-myself, where my attention is drawn, perhaps first, to how I might be being-seen, (rather than, for example, being-heard) by others who I may or may not myself be able to see, as well as ‘imaginary’ others perhaps watching the scene ‘now’ or in future as one watches a film. In such a way I might feel myself as playing alongside myself. In my appearing to myself, there may be an imaginary scene produced by ‘long-shots’ and ‘mid-shots,’ very different from the ‘actual’ footage

¹²⁰ Derrida has an extended discussion of the feign in Volume 1 of *The Beast and the Sovereign* (2009).

– chance close-ups on footpaths, grass verges, and shoes. As with the awareness of citation that I ‘imagined’ in Nachbar’s (2006) *Incidental Journey* above, this would be a doubling of my ‘image’ of myself into at least two kinds of objects, Brent as performer of episode, and Brent as character in film. Such a relay between two kinds of identities or objects is not ‘image’ in the sense Levinas proposes in RS. However, considering Wall’s (1999) suggestion in relation to Levinas’s ethics that I quoted in the section ‘The Image, Rhythm, Resemblance’ above: ‘The self... consists of its absolutely passive being-formed which makes possible its (ambiguous) ability to identify with others and also to imitate them’ (1999: 42), I wonder if such a capacity to identify as this and as that, that I become aware of as an ‘under-cover-agent’, opens onto a kind of radical impropriety of (my) being. Or perhaps this is wishful thinking. In the image in Levinas’s sense, as I have outlined, the agency of the agent would have been deposed and the I would not be distinguishable from the locale or the



‘cover,’ there would be no frame or phenomenology as such.

A similar sense of myself as ‘under-cover-agent’ occurs on preparatory locale-visits. In these I feel I must also attempt to monitor or calculate how I am appearing to others, mostly as how I am being-seen, as locale visits tend to involve walking back and forth and lingering, perhaps I appear *as if* I don’t have a clear purpose or destination, (here there may be an adequation of such an appearance with how I feel I ‘really’ am, as I attempt to find a sense of orientation and aim, perhaps similar to how someone ‘working’ might wander around a studio) in often suburban locales over perhaps two or three hours. To the extent that such reconnaissance in the locale would be both or undecidably,

re-knowing and being-surprised, it would be a kind of *dorsal* engagement. I attempt to gauge and modulate the degree to which I am remarkable, disruptive, annoying, suspicious or threatening. Such calculation would in part occur through an attempt at feigning such as to fit a ‘preformat’ (to bend Read’s expression [Read 2008: 170]) or template of passing-by or passing-through in the locale. The under-cover-agent may attempt to feign that others pass her by while she attends-to these others in an attempt to discern the extent to which they attend-to her or pass-her-by. But she cannot see behind her back. Unlike most episodes, in such locale visits I don’t have a kind of alibi occasioned by attendeers who might be recognized as ‘an audience’ and so provide some kind of categorization and perhaps legitimation (or camouflaging and diffusion) of behaviour when it moves into modes remarkable as deviating from the normal.¹²¹ Perhaps, attendeers might occur as middle terms, mediations, or perhaps gradients (in that attendeers perform something of a deviation from the normative or normal, but a less remarkable one than I at times perform), between the normal or normative and what I find myself to have been doing and be doing.¹²² A not-wanting to appear as impersonating a ‘just-passing-through’ could be reversed into its opposite, of wanting-to appear as impersonator. Such situations may occur with a relay or movement between an attraction and repulsion towards my feeling of myself to appear as deviant in some way. Particularly in locale visits, there occurs a kind of obsessive-compulsive sense. I feel I must keep returning to places of interest, I am re-recorded or tethered to them, and make repeated and refined comparisons between them. Such tethers seem to derail my progress ‘from behind’ (Wills 2008: 10). Perhaps part of the charge

¹²¹ By ‘normal’ I mean both in the sense of ‘common’, and in the sense of ‘permissible’ or in keeping with ‘norms’. Insofar as it appears, sometimes it occurs on or near limits of normative behaviour in its street locales. In such locale visits, the range of the normal feels particularly narrow. My supervisor Mark Jackson relayed to me that attending *Poring in Oct Dec Series* (2011), he heard a passer-by say to her counterparts, on seeing me on the other side of the street, something like, ‘Don’t cross over, there’s a weirdo over there’. It appears that this passer-by-becoming-attendeer recognized me as actually a ‘weirdo’ rather than ‘inspired by’ a ‘weirdo,’ or as taking a ‘weirdo’ as a model. However, in both cases it is unclear to what extent my performance was a mimesis of people who might be referred to as ‘weirdos’ or ‘crazys’ on the street.

¹²² My feeling of being-seen tended to be greater in locale visits in suburban streets than in urban streets. In discussing conditions of visibility in contemporary urban environments, Read picks up on Beatriz Colomina’s discussion of ‘the inhabitant of the “modern,” moving within a space that is “neither inside nor outside, public nor private... it is a space that is not made of walls but of images, images as walls.” (Read 2008: 211). Read quotes Colomina:

The modern transformation of the house produces a space defined by (moving) images. This is the space of the media, of publicity. To be inside this space is only to see. To be “outside” is to be in the image, to be seen, whether in the press photograph, a magazine, a movie, on television [Read adds [on CCTV record]] or at your window. It no longer has much to do with public space, in the traditional sense of a public forum. (Colomina cited in Read 2008: 216)

The sense of ‘being outside’ that Colomina (within Read’s discussion) suggests might help to explain my sense of being-seen in a movie, even if I imagined I was ‘under-cover.’ As might the idea of being inside as seeing (but not, as Read suggests, of witnessing), even if seeing in this case is not necessarily seeing ‘the street’ outside the house.

associated with this feeling is the risk of being found out as a kind of imposter. Perhaps it is also the risk of not being found out, that is, as taken for ‘real’ as an ‘odd’ person, persons, or ‘group’ on the street rather than having the kind of reality of ‘art’ or of a ‘performance.’ In being found out as an imposter I would only be taking on another semblance of myself. The ‘under-cover-agent’ would not appear in distinction from the locale, would pass or blend in from the point of view of everyone and everything, including the other ‘agents’—attendeers—who have accepted the email invitation and so in a sense have ‘read a code’ to make the rendezvous with the cover. In my feeling of becoming an under-cover agent, my ‘I’, my ‘characters,’ occur as iterating phrases, gestures and rhythms within and between episodes. Something similar might be said of episodes and of other attendeers. As a noun, or as named, a character, say the ‘under-cover-agent,’ would be detachable from the episode, somewhat analogous to ‘criticism’ in the sense Levinas discusses in RS, an opening to dialogue of what, as verb or process of characterizing, would pass-by or feign each feign as another characterization.

In Levinas’s example of the fable, such opacity of the *as*-animal rather than the *through*-animal would be the interruption of its conceptuality, *moral*, message, or *said*. That is, Levinas characterizes art in its materiality, as the limit of conceptuality. In this sense the fable is not reducible to its moral but neither is it completely detachable from a question of moral or message. Rather, any moral would be kept *as a question* by or with its opacity. This would be *one* way of thinking ethico-political signification, and *one* way of thinking an ethico-political signification of art.

The Walk: Becoming Visible and Becoming a Group

At the time of Pilkington and Nachbar’s writing of ‘We Always Arrive in the Theatre on Foot: a walk to the theatre in sixteen steps and eighteen footnotes’ (2012), *The Walk* had yet to take place. According to the ‘Trailer’ page of the TanzForum Berlin website, *The Walk* took place in Berlin as an indoors version at Sophiensaele in February, and an outdoors version in May 2012. In footnote ‘a,’ of the article, Nachbar writes that *The Walk* aims to be ‘a walk to the theatre that becomes theatre on its way’ (2012: 30). In footnote d, Nachbar writes, ‘for *The Walk*, the question is what happens when a group of people walk to the theatre together? What techniques can be used to make the walk to the theatre a communal experience?’ (32) In ‘STEP 14,’ Pilkington and Nachbar suggest, ‘Walking to the theatre might become visible if it is a group that walks there, making the walk a procession for its participants; it could also possibly become a demonstration in the name of theatre.’ (2012: 34)¹²³ ‘A following,’ perhaps a temporary motile collective, a mobilization, would seem to be

¹²³ With this suggestion Pilkington and Nachbar pick up on Rebecca Solnit’s differentiation in *Wanderlust: A history of walking* (2002 [cited in Pilkington and Nachbar 2012]).

something that Nachbar's *The Walk* attempts or explores the possibility of. In this way a temporary group with some kind of tethering, binding, and re-cording might be occurring. A 'demonstration for the theatre' in Pilkington and Nachbar's article invokes the idea of gathering a following and the formation of a collective, and of species of these called advertising and marketing. I imagine there are different ways in which 'spectators' may be invited to, and invited within, such a demonstration. *The Walk* may have invited passers-by to it before the given start time of *The Walk*, as well as while it occurred. Again, I imagine a kind of pleasure of subterfuge or awareness of resemblance, of being in a group appearing differently to 'insiders' (fellow 'spectators') as compared to 'outsiders' (passers-by). The sense of a demonstration for the theatre also invokes the sense of a gathering that picks up members along the way, not out of the town as in *The Pied Piper*, but within the town to the theatre. (Perhaps *The Pied Piper* would have feigned as under-cover-agent with a secret).¹²⁴ My engagements with Hampton and Neath's *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* (2012) in Chapter Two, and with *saying* in Chapter Five, might be an engagement with vocal or auditory parts of the kinds of situations Pilkington and Nachbar describe and engage with. Pilkington and Nachbar's suggestion that *The Walk* might become a 'procession' or 'demonstration' provides a different orientation to processes of becoming and belonging that I discussed in Chapter Two concerning relations among attendees, passers-by and me.

Such a group as Pilkington and Nachbar (2012) describe might differ from the 'usual' processes of a street and become 'visible' as a group in any number of ways as it walks, by for example: sustaining a closeness of individual bodies relative to passers-by or other bodies who also happen to belong there, 'eye-contact' among the individuals, possibilities of attendings-to the fact that many individuals take the same route over a given time and distance, conversation and gestural 'interactions,' a sharing of qualities or rhythms of gesture or movement, clothing and costume, objects and materials, age and ethnicity, as well as the number of individual bodies that sustain any of these or other modes of association with one another. Perhaps the larger the 'group' the more unusual it would tend to be, and so the stronger it would appear, and this would occur at least partly as a visible appearing. 'Group' suggests among its members, the operation of associative 'forces,' or 'forces' that work against the tendency of each individual, or each person, to go her or his own way. A force that works against disbanding might be described as a 'binding' or (in the language of Hampton and Neath's *The Bench, or Hello for Dummies*), a tethering, among the members of the group.

¹²⁴ The prioritization of vision in Pilkington and Nachbar's example invokes, by contrast, in the context of individuals following a 'guide' in urban streets, *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*. In this legend, the rats or children are bound, not by what they see, but by the sound of the piper, and perhaps are not bound to each other, except in being species-bound. They are visible as a densification of rats or children, but if they are a group they are of a different kind to the group suggested in Pilkington and Nachbar's STEP 14.

A group may be visible, audible or otherwise sensible as a group to its members before it is visible to others—this recalls the discussion of ‘under-cover’ discussed above. Or conversely, perhaps a group may appear to and be recognized by others, before or independently of the members of such a group ‘recognizing’ themselves to be in this group.¹²⁵ In relation to such a group, there is no finality as to who the members are, or if the group exists, or how a differentiation between inside the group and outside the group would be decided. The existence of a group suggests processes of mediation between interiors and exteriors, or processes of interiorizings and exteriorizings, and I will explore such processes further in Chapter Four.

Transition

The sense of ‘participation’ I have explored in this chapter would occur beside, underneath, as opacity over the top of, before, or in the meanwhile of, voluntary, (or even, Levinas would argue), unconscious, modes of participation.¹²⁶ I have explored questions of the appearance and recognizability of such participation through explorations of my and others’ practices. *Meanwhile*, it is not a kind of participation I could improve or increase. I have explored different figures of responding to this idea of participation by way of modes that might or might not be described as some kind of ‘recognition,’ or as occurring at the limits of recognizability.

In the sense that, as I outlined above, participation in the image would occur as a deposition of subject, object and concepts into a mode that does not *work* in any economic sense, in which there is no ‘I’ that could work, it could not be put to work as a work or shared project. This recalls Nancy’s essay ‘The Inoperative Community’ and, as Bruns (2002) notes, Blanchot’s critique of Levinas’s figuring of the other as *human* other—in that naming the other in this way already suggests a community defined by a property, being ‘human,’ however that is defined—and so exclusive of alterity. This question aside, Levinas’s writing of the image and Blanchot’s engagement with poetry can be thought of as engagements with the question of how to think and practice fraternity or community, in a way that resists totalizing or totalitarianism. In this sense, RS and Levinas’s aesthetics would belong to his ‘ethics as first philosophy’. That is, Levinas’s engagement with the image would offer a reminder that any ‘community’ or ‘participatory’ art project, any other art project and any other project at all, insofar as it ‘works’ probably or necessarily involves a ‘digestion’ or exclusion of otherness. But every artwork must in some way work to appear and be recognized,

¹²⁵ In Chapter Five I will explore versions of such a being recognized in relation to ‘cavesdropping.’

¹²⁶ ‘It is a mode of being to which applies neither the form of consciousness, since the I is there stripped of its prerogative to assume, its power, nor the form of unconsciousness, since the whole situation and all its articulations are in a dark light, *present*.’ (RS: 133)

be called an artwork. For me this is the ethico-political question of participation that emerges in an engagement with appearance and recognizability in my and others' practices in relation to the writings of Levinas and others discussed in this chapter.

Four: Bending Back

The ‘fulcrum’ in which this turning of being back upon itself which we call knowing or mind is produced thus designates the singularity par excellence. (*OB*: 106)

The subject is not *in itself*, at home with itself, such that it would dissimulate itself in its wounds and its exile, understood as *acts* of wounding or exiling itself. Its bending back upon itself is a turning inside out. Its being ‘turned to another’ is this being turned inside out. (*OB*: 49)¹²⁷

This chapter explores how aspects of Levinas’s thought undermine or retract what I write or perform in attempting to pass this project off as research. As such, it attends-to a necessity of negotiating the necessity in which my findings are re-collections of what I expected to find—rememberings of the same. It does so firstly through an exploration of Levinas’s essay ‘The Trace of the Other’ (1986). Then, returning to Wills’s (2008) writing of *dorsality*, it explicates how, for Levinas in *Otherwise than Being*, ‘pre-original’ ‘bending back’ would have been *recurrence*—a bending back of the oneself absolutely prior to its representation of itself to itself or its consciousness of itself. Then I revisit the exploration of participation in the image in RS in Chapter Three by registering an ‘originary’ ambiguity within Levinas’s writings, between the *il y a* and *illeity*. While this chapter is more explicitly concerned with methodology than the previous chapters, it pre-empts my attending-to in Chapter Five of what Levinas identifies as the ‘methodological problem’ of *OB* (7), of how a *saying* as enigma, non-phenomenon, might be *said*. Thus both Chapter Four and Chapter Five explore versions of the problem explored in Chapter Three, via Bruns’s (2002) commentary, as Bruns puts it, ‘how I can enter into a relation with a thing without destroying it, that is, without absorbing it into myself as an object of consciousness or as part of my grip on existing’ (2002: 220). In this project a ‘relation’ that would particularly be in question would be *performing*, thus it would also be a problem of how one might perform ‘a thing without destroying it’.¹²⁸

The Trace of the Other

In the 1963 essay ‘The Trace of the Other’ (1986) (TO), Levinas proposes that the trace of an absolute alterity is presented in the face of the other person. In the first section entitled ‘Being and the Same,’ in diagnosing the traditional operation of western philosophy including the work of Husserl and Heidegger, Levinas discusses the status of the ‘I’ in its relation to the outside, and proposes that knowledge and the true participate in the inwardness of the ‘I.’ Insofar as the ‘I’ is in a relation of knowledge with the other, the ‘I’ is not disturbed from its egoism, and, ‘The alien being is

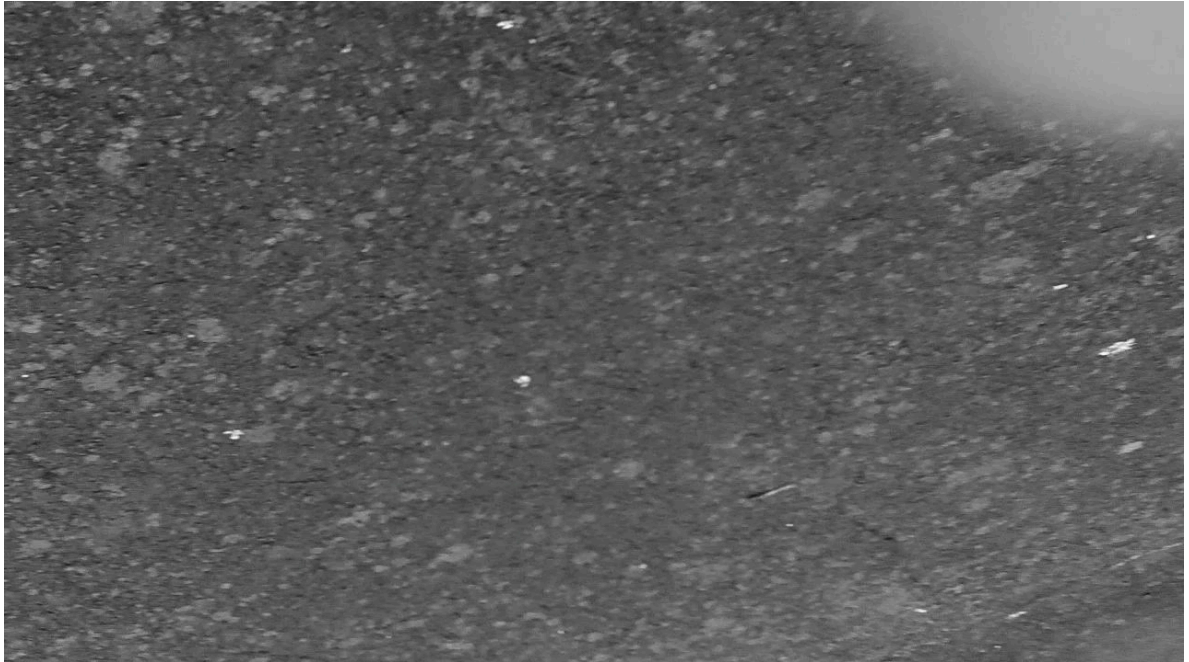
¹²⁷ Wills (2008) quotes this passage in his discussion of Levinas’s writing of corporality in *OB*.

¹²⁸ This differentiation between knowing and performing or enacting has been prompted by comments within one of the examiners’ reports.

as it were naturalized as soon as it commits itself with knowledge.... Though it surprised the I, a being that is in truth does not alter the identity of the I' (1986: 345). This suggests that a Levinasian engagement in research would seek to acknowledge an exceeding of the grasping or comprehending of knowing, or seek to acknowledge that that would have been prior to the true. Levinas writes in *TI*, 'the presentation of the face is not true, for the true refers to the non-true, its eternal contemporary, and ineluctably meets with the smile and silence of the skeptic. The presentation of being in the face does not leave any logical place for its contradictory' (201).¹²⁹ In research, Levinas suggests in 'The Trace of the Other', the inwardness of the I is maintained, as what is obscure is 'promised to research' (1986: 345) in a future in which everything is in principle knowable, 'a future whose night is but the opacity produced by the density of the superimposed transparencies. Memory brings back the past itself and puts it into this future in which research and historical interpretation wander' (345). Thus for Levinas, what comes is mistaken as what is remembered. The traditional thinking of time in research and history, Levinas suggests, is problematic both in its thinking of the past and the future, Levinas continues, 'The traces of the irreversible past are taken as signs that ensure the discovery and unity of a world' (345). I read 'world' in this quotation as corresponding, at least broadly, to 'the perspective of the world' that Levinas suggests in *EE* (52), which, for Levinas in *RS*, is suspended in participation in the image, as I explored in Chapter Three. This would be to read 'alien being' in the quote above and 'world' as concepts or themes, that is, as already grasped or incorporated within ontology.¹³⁰ Therefore the time of the 'as soon as' is also the time when the other has absolved itself prior to the *existence* of 'the alien being', which is also to say that the alien being, or the other traced in the face of the alien being, never *existed*. It never existed, but perhaps left a trace. That is to say that for Levinas, ontology, and this research, cannot avoid mis-taking traces for signs. It isn't that first there was an alien being that was then caught in the net of ontology. For Levinas, the identification or intending of an alien being, and a world as unity are ontological mis-takes. The other has already absolved itself before ontology. I mis-take a trace for a sign and in so doing deny the unknowability, unforeseeability of the future, and the irreversibility of the past means that something passed which I cannot retrieve. For Levinas, the other's transcending of knowledge and ontology has a meaning within politics, as originating interruption *of* politics, as I will discuss below. For Levinas in *TI*, as Wyschogrod explains, 'In the absence of the other, the meaning of individuals emanates from the totality whose significance derives from power that is ultimately expressed in war' (2002: 194). Thus, for Levinas, knowledge of the other, and research

¹²⁹ In *OB* Levinas likens the relationship of the *saying* and the *said* to the refutation and return of skepticism. I will pick up on this in Chapter Five.

¹³⁰ '[W]orld' here might also be taken as a sign, (and for the moment not a trace), of Levinas' disagreement with Heidegger's concept of 'world' on the basis that, for Levinas, it implies an imposition of unity.



understood as a pursuit of knowledge and truth, is correlative with ontology that is ‘ultimately expressed in war.’ This suggests that insofar as this project is provoked within a Levinasian engagement, it is called by that which it necessarily cannot digest or com-prehend, to negotiate its ontological mis-takes in such a way as to respond to this exteriority as, in the terms of *TI*, the exceeding of totality by infinity. Thus insofar as this project occurs within a Levinasian ‘methodology’ it would occur at the limits of the methodo-*logical*, perhaps in a ‘relation’ of the metho- to Levinas’s writing of the *trace* (or, to the *graphic* in the sense that Derrida discusses in SEC).

Games

At the end of the first section, ‘Being and the Same’ of the ‘The Trace of the Other’, Levinas makes a passing mention of art,

the complacency of modern philosophy for the multiplicity of cultural significations and for the games of art lightens being of its alterity and represents the form in which philosophy prefers expectation to action, remaining indifferent to the other and to others, refusing every movement without return. (1986: 347)

That is, for Levinas, ‘the games of art’ would not respond to the (un)founding of these very ‘games’ by the other.¹³¹ This brief reference to art recalls the irresponsibility of art Levinas suggests in RS,

¹³¹ The sense in which Levinas writes ‘play’ thus tends to differ from the sense in which *play* for Derrida occurs as language’s materiality and *différance*. And the sense Levinas writes ‘immanence’ would be in the sense of a totality or totalizing system that pretends not to have been interrupted by exteriority. This thus differs from the sense of immanence engaged by Massumi (2002) in my example in Chapter Two, where immanence is differing or varying.

perhaps suggesting ‘games’ as a mode of (false) pretense, *alibi*, or façade. In this sense it recalls my discussions of frames, feigns and façades in Chapter Two. And it would contest the idea that my imagining of myself to be an ‘under-cover-agent’ in Chapter Three, insofar as this occurs in the mode of ‘expectation’, occurs as a tracing of exteriority. Arguably, this brief mention of art would be a caricature of art. Or, it would be art as the *artifice* and irresponsibility of a game. This seems to be a game as a *totality*, or perhaps an ‘island-state’, in which (or that pretends that), all the possible combinations of moves and their effects are in principle knowable in advance. What is artifice is real. As I suggested in the Introduction, for Levinas in *TI*, the other’s distance from the same is part of the other’s ‘way of existing’ (35). In this way, for Levinas, the ‘I’ will remain absolutely separated from the other, and the relation between the two cannot be totalized as in the representation of ‘a system visible from the outside’ (35). There is for Levinas, a radical asymmetricality of my relation to the other. In this sense, and notwithstanding that Levinas writes *play* as analogous with his characterization of games, Massumi (2002) and Levinas would agree that *I* cannot step outside the field (of a play). That is to say, the feign, as a making-believe (rather than a make-believe), is (almost) all that matters.¹³² For example in a professional soccer game, often it is almost as if the only rules that existed were the game’s artificial rules. But these rules are always contaminated by other games and other rules, for example, such as those of the supporters-in-the-stadium or the supporters-on-the-sideline. Massumi (2002) suggests that games involve different levels of codification. In Derridean terms they occur through or as modes of iteration—as movement-writing or choreography. A game’s becoming might be said to occur as modes of iteration without any tethering to an author, in this sense exceeding any programmability, and thus periodically inducing changes to the rules (Massumi suggests that the rules operate to catch up with the game’s becoming). But how would the feign, or more generally, the becoming—as ‘artificing’ or artificiality—of the game, relate to totality and to infinity? Massumi suggests that innovation or becoming of the game emerges from the game itself rather than, in any simple terms, from a player as author-subject:

It is through stylistic free variations that an already-constituted sport evolves. The ‘individuality’ of the style is a collective individuation: it is ‘collective’ in its absolute dependence on an intermixing of the multiple and heterogeneous elements of the sport; and it is an ‘individuation’ in the sense that it is the motor of the sport’s unique evolution. A style is a germinal individuation *of the sport*. The single body channeling the evolutionary potential is a node of expression of a collective becoming. (2002: 78)

¹³² Watt’s (2010) linking of Levinas with Derrida’s essay on Artaud’s ‘theatre of cruelty’ provides an avenue for exploration in relation to this discussion. Watt discusses the following suggestion of Derrida in ‘The Theatre of Cruelty and the Closure of Representation’:

Closure is the circular limit within which the repetition of difference infinitely repeats itself. That is to say, closure is its *playing* space. This movement is the movement of the world as play. (1978: 316)

The becoming of a game, in the sense of a novel feign or *style* produced in and as the game's becoming, is not first recognizable or clearly readable. If so, to an extent, aside from however else we might think of art, we might consider 'the games of art' as a mode, or as involving a mode, of 'technology in the back' (Wills 2008: 12). That is, we might consider 'technology in the back' as in some way analogous to the way that Massumi (2002) writes of the game's becoming, as becoming of artifice (but care would need to be taken not to collapse the differences between Wills's and Massumi's engagements). Back to Wills again, and the passage of 'Façades of the Other' of *Dorsality I* quoted in Chapter Two in relation to a sense of contingency in Hampton and Neath's *The Bench or Hello for Dummies*. Wills suggests, in relation to Levinas's 'Is Ontology Fundamental' (1998b), discussing a 'type of blindness or groping in the dark':

Technology thus retains something of the unseeable or unforeseeable other; our relation to it has something of the structure of our relation to the absolute other. If it never shows us a face or speaks to us through its eyes, that is because it exists to some extent outside our vision and outside our grasp. But it also means that the other... retains something of technology.... We can understand an incompletely human, technologized, even an inert or inanimate other, as either a perversion or consecration of Levinas's ethics. In the first place, it obstructs the path to theological transcendence such as he was often at pains to resist, and reinforces his avowed atheism. (2008: 61, 62)

That is, if the artifice and becoming of a game, are, or are like, 'technology in the back' (Wills 2008: 12), then we might consider 'the games of art' with Wills 'as either a perversion or consecration of Levinas's ethics'. Thus there might be some kind of analogy here (and important differences) with the way that for Levinas, the alterity of the other resists visual figuration. Wills continues:

Perhaps an ethics that presumed an originary nonhuman would be the beginning of a rethinking not just of relations between the animate and the inanimate and between Homo sapiens and technology, but also of everything we understand as experience of the inhuman. (2008: 62)

My picking up on this brief mention of art is also to caricature Levinas's writing of art. It is important to register that Levinas's texts frequently engage examples from literature, 'fiction'.

The Trace

In the section 'Need and Desire' of 'The Trace of the Other', Levinas suggests,

the epiphany of a face is alive. Its life consists in undoing the form in which every entity, when it enters into immanence, that is, when it exposes itself as a theme, is already dissimulated. The other who manifests himself in the face as it were breaks through his own plastic essence.... His presence consists in *divesting* himself of the form which, however, manifests him. (1986: 351)

Levinas proposes 'the exceptional signifyingness of a trace' as the way in which such an undoing of 'form' or 'undoing of plastic essence' occurs:

How can the coming of the other out of the absolute, in the visitation of a face, be in no way convertible into a revelation-not even by a symbolism or a suggestion? How is a face not simply a true representation, in which the other renounces his alterity? To answer, we will have to study the exceptional signifyingness of a trace, and the personal order in which such a signifyingness is possible. (1986: 352)

If the trace, as Levinas writes of it, were a kind of tether, it would tether me—as an ob-ligation—to that which was never present. In relation to questions of documentation and historization of live art, Levinas's engagement with the trace would provoke an engagement with how that which was never in truth might be traced within the mode of 'form', 'plastic essence', the true, themes, or 'the perspective of the world' (*EE*: 52). I have explored such ideas in relation to resemblance in Chapter Three. Wyschogrod notes that for Levinas, 'The trace... issues from an immemorial past... that can neither be converted to the present of the acts of a self nor incorporated into the diachronicity of the historical process' (2002: 197). Wyschogrod seems to be using 'diachronicity' here in the more 'conventional' sense, pertaining to time within which change would be observable. Therefore it seems that this time, for Levinas, would be the 'chronological' sense of time as a succession of 'present' or 'synchronic' moments, rather than the sense which Levinas writes of the 'diachronic'. That is to say that 'the trace', as inaugurating relation of the 'I' to exteriority, would refer both to something like a condition of possibility of history, and to a 'beyond history'. My engagement with documentation and historicization provoked by Levinas's ethics concerns the relation of a(n) (un)founding fiction—a fiction beyond the opposition of truth and falsity—to the necessity of the true, and an imperative, desire or ob-ligation of attending to a tracing of such a fiction within the true.

Recurrence

In Chapter Three I noted Bruns's (2002) suggestion that materiality, for Levinas, is the corporeality of the subject. In *OB*, Levinas figures the subject as first a material, corporeal recurrence to itself absolutely prior to its representation of itself to itself or its consciousness of itself. Levinas argues that recurrence is presupposed in Husserl's thought of an intentionality that protends and re-tends, a being able to identify itself across time:

The reflection on oneself proper to consciousness, the ego perceiving the self, is not like the antecedent recurrence of the oneself, the oneness without any duality of oneself, from the first backed up against itself, up against a wall, or twisted over itself in its skin, too tight in its skin, in itself already outside of itself.... The uncancellable recurrence of the oneself in the subject is prior to any distinction between moments which could present themselves to a synthesizing activity of identification and assemblage to recall or expectation.... Verbs, possessive adjectives and the syntactic figures one would like to use to disarticulate the singular torsion of the oneself bear already the mark of the oneself, this torsion, this contraction, this fission.... The oneself cannot form itself, it is already formed with absolute passivity. In this sense it is the victim of a persecution that paralyzes any assumption that could awaken in it, so that it would posit itself *for* itself. This passivity is that of an attachment that has already been made, as something irreversibly past, prior to all memory and all recall. It was made in an irrecuperable time which the present, represented in recall, does not equal, in a time of birth or creation, of which nature or creation retains a trace, unconvertible into a memory. (*OB*: 104, 105)

Thus, within a Levinasian engagement, the first bending back of the title of this chapter would be, or rather, would have been, 'recurrence'. For Levinas, such a recurrence is what I am; it is not a project I could decide to do. The 'antecedence' or priority of the 'irrecuperable time' indicates the particular sense of 'diachrony' Levinas engages in *OB*. The necessary 'counterpart' of this diachrony,

would be chronology—as the mode that the themes of re-search, knowledge, documentation and truth occur within. A little further, Levinas writes:

The recurrence of the oneself refers to the hither side of the present in which every identity identified in the said is constituted. It is already constituted when the act of constitution first originates.... In the exposure to wounds and outrages, in the feeling proper to responsibility, the oneself is provoked as irreplaceable, as devoted to the others, without being able to resign, and thus as incarnated in order to offer itself, to suffer and to give. It is thus one and unique... This hypostasis, when it shows itself, does so under the borrowed mask of being (*OB*: 105-106).

As I explored in relation to Wills's (2008) engagement with the house in Chapter Two, for Levinas in *TI*, the hypostasis is a first solidification that differentiates the oneself from the element. For Levinas the oneself, ego or 'I' is unique, not for any quality, property, or predicate, nor, as Alphonso Lingis points out in his 'Translator's Introduction' to *OB*, any 'specific difference' (1981: xxxvi), but as uniquely singled out in responsibility, as Levinas writes, 'without being able to resign' (*OB*: 105). For Levinas, '[t]he oneself does not coincide with the identifying of truth' (106). And, 'if the return to self proper to cognition, the original truth of being, consciousness, can be realized, it is because a recurrence of ipseity has already been produced' (106, 107). The hypostasis or recurrence would not have been absolutely antecedent to what Levinas describes in 'The Trace of the Other' (1986) discussed above, as the inwardness of the I. Rather, the hypostasis would be absolutely exposed to the other. In a formulation that might be described as paradoxical Levinas writes, 'It is as though the atomic unity of the subject were exposed outside by breathing, by divesting its ultimate substance even to the mucous membrane of the lungs, continually splitting up.' (*OB*: 107). In Levinas, on the one hand the oneself is a 'recurrence' to itself, I am already a bending back; and on the other hand, as Levinas writes in 'Meaning and Sense' ethics occurs as a 'one-way movement' (1996c: 49) from the same to the other without a return journey. Levinas frequently likens the 'one-way movement' of the ethical relationship to the exile of Abraham in contradistinction to the 'return journey to the same' of Ulysses, for example in *TO*, 'The God of the philosophers... is a god adequate to reason, a comprehended god who could not trouble the autonomy of consciousness, which finds itself again in all its adventures, returning home to itself like Ulysses, who through all his peregrinations is only on the way to his native island' (346). For Levinas, the subject was never at home in its hypostasis, in its body or in its home, it was already in exile. The subject's bending back upon itself in recurrence would have been this 'one-way movement' (1996c: 49) of giving without reserve from the same to the other.¹³³ In the section 'Need and Desire' of *TO*, Levinas differentiates

¹³³ In *Heuretics* (1994), having outlined a genealogy of the thinking of discovery in Europe as a relation to a *frontier* of knowledge, and registering the colonial implications of such a frontier, Ulmer quotes Eugene Victor Walter in *Placeways: A Theory of the Human Environment*, 'The Greek sense of *hodos* or "route" expects rationalization. Our term "method," which means a *way* of proceeding but implies rational conduct, comes from the Greek words *meta plus hodos*', (Walter 1988: 185) 'To go the right way, one made a journey to a proper destination, and after the journey out, sought a return (*nostos*) or homecoming.' (Walter 1988: 186).

need, as economic, from infinite desire for the other ‘The desirable does not fill up my desire but hollows it out, nourishing me as it were with new hungers’ (351).

It is perhaps ambiguous as to whether that which Levinas describes in the quotation from *OB* at the beginning of this section as ‘irrecuperable time which the present, represented in recall, does not equal, in a time of birth or creation’ (105), would be the meanwhile of the *il y a*, or whether it would have been the time of the absolutely other—what Levinas refers to, with regard to the trace, as illeity (*illeité*). For Levinas, a face stands in the trace of illeity. While the *il y a* would be anonymous being, *illeité* would have passed as the otherwise than being.¹³⁴ In *OB* Levinas writes:

Illeity lies outside the ‘thou’ and the thematization of objects. A neologism formed with *il* (he) or *ille*, it indicates a way of concerning me without entering into conjunction with me.... The illeity in the beyond-being is the fact that its coming toward me is a departure which lets me accomplish a movement towards a neighbor. (*OB*: 12, 13)

As I outlined in the Introduction, for Levinas, the ethical relation is a relation to the singular other, in *TI*, ‘The third party looks at me through the eyes of the Other – language is justice’ (213). The ‘third party’ is ‘present at the encounter with the other’ (213). In *OB*, with the third party comes the question, ‘What do I have to do with justice?’ (157). That is, there is a necessity for ‘comparison’ between more than one ‘incomparable’ other (158). In this comparison ontology and the question of justice are born. The *il* of illeity concerns both ethics and politics, infinity and totality. In ‘Levinas and Language’, Llewelyn explains that,

illeité is the third-personality not simply of the third party who looks at me already in your eyes, but the third-personality both of the third party over and against me and of myself as a third party over and against and thanks to them and you.... Further, if Levinas’s neologism *illeité* is built on the latin pronoun *ille* denoting remoteness and disjunction from the speaker, separateness or absolutely pluperfect pastness... it denotes our *parenté*, where this is our being bound in a relationship of fraternity that is

Ulmer suggests that ‘A “method of invention,” however, deconstructs this opposition between returning home and wandering’, discussing Derrida’s suggestion in relation to the myth of Ulysses and his return home, that ‘the architect... of today already–will not be a Ulysses’ (1994: 45). As I outlined in the Introduction, Ulmer picks up on the archaic sense of invention as ‘finding’, picking up on the sense of *inventio* as the commonplaces of a culture. Ulmer notes that as a finding, invention is thus inherently connected to ‘place’. To gloss (and oversimplify) Ulmer’s engagement in the terms of this project: Ulmer explores how finding where he already is, is to turn into difference. Questions of methodology in relation to route have particular resonances with each of the three practices I discuss in this exegesis. Episodes of my practice negotiate a relation between senses, façades or feigns of (‘forward’) progress – as, say, movement along a street, with movements of myself and other attenders, of relaying-between or turning-back or going round and round.

¹³⁴ In *OB*, Levinas describes illeity in a way that resonates with Wills’s (2008) engagement with dorsality:

The infinite wipes out its traces not in order to trick him who obeys, but because it transcends the present in which it commands me, and because I cannot deduce it from this command. The infinite who orders me is neither a cause acting straight on, nor a theme, already dominated, if only retrospectively, by freedom. This detour at a face and this detour at a detour in the enigma of a trace we have called illeity. (12)

neither our being united under a Father in the way of a particular monotheistic religion, nor a biological common descendance, but our being bound ethically in a sociality (2002: 129, 130).

Would there have been any difference between the *il y a* and illeity? Llewelyn suggests that because the *il* of illeity can mean *il* in the sense of the third person, my neighbour, or *Il* in the sense of 'He' as absolute other, absolute passed, or 'it' as in the *il* of 'there is' (*il y a*):

It is as though the *il* of the third party is attracted 'upward' toward the *il* of *illeité* and 'downward' to the *il* of what Levinas calls the *il y a*, the 'there is', so that, independently of the fact that *il* can translate 'it' as well as 'he', there is a risk of the extremes being confused (GCM 69 [Levinas's *Of God Who Comes To Mind* [1998: 69]], BPW 141) (Llewelyn 2002: 131).

Llewelyn suggests that 'the "there is" is not a nothingness that limits being, but is indistinguishable from being. The "there is" is beyond contra-diction' (2002: 131, here Llewelyn cites *EE*: 64].

Llewelyn suggests that in *OB*, the *there is*, 'is': '*Apeiron*, [infinite] unbounded, its unfinishedness is that of the "horrible eternity" [*OB*: 176] into which the conceptual diction of essence always threatens to fall' (Llewelyn 2002: 131). Llewelyn continues:

My being called by them is my owing it to them not to require a demonstration of their right.... What is without reason par excellence is the anarchic *il y a*. Only thanks to the meaninglessness of this sublinguistic, subliterate and so subpoetic murmuring can meaning and rationality be regained through ethics. Therefore language is rational only in the face of the menace of the non-rationality of the 'there is'—the non-rationality into which language risks slipping if construed in the manner of structuralism and ontologism, with their corollaries that the human being is possessed by language, and that what speaks first and last is language in its totality.... I can only witness to the other in responsibility if, beyond knowing and doubt, there may be no more to illeity than ilyaity. The ambiguity or enigma of this incognitive 'may be' (Levinas's *peut être*) is necessary to the good beyond being. (2002:132)

I suggest that the sense of the 'non' of non-rational and the 'less' of 'meaningless' in this passage would be a 'beyond'. That is, the *il y a* would be beyond reason and hence beyond the opposition of the rational to the non-rational, or of meaning to meaninglessness: neither meaning nor reason concern the epi-phantic.

If the self as a bending back or the bending back of the self never bends back to the same place, why remark it? That is, if differing happens prior to my will or consciousness, why would I need to 'do' anything about it? Perhaps because to live, to survive, in my conatus, I must live in conceptual commerce with objects, I must live as co-present with others in relations of politics, economics and justice. Levinas writes in *OB*, 'Being's essence carries on like a vigilance exercised without respite on this very vigilance, like a self-possession' (103). And I cannot live in the *il y a* or attend to the trace of *illeity* in the other's face or back, without living in concepts and themes. It would be the strength of this must, or the strength of the return of ontology as com-prehensive grasp and self-possession, in relation to which an imperative of a remarking a re-turn into difference, an attending to a resonance, or a turning of myself inside out would 'perhaps' call to be heard, to quote part of the title of Derrida's (1991) essay, 'at this very moment'. This would perhaps be traced as a wholly other



imperative to that of need, an imperative that could never have been lived up to or met, but that perhaps might be traced.

Responsibility

In the text of her spoken paper, ‘Caliban’s Cave: Is there a philosophy of the Stage?’ Liza Kharoubi (2011) offers ‘a short account’ of [the] *temptation* of the stage for philosophy’ (4), engaging writings of Martha Nussbaum, Avital Ronell, Critchley, Stanley Cavell and Lingis.¹³⁵ Critchley’s *Infinitely Demanding: Ethics of commitment, politics of resistance* (2007), and Kharoubi’s engagement with it, are apposite to the question of recurrence explored above in relation to questions of responsibility. Critchley attempts to articulate a response to what he diagnoses as a situation of religious and political disappointment that would motivate political action that resists nihilism in both its violent ‘active’, or withdrawing ‘passive’, forms. Identifying a motivational deficit within ‘secular liberal democracy’ (2007: 7), Critchley argues that motivation to resist nihilism occurs as ‘ethics’ as the way a self binds to its conception of the good, ‘ethical experience furnishes an account of the motivational force to act morally, of that by virtue of which a self decides to pledge itself to some conception of the good (9). Noting that for Critchley, ‘resisting’ opposes individualism, Kharoubi suggests:

¹³⁵ Spoken paper given at SAES Congress (Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences, Canada) 2011.

Theatre precisely shows that solitude is but an illusion of thought, as on Shakespeare's stage. There is no stage without a public: 'Un theatre vide est affreusement désert' ['An empty theatre is horribly deserted'] said Levinas in *De l'existence a l'existants*. Likewise, we are never thinking alone when we engage in philosophy. This curious statement seems to be at the basis of ethical thinking as seen from a theatrical point of view. The solitude of a substantial subjectivity fails to account for the theatrical experience. (2011: 6)

Thus Kharoubi suggests theatre as a mode that reveals my primordial relatedness to others that would be prior to any empirical sense of being-alone. Kharoubi's suggestion that theatre shows the illusory character of solitude feels plausible insofar as an empty theatre—auditorium, stage, backstage, front of house—conjures, performs, or recalls relations of seeing and being-seen, hearing and being-heard, or touching and being-touched. Thus an empty theatre as a 'haunted' space or a space of fantasy, might show that 'solitude is but an illusion of thought' in showing that even when I am alone I am always related to others, always performing to or for others, always choreographed by others. Some of these others may be distinct persons as I imagine them, and in this sense identifiable and nameable, while other others are not. This recalls the way Lepecki characterizes the 'secluded chamber' (2006: 26) in his account of the emergence of choreography. Further, the appearance of a theatre as a theatre, 'empty' or otherwise, would always occur as a mode, in Heidegger's and Nancy's terms, of 'being-with'.¹³⁶ For Lepecki, 'masculine solipsism is an essential element' of

¹³⁶ Read engages a question of the meaning of 'empty' in the context of a discussion of the 'life' implied in the term 'liveness' in relation to Agamben's concept of the production of the human in 'the anthropological machine' (Read 2008: 83). Read comments on two formulations of the ontology of performance: Peggy Phelan's in *Unmarked*: 'Performance's only life is in the present' (Phelan 1993: 146), and the first two sentences of Peter Brook's *The Empty Space*: 'I can take any empty space and call it a bare stage. A man walks across this empty space whilst someone else is watching him, and this is all that is needed for an act of theatre to be engaged' (Brook 1968). Read notes that in his *Theatre and Everyday Life* (2001), he 'addressed why the first sentence... was more complex and problematic than it might appear' (2008: 85). In relation to Brook's second sentence, Read comments, 'I am not so troubled by the gender presumption in this, more the species one' (85). Read suggests 'The analytic strength of their particular models derives from the way in which both Phelan and Brook resist positing 'performance' and theatre in general as the norm of actually existing performance,' (2008: 85), and this exegesis aims to take such an approach. Read comments further on Brook's and Phelan's formulations, 'every politics which grounds itself in reference to some substantial particularity (whether it be ethnic, religious, sexual or concerned with lifestyle) is by definition reactionary' (85). This might indicate both one of the lessons and one of the questions or problems concerning Levinasian ethics. The 'lesson' would consist in the thought that 'the other', or 'ethics' is not empirical, or *is not*—is not in Read's terms a 'substantial particularity'—might perhaps contest or interrupt the necessary totalizations inherent in what Levinas calls politics, or, might interrupt the totalizations that, in Read's terms, occur in both the more open-ended mode of 'politics' and the instrumental mode of 'the political'. The potential question or problem might be indicated in the claim that a space (or a stage) could be 'empty'. If Levinas's example of an empty theatre would seem to imply that the emptiness was an emptiness of *people*, then this might suggest a humanism. However, in the terms of *EE* or *RS*, any place or any stage could be empty, even if, empirically speaking, it was full of all kinds of living bodies and objects. That is, the sense of emptiness that Levinas is concerned with in *EE* is an emptiness of objects or concepts in which anonymous materiality persists. However, perhaps the example might suggest that an experience of such emptiness of objects and a persistence of anonymous materiality might open exemplarily in an experience of a theatre empty of people. This would be consistent with a species-tether or species-bond or homosociality, in which people tend to socialize with other people. To say

choreography as it emerged ‘as an early-modern subjectivity machine’ (19) in Arbeau’s *Orchesographie* (cited in Lepecki 2006).¹³⁷

Levinas’s description of an empty theatre in *EE* occurs as part of his articulation of the *il y a* or ‘there is’, that is, as I explored in Chapter Three, Levinas’s idea of the persistence of anonymous being that he describes in terms of darkness and the night. I suggest that the ‘horrible desert’ of the empty theatre Levinas suggests would not be the horror of a haunted place or a place that recalls ‘absent’ others. Rather, it would be the horror of a space of anonymity, of thingly materiality—and, recalling RS, an ‘empty theatre’ suggests deep darkness and shadow. Indeed, Kharoubi (2011) explores how theatre puts into play relations of darkness and light. An empty theatre as an opening of the ‘there is’ would occur as a participation in radical anonymity. Therefore, as well as Kharoubi’s suggestion that theatre shows that my insulation from others is illusory, Kharoubi’s engagement, together with *EE* and RS, also provoke me to consider whether there may occur modes of performance that open an ‘experience’ of ‘an empty theatre’ as an ‘experience’ of the *il y a*. Kharoubi’s engagement thus provokes a related engagement to the one in Chapter Three, but provoked by a feeling of solitude. RS, in its call for criticism that would bring art into relation with history, calls me to consider the ethical and ethico-political signification of such performance, if it would have occurred.

In relation to Critchley’s (2007) engagement with tragedy, Kharoubi suggests:

The major issue of Tragedy for Critchley, namely the acknowledgement of the other(s), mirrors what can be called the tragedy of subjectivity or its dramatic nature, torn between Me and You. Existential solitude is linguistically delusive and ethically pernicious – which could be expressed by the paradigm of the

that a place is empty would produce what Read calls a ‘remainder’ (2008: 85). Read suggests, ‘Within the particulars that make up any forceful performance discussion, it is this remainder which stands for the universal, for the whole, the ‘as such’ that is opposed to the parts within (85). If Levinas prioritizes the human in the context of an ethics and a politics, so does this current project. However, this project, in its engagements with Wills’s (2008) writings on prosthetics and technology, and Massumi’s (2002) engagements with becoming and belonging, and more indirectly, with Read’s (2008) engagement, picking up on writings of Latour, with ‘an amplified collective of other entities, beings and non-human things that characterise the expanded field of performance’ (2008: 7), this project attempts to be affected by processes other than the human, or at least, other than a human thought as distinct from technology, objects, or other animals.

¹³⁷ Lepecki picks up on Ludwig Wittgenstein’s comments on solipsism in *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus*. Lepecki suggests:

Wittgenstein’s propositions in the *Tractatus* allow us to think that it is precisely at the critical point where solipsism binds subjectivity to the logic of language that the choreographic – that is, the technology that binds modernity’s ‘being-toward movement’ to writing – decidedly aligns itself with philosophy to simultaneously generate *and* critique solitary masculinity. (2006: 20)

“Enchanted Island” as suggested by Shakespeare, Swift, and Critchley.... the representation of the stage as an island has philosophical implications on the representation of subjectivity. (2011: 6).¹³⁸

Kharoubi quotes Critchley’s characterization of passive nihilism in *Infinitely Demanding*, ‘In a world that is all too rapidly blowing itself to pieces, the passive nihilist closes his eyes and *makes himself into an island*’ (2007: 5).¹³⁹ Properly speaking, my performance practice does not take place on or in a stage. However, consonant with Read’s (2008) engagement across ‘theatre’ and ‘performance’ outlined in the Introduction, and keeping a sense of a stage as temporal and contingent, Kharoubi’s suggestions are provocative for this project. Lepecki (2006) suggests that in different ways in the choreographic practices of Bruce Nauman, Xavier Le Roy and Juan Dominguez, ‘solipsism’ paradoxically occurs as an opening out onto the world. In very broad terms, there would seem to be some similarity between what Lepecki explores as ‘masculine solipsism’ (2006: 26) and Critchley’s (2007) characterization of passive nihilism—the former, Lepecki argues, occurs as political engagement and the latter for Critchley, occurs as disengagement from politics. The projects Lepecki discusses are also, clearly, modes of publication or presentation, so occur as a mix between an intensity of ‘inwardness’ and presentation to others, or occur with a kind of tension or paradoxical mode.

Kharoubi suggests, ‘The solitude of the stage is a form of psychosis. Taken separately, as Levinas well showed in *La réélité et son ombre* [RS], that is to say considered without its public, the stage is essentially ‘evil’ (2011: 6). This picks up on Levinas’s suggestion in RS that art, in its suspension of conceptuality in what Levinas figures as ‘the image,’ is an evasion of responsibility if it is not, by the work of criticism, brought into history—that is, brought into the arena of conceptuality and discourse. Kharoubi had previously suggested, ‘For Critchley, nobody comes to the world as a singular conscience but already as “plurilogic”, as a *sort of public*’ (2011: 3, my emphasis). It seems that these quotations concern different sorts of public. If we subscribe to Kharoubi’s reading in the second quotation it would seem that a ‘solitude of the stage’ would be impossible insofar as a ‘solitary’ beholder or ‘beholdeer’ of the stage would be a ‘plurilogic’, or, in Critchley’s ‘parlance’, a ‘dividual’ (2007: 11):

¹³⁸ I briefly discuss Levinas’s discussion of Daniel Defoe’s story of *Robinson Crusoe* in Chapter Five in relation to hearing.

¹³⁹ In relation to this project’s participation in dance there is an aspect of Critchley’s (2007) characterization of ‘passive nihilism’ which I find limiting. With reference to Nietzsche’s concept of ‘western Buddhism’, Critchley suggests practicing yoga as exemplary of passive nihilism. I suggest that ‘yoga’ is something of an undifferentiated ‘straw person’ here. Given the close associations among modern dance and contemporary dance practices, somatic practices, and yoga, and given the close and complex relations between dance and politics, this association deserves a more nuanced engagement.

[T]he ethical subject is, in my parlance, *hetero-affectively* constituted. It is a *split subject* divided between itself and a demand that it cannot meet, a demand that makes it the subject that it is, but which it cannot entirely fulfill. The sovereignty of my autonomy is always usurped by the heteronomous experience of the other's demand. The ethical subject is a *dividual*. (2007: 10-11)

Relations between these two senses of public would occur in every kind of performance. 'Plurilogic' or 'dividual' might also be called the ethical subject as occurring in, or out of, in Levinas's terms in *OB*, 'the other in the same' (25). The demand that cannot be met would, in the terms of the sections above, occur as or in recurrence, or occur recurrently. To the extent that the 'dividual' is thought within a Levinasian framework, it would have been called, as Levinas suggests in 'The Transcendence of Words' (1989), to enter into discourse concerning concepts and politics *as a response to the infinite demand of ethics*. Discussing ToW in 'Art and Poetry in Levinas' that I discussed in Chapter Three, Bruns (2002) suggests a different and related sense of the meaning of 'critique' for Levinas to that in RS,

the sound of words is an ethical event, which Levinas does not hesitate to characterize as *critique*, not only because others interrupt me in making themselves felt, setting limits to my autonomy, but because *even when I myself speak* – even in self-expression – I am no longer an 'I', am no longer self-identical, but am now beside myself: [Bruns quotes Levinas in ToW in *Outside the Subject (OS)*] 'To speak is to interrupt my existence as a subject, a master' (*OS* 149) (Bruns 2002: 229).

A word is conceptual, *and* occurs as an encounter with others prior to concepts, and I will pick this up in Chapter Five in relation to *saying*. To the extent that this project is exploring the relation of ethics to politics it is concerned with how it engages the relation of these two senses of public.

Kharoubi continues, '[t]he drama of practical subjectivity consists in acknowledging that we are deceptively insulated. In that respect, theatre provides an appropriate description of subjectivity as a form of "dividualism" (Critchley 2007: 38), an interstitial form split between a stage and a public without any possible separation' (Kharoubi 2011: 6). I read 'description' in Kharoubi's suggestion in a similar way to 'illustration' in the Introduction: as not limited to the mode of truth-as-adequation. If theatre was to occur as 'resistance' in Critchley's sense, at an 'interstitial distance within the state' (2007: 111), it may be appropriate for it to show itself as somewhat *inappropriate*, or to raise a question of properness and propriety. I suggest that an 'attendeer', might be described as 'an interstitial form split between' a passing-by and an attending, and perhaps also split between a performer and an audience or audience member.

One mode in which episodes of my practice might involve an engagement with insulation, solipsism, or a making of myself into an island, may be what I explored in Chapter Two as minimal interiorizings-exteriorizings through arrangements and choreographies of 'belongings', such as my water bottle, mobile phone or parts thereof, and items of clothing, but also traffic lights and footpaths as material-choreo-graphic tissues. These 'belongings', as named, might be considered as

islands, or shores of identifying within the movements of a street that is sea-like in that it is constituted in or as varying flows. In this picture, 'stage'/island as interiorizing-exteriorizing recalls Levinas's description of the hypostasis in *EE* (82) as a separation from a flowing element that is a primordial becoming-noun of a verb. In relation to the figure of an 'island', my practice might at times in these minimal interiorizings-exteriorizings seem to consist in a 'show' or 'showing' (to invited attendeers or to passers-by-becoming-attendeers), or façade, of the formation and deformation of 'islands' as temporary or partial. At times, in such a way the practice may show itself to be affected by otherness, as vulnerable. The inducing of minimal interiorizings-exteriorizings in my placement on the footpath of such 'physical' markers as a water bottle,¹⁴⁰ perhaps would participate in a mode of solipsism or making-myself-into-an-island: the idiosyncratic, idiotic, or idiolectic character of my engagements. The scene of the 'secluded chamber' that Lepecki (2006: 26) describes would seem to be quite different than what may seem to be the locales of my practice: footpaths. However, there may in my practice be a sense of solipsism that would be a distancing-in-proximity of the practice, and particularly of myself, within 'public' space. In relation to Nauman's 'solipsistic' engagement Lepecki outlines the etymological sense of 'idiot' 'from the Greek *idiotes*' which Paola Mieli (1999) finds: 'a private person, individual, "one in a private station" – from *ideios*, one's own, separate, removed from social responsibility' (Mieli *et al.* 1999: 181, cited in Lepecki 2006: 33).¹⁴¹ The idio- character of my engagements at times may be encountered as my being in distress or psychological disturbance, and therein arise a number of ethico-political dangers and problems. If passers-by perceive me to be vulnerable or to be suffering, they may become concerned for me. What appears as my suffering at times may have become, through processes of *empathy*, the suffering of others.¹⁴² The actions taken by passers-by to care for me, if even in turning to pay attention to me in relation to the comings and goings and attendings of the footpath, and perhaps in asking those attending how I am, may also be a kind of suffering for them. However, an idiot is not necessarily someone in distress.

¹⁴⁰ A water bottle is a solid (for) enclosing a liquid, or a liquid enclosed in a solid.

¹⁴¹ My exploration of idiocy picks-up-on Mark Harvey's practice-led PhD *Performance Test Labour* (2011). In his PhD exegesis, Harvey 'engages the fields of performance art and choreography' (xi) and proposes and explores 'choreographic idiocy' in a 'Nietzschean understanding of experimentation' (xi) in response to Avital Ronell's *The Test Drive*, Lepecki's (2006) engagement with the 'still act', and genealogies of dance and performance art choreography. Harvey suggests of his project:

The core discovery of this project is how *idiocy* can be uncovered through an engagement in choreographic practice, in relation to concepts such as Giorgio Agamben's bare life, to the degree that neither 'labour' nor 'conceptualising' can take precedence in practice. (2011: xi)

¹⁴² Kinaesthetic empathy has in recent years become a concept of exploration in dance and performance. Susan Leigh Foster offers a genealogy of the concept of empathy in *Choreographing Empathy: Kinesthesia in performance* (2011).

My ways of performing may stammer before thresholds of an in-common of communicativity. However, there can be no final decision as to the privacy or recognizability as ... of any performance. There is no privileged position from which a decision may be made as to the recognizability of a performance practice, or any other identity. Hence there is no 'law' of performance (or the artwork); however there are normative 'valuings' of actions and hence tendencies towards normalization and normativity. Perhaps there would occur a continuum between my being idiotically private on the one hand, and communicatively efficacious and efficient on the other. Lepecki's (2006) engagement with solipsism concerns dance projects in which a question of the genre of what was occurring may not have been as pressing as in episodes of my practice on footpaths. It seems likely that almost all of those attending Le Roy's *Self Unfinished*, if asked what they were attending to, would have identified it as some kind of dance or theatre project. Therefore there would seem to be a different kind of privacy or idiocy occurring to that in episodes of my practice. If so, there would seem to occur demands, or at least inducements, for me to modulate my performance so as to be able to shift along such a continuum in order to harness or adapt to the different comings and goings. However, to adapt a formulation from Derrida in ATVM, I would also be calculating in relation to that which cannot be calculated.¹⁴³

In relation to modes or 'style' (10) of performance in the 'philosophical practice' of Lingis and Avital Ronell, Kharoubi suggests:

With Lingis, and with Ronell, the temptation of the stage unveils the risk of the abyss not because philosophy is out of her mind but because it is seminally ethical. It deals with encounters, face to face with obscurity, which precede any dialogue or friendship: likewise, theatre is not built on dialogue but on a blasted dialogue (10, 11).¹⁴⁴

Perhaps Hampton and Neath's *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* (2012) opens a space, or questions the difference, between 'real' people and 'dramatis personae'. By contrast, LIGNA's 'radio ballet', and episodes of my practice tend more to occur with 'real' people, including in the latter case, most prominently me, where a 'real' emerges out of shadowy or unknowable processes, two of which would be called fiction and fantasy. For Levinas as I outlined in Chapter One, in distinction from the infinite responsibility of ethics, *justice* is the mode in which I must make judgements about my

¹⁴³ In relation to a question of fault and of attempting to avoid returning Levinas's work to him, avoiding a circuit of reciprocity, Derrida writes 'to calculate the transaction, negotiate the compromise that would leave the non-negotiable intact, and to do this in such a way as to make the fault. (1991: 17).

¹⁴⁴ Kharoubi writes, "Theatre belongs to what Alphonso Lingis calls "catastrophic time", which he defines as "the empty endurance of the void" (Lingis 128). Catastrophic time is the time when no project can form.' However, perhaps episodes may take part in something like what Lingis refers to as a 'catastrophic time' as 'the empty endurance of the void'. Lingis's (2000) engagement is with the sense of the catastrophic 'in the history of our species' that emerges from 'inhuman distance' of 'thought' (135).

relative responsibility to and for co-present others. Therefore, to the extent that they are made of engagements among ‘real’ people, episodes of my practice are bound in terms of justice or morality, to occur otherwise than through many of the story-points of tragedy, comedy or farce one may encounter in a ‘conventional’ play, assuming there is such a thing. In suggesting that episodes are ‘bound’ in this way is to suggest that they may be related to justice more strongly than a ‘being-tethered’. However, that is not to suggest that the binding is a compulsion. Injustices would remain possible, and complete avoidance of injustice would be impossible. Kharoubi continues, ‘For Lingis, this denuding that appears in ‘catastrophic thinking’ also has an erotic effect – which might well be what the public is eventually on the lookout for in tragedy’. Kharoubi quotes Lingis in ‘Catastrophic Time’ within his *Dangerous Emotions*:

When we see the devastated banks and police stations in the wake of a tornado, as when we witness a revolution that overturns the entire hierarchy of society, we feel an exultant wildness. It is not simply the justice that may arise from this leveling; it is a kinship with tempestuous and torrential nature that fires us; we come to understand that revolutionaries are not driven by utopian sentimentality (2000: 133).

Kharoubi comments, ‘even Levinas explains that peace, for instance, doesn’t come through dialogue, because the relation to the other is always asymmetrical, never on an equal footing’ (2011: 11). Kharoubi’s quotation of Lingis prompts a consideration of the extent to which the affects of episodes are tragic, where tragedy is characterized as a wildness of destruction. It seems that the affective life of an episode is to some extent an experience of the *potentiality* of a tempestuous or tragic encounter. However, the *possibility* of such an encounter is not of interest to this project. Affects become pivotal in a consideration of performance practices in relation to Critchley’s engagement in *Infinitely Demanding* (2007).

As I noted above, in *Infinitely Demanding*, Critchley proposes that resistance occurs at ‘an interstitial distance within the state’ (2007: 111). Critchley notes that ‘the unfulfillability of the ethical demand’ in Levinas ‘is internal to subjectivity’ (10), and suggests:

For Levinas, the experience of the demand is affective and the affect that constitutes the ethical subject is trauma. Following this clue, I seek to reconstruct the basic operation of Levinas’s work in psychoanalytic terms, borrowing the notion of trauma from the later Freud. This means that the ethical subject is, in my parlance, *hetero-affectively* constituted. It is a *split-subject* divided between itself and a demand it can never meet, a demand that makes it the subject that it is, but which it cannot entirely fulfill. The sovereignty of my autonomy is always usurped by the heteronomous experience of the other’s demand. The ethical subject is a *dividual*. (2007: 10-11)

In relation to Levinasian ethics (and writings of Christian theologian Knud Ejler Logstrup), Critchley suggests that the unfulfillability of the ethical demand leads, in psychoanalytic terms, to the problem of sublimation. Concerning sublimation, ‘against’ what he calls a ‘tragic-heroic paradigm’ (2007: 11), Critchley aims to show that ‘*humour* can be conceived as a practice of minimal sublimation that both maintains and alleviates the division of the ethical subject’ (11). On the face of

it, to focus on a question of distress in episodes may be to engage my practice in terms of a tragic-heroic paradigm. Critchley suggests:

The picture of human finitude that I would like to propose is better approached as *comic acknowledgement* rather than tragic affirmation.... My approval of the demand of finitude is not equal to that demand, but makes that demand all the more demanding. There is no way that I can freely assume the necessity of the ethical demand like Schelling's Oedipus. Its radically one-sided unfulfillability sunders my ethical subjectivity in a way that entails the endless inadequacy of my action. As such, any foaming wave of authenticity slips away into a deeper undertow of inauthenticity. My global claim is that humour is a prime expression of this inauthenticity. Humour is a more minimal, less heroic form of sublimation that allows the subject to bear the excessive, indeed hyperbolic, burden of the ethical demand without that demand turning into obsessive self-hatred and cruelty. (2007: 78-79)

Critchley discusses humour as a mode of 'anarchic metapolitics' (2007: 88). For Critchley, 'the task of radical political articulations is the *creation* of interstitial distance within the state territory' (113). Critchley explains:

[B]y the word 'meta-political' I do not mean non-political or pre-political. Although ethics and politics can be analytically distinguished, we always face an ethical, political and indeed socio-cultural manifold, a synthesis if you will.... If ethics without politics is empty, the politics without ethics is blind. (2007: 120)

In relation to this Critchley suggests that 'Levinas's thematic of anarchism takes on great interest'.¹⁴⁵ Critchley notes that in *OB*, *anarchy* is 'a name for that which precedes any principle or *archè*' (2007: 121). In this sense, anarchy would be an undoing of the 'self-positing of the subject,' that would, for Levinas as Critchley explains, be, or have been, 'deposed' in ethics (2007: 121). 'It is in this sense,' writes Critchley, 'that Levinas claims that the heteronomous ethical experience of the relation to the neighbour is anarchical, the other posits me under their demand despite myself and before any act of the will' (121-122). In this model, my deposition by the other would occur as both an experience of radical exteriority, and within me: Critchley suggests, 'the other concepts that Levinas links to anarchy are obsession and persecution' (122).¹⁴⁶ Critchley notes Levinas's suggestion that anarchy 'cannot... be set up as a principle.... It can only disturb, albeit in a radical way, the State' (Critchley 2007: 121, altered translation of *OB* 194). Critchley adopts this in his terms: 'anarchy is the creation of interstitial distance within the state, the continual questioning from below of any attempt to establish order from above (122, 123). If Levinas's or Critchley's philosophies are necessarily themselves a relation or relating of anarchy and the state, then my subscription or 'underwriting' of them is called to occur in a double sense, or perhaps as a subscription-subsidence.

¹⁴⁵ In relation to this, Critchley references Miguel Abensour's 'Anarchy Between meta-politics and Politics' (2002: cited in Critchley 2007)

¹⁴⁶ Critchley links this to Butler's engagement with grief in *Precarious Life*, in which, Critchley notes, Butler suggests that 'In grief, we are held in *thrall* by the other' (2004: 22)

In a section entitled ‘A new language of civil disobedience’ (2007: 123), Critchley suggests that ‘the great virtue of contemporary anarchist practice is its spectacular, creative and imaginative disturbance of the state’ (123), in relation to this Critchley refers to Ya Basta! and The Rebel Clown Army. Interestingly in relation to modes of figuration and the relation between vision and hearing, Critchley’s engagement with anarchism shifts in ‘Mystical Anarchism,’ (2009) in which Critchley notes that groups such as *Tiqqun* prioritize resonance rather than visibility, as they suggest that visibility ‘is always controlled by the police and the state’ (Critchley 2009: 302).¹⁴⁷ In *Infinitely Demanding*, Critchley suggests that ‘contemporary anarchist practice ‘exercises a satirical pressure on the state in order to show that other forms of life are possible’ (2007: 124).

‘Fools of the World Unite’, according to its website, ‘is a revolutionary force that carries out creative outbursts and spontaneous foolishness in public spaces, enabling scenes of disturbance and joy.’¹⁴⁸ In Read’s (2008) terms such ‘creative outbursts’ as Fools of the World Unite have conducted might perhaps be positioned (and anarchically deposed), closer to ‘politics’ than the instrumentality of ‘the political’. Thinking of Read’s suggestion that ‘theatre and the political are enemies’ (2008: 26), in favour of politics as an open-ended, non-instrumental process, what of humour and foolishness in relation to my practice? Humour, like any other mode of sense, occurs in relation to norms, or in relation to a common sense. That is, what is humorous or foolish for one person is not humorous for another, but there also occurs a level of commonality as to what is humorous. To say that my foolishness or humour is invisible would suggest that I am being-seen in ways other than as humorous. That Critchley argues for humour rather than tragedy and heroism as a mode of political engagement recalls Read’s argument for engagements in theatre and performance that question what he calls ‘the conflict paradigm’, Read writes, ‘I want theatre to concern itself less with the banality of conflict, and concern itself more with the nuance of reticent choices, choices that are the other of the conflict paradigm’ (2008: 48).

In the section ‘Conclusion: Reinventing the Polis’, Kharoubi draws further on Critchley’s engagement with the relation between ethics and politics in *Infinitely Demanding*, noting that ‘Critchley affirms that the “condition of true democracy” is precisely the creative “interstitial distance” with the state. What else is theatre if not the physical curvature of the intersubjective public space?’ (2011: 12). This alludes to Levinas’s idea of a curvature of intersubjective space that means that the relation between the Other and me is not a reciprocity. Kharoubi continues:

¹⁴⁷ Critchley explores mystical anarchism further in *Faith of the Faithless: Experiments in political theology* (2012)

¹⁴⁸ Available at <http://www.foolsoftheworldunite.com/>

The technology of flesh begins with the acknowledgement that solitude is a deceiving reverie and that dramatic subjectivity can only be a plurality or a “plurilogism”. In this respect, theatre shows itself as the art of acknowledgement, liberating a multiplicity, like a Djinn from a bottle (2011: 12)

Kharoubi quotes Critchley:

Who are the people? They are not, in my view, the expression of a national essence, the alleged unity of a race, the citizens of a nation-state, the members of a specific class like the proletariat, or indeed the members of a specific community defined by religion, ethnicity, or whatever. The people cannot be socially identified and policed by any territorializing term. (2007: 129)

Kharoubi suggests ‘The technology of flesh [that is, theatre] creates a form of social glue by opening channels of affect. In this process, the catharsis could be interpreted as the experience of getting out of one’s island: becoming, not at all purified, but acknowledged as other, as a vulnerable multiplicity’ (2011: 12). Then, in relation to Nussbaum’s understanding of ‘fragility’, Kharoubi suggests, ‘This fragility towards external events is more acutely felt when it is a political fragility, a vulnerability in front of another man’s power... Caliban’s cave is seen as the nihilistic “singularity” of the stage, the black hole, the stone that can’t be transformed, the obstacle or scandal that prompts ethical resistance’ (12).

The danger of ‘evasion’ presents itself here, if ‘the people’ in which I participate or out of which the I is produced, ‘cannot be identified and policed by any territorializing term’, it might seem that in Levinas’s terms ‘the post’—which is my recurrence to myself— that I cannot abandon in or as my responsibility to the other, is not identifiable or is undecidable. As Kharoubi herself notes, for Levinas, my relation to the other is asymmetrical. Any engagement with Levinas in relation to an ethics-politics of theatre and performance must think through such an asymmetricality or curvature. In *TI* my relation to the other is figured in terms of distance even in the approach—the other’s distance from the same is part of the other’s ‘way of existing’ (35). *OB*, however as I have noted, elaborates a bending-back of the subject upon itself as ‘the other in the same’ (25). This is at the same time an elaboration and a deconstruction of the ethical subject. While in *TI* the other could not be totalized or made present, in *OB* the identity of the ‘I’ and of the other are each radically in question, or rather before the possibility of a question. This opens the charge or possibility of, in Levinas’s terms ‘evasion’ of responsibility or, perhaps in Derrida’s terms ‘alibi’ (Kamuf 2002) and of evading evasion. At the level of the said, calculations and rendezvous occur.

If, as Kharoubi suggests, ‘From the public’s standpoint, theatre can be defined as a technology of [what Critchley 2007: 61 calls] “hetero-affectivity”’ (Kharoubi 2011: 8), the question remains open as to how responsibility, as responsibility to ‘the other in the same’ (*OB*: 25), may be figured or performed. Perhaps, the ‘I *said*’ would correspond to ‘the state’; and the *saying* would be a kind of interstitial distancing within the ‘I’, state or said.

In his Introduction to his edited anthology *Dance* (2012), Lepecki suggests:

[D]ance's *precariousness* – which springs at a physical level from dance's necessary and ongoing play with forces, and at a social level from its subaltern position in the general economy of the arts – we can say that it performs, bespeaks and underlines the current and implacable precarization of life, brought on by the momentarily triumphant neoliberal globalization of financial capitalism. (2012: 15)

Lepecki's reference to *precariousness* recalls Butler's *Precarious Life: Powers of Mourning and Violence* (2004). What might it mean to 'perform', 'bespeak' or 'underline' precarity? Something like precariousness that may occur if my practice has appeared to someone or something, may occur as a tending-towards, or 'risk' of, 'disappearing' or dissipating. This is perhaps not so much because it is 'ephemeral', because the life into which it might disappear may be just as ephemeral. Or perhaps the life into which a performance practice may disappear or dissipate may not have first appeared such that it could be ephemeral, because I do not remember the generality of life but the specificity of occurrences that distinguish themselves from the generality. The generality of life might be aligned with Blanchot's (1987) *everyday*, which I discuss in Chapter Three. Distinguishing my practice from life in general, especially from the position of the one who I might identify as a passer-by who might potentially attend to my practice through the appearance of some kind of particularity, would not so much be precarious, with its implication of threat, as uncertain. However, if it hadn't first appeared it could not disappear, nor could its appearance be tenuous or, perhaps, precarious. But what would be the process, thing, object, or subject, subject to precarity? The practice might risk 'falling' (or rising) into forgetfulness, of not being recouped within economies of art or the university, in which it desires, promises, or is expected, choreographed, or called, to participate. However, at face value, the *raison d'être* of an exegesis would seem to be to prevent such a falling, or at least economize or bet on the risk of falling as a mode of recouping or tethering into these economies. Perhaps the exegesis in the end should not 'house' the project but in some way remark, as Wills writes of the house in relation to his discussion of the section 'Interiority and Economy' in *TI*, but a turning out, in which the house would become 'the pure passive exposure of a type of façade.... A face most closely related to its back' (2008: 60). That is not to say that the exegesis has carried this out. Or perhaps the project does not happen in this exegesis. Related to this is the sense, which I explored in Chapters Two and Three, that episodes of my practice stretch-us-out, or stretch-themselves-out, such that even if one is attending an episode having been invited, and having deliberately arrived at the episode to attend to it, the sense that one is attending to the episode may be stretched, or one's attention is increasingly likely to begin to move with other processes that seem to not be part of the episode, or at least, seem to not intend to be part of the episode. But then that would probably not be a situation of precarity so much as tenuousness.

Another sense of, if not precarity, then perhaps tenuousness, of my practice would be the fact that inasmuch as it does 'appear', it often appears to be out of place, or opens a question of place.

However, thinking of Derrida's engagement in 'Performative Powerlessness' (2000), in which he suggests an antinomy of the performative with the event, perhaps there would occur a 'proper' of my practice as the effect of a sedimentation of routines. This would demand me to attend to how such a sedimentation or proper is 'in deconstruction'. Episodes do not contravene laws, but do occur in tension with norms or codes of street choreography. If an episode of my practice appears as 'a performance', it often feels to me, not so much precarious, as impinging-on-and-impinged-upon, pressing-against and being-pressed-by goings-on of the footpath. I feel as if I must be ready to adjust my location in response to passers-by or passers-by-becoming-attenders. 'I' may appear as being in a precarious state with regard to 'sanity' or 'reality', or a 'sensus communis'. People attending an episode of my practice later reported that passers-by recognized or misrecognized me as someone in a disturbed state. I cannot know to what extent the givenness of a sensus communis might be called into question in or by the episode.

Perhaps another mode of precariousness of my practice, insofar as it is concerned with an engagement with Levinasian ethics or an engagement with ethics in relation to a reference-field of writings by Levinas, Derrida, Wills and others, may be that 'the ethical' would have been in constant danger of being subsumed or covered by the (political) moves I am making, the said, or the political goings-on, in episodes. The possibility of the signification of ethics within my practice might thus be described as precarious. Or would the signification of ethics rather be in doubt without such doubt necessarily occurring in a situation of precarity? If the possibility or actuality of the signification of ethics in my practice were precarious, it would seem that this possibility or actuality would be in danger of 'falling' or 'rising' into politics. This would in some way be analogous to the problematic of *OB*. Any intentional move would occur in the mode of politics rather than ethics, even as ethics and politics would be intertwined.

Lepecki (2012) suggests precarity in relation to global forces that also would occur on a micro-scale. It is perhaps in a 'micro-mode' that this project might offer some commentary on engagements in political philosophy. Perhaps such a commentary performed in my practice might occur as an engagement in 'public' places that occur in some way—for example to the extent that it opens a sense of participation prior to a decision to participate—in Critchley's terms in *Infinitely Demanding* 'at an interstitial distance within the state' (2007: 111).

Practice-led

As I noted in Chapter One, this project is practice-led. That is, the explorations reported and invented in this exegesis emerge within and from my performance art practice and my attending of the practices of Ant Hampton and Glen Neath, Martin Nachbar other artists. In this sense I am engaging my attendings-to or attendings-of practices of others as modes of my practice, among

engagements with works ‘signed’ by me. Perhaps this project is also to an extent ‘led’ by my engagements in the other parts of the reference-field of this project, the writings in the fields of philosophy, contemporary arts, performance studies and performance philosophy. Engagements with these texts are other modes of performance and practice. The explorations within this exegesis of, for example, framing, re-cording, tethering, ‘technology in the back’ (Wills 2008: 12), participation in the image, and the trace—themselves provoked, led from behind, or framed, tethered or re-corded by or to writings of Derrida, Levinas, Wills and others, suggest a complexity, undecidability or enigma of what ‘being-led’ can be. If Levinas’s fictions of being-provoked in *saying*, or obeying before hearing, could be modes of being-led, I would have been ‘led’ to be precisely by what I cannot know. I do not intend this exegesis to be read as part of my performance art practice but as an exegetical engagement of it. The engagements in this exegesis provoked by writings of Derrida and others, would imply that borders between a practice and its others are, as Kamuf suggests in her introduction to Derrida’s *Without Alibi* (2002), ‘always divisible’ (2).

This project might also be considered to occur as ‘practice as research’ within contemporary arts and performance. ‘Practice as research’ also raises questions of research, practice and their borders. This project is a proposition of one way of carrying out a practice as research project. The methods and methodology have been gradually formulated projectively and retrojectively among the attendings-to and passings-by of the project. Or, this project is an example of a practice as research project within current debates on arts practice as research within universities. If this project makes a contribution to these debates, it may most apparently or particularly be through its engagement with performance practices in relation to selected engagements within Levinas’s ethics, such as those in Chapter Three with resemblance and mimesis, and in Chapters Four and Five with questions of research in relation to the *trace*, and the *saying* and the *said*. In relation to Derrida’s engagement with the trace and the grapheme as iterable mark I suggest that a *methodography* supplements the *methodology* of this project. That is, it attends-to the condition that the proper way (*hodos*), Walter (1988: 185), of this project and this researcher differ and defer from themselves, and do not ‘return to the same, (and, for Levinas as I have outlined, should not return to the Same (Critchley 1991: 165). I suggest that another potential contribution of this project to debates on practice as research occurs via its engagement with Wills’ *dorsality* (2008). *Dorsality* resonates within ‘metho-techno-logico-graphico-choreo’ engagements with movements of bodies within fields within which occur an immanent varying of backs, sides and fronts, facings or façades.

Research Methods in Theatre and Performance, edited by Baz Kershaw and Helen Nicholson (2011), is one of several recent edited books within the field of research in the arts in relation to universities. In the chapter ‘Practice as Research: Transdisciplinary Innovation in Action’ by Baz Kershaw with Lee Miller/Joanne ‘Bob’ Whalley and Rosemary Lee/Niki Pollard, Kershaw suggests that,

practice as research in the performing arts pursues hybrid enquiries combining creative doing with reflexive being, thus fashioning freshly critical interactions between current epistemologies and ontologies.... [T]his chapter adopts a straightforward [definition]: ‘practice as research’ (PaR) indicates the uses of practical creative processes as research methods (and methodologies) in their own right, usually but not exclusively in, or in association with, universities and other HE institutions. (64)¹⁴⁹

The term ‘practical creative processes’ recalls the senses of bordering I suggested above. A reservation I have concerning Kershaw’s formulation is that it seems to imply a kind of humanism wherein there would occur a centrality or primacy of ‘practices’ that might tend to be construed as being performed by intentional knowing human subjects. In this project I attempt to engage otherwise than within such a humanism. Furthermore, I suggest that it would be very difficult to argue that any process, any mode of research, any discipline or any project whatsoever, involves any more or less ‘creativity’ than any other. That is not to say that there are not ‘practical creative processes’ within theatre and performance practices that differ from other such processes in other disciplines. This project affirms that such processes in theatre and performance are worth exploring *as research*, and ‘as research methods (and methodologies) in their own right’. In being-provoked by Levinas’s ‘ethics as first philosophy’, this project attends to a sense of ‘ethics’ prior to ontology and epistemology—and prior to ‘right’ insofar as a right would be held by a subject or identity—and so prior to ‘interactions between... epistemologies and ontologies’. It is not clear to me what Kershaw intends by this. Another difference between this project and Kershaw’s definition of PaR occurs with Kershaw’s ‘straightforward’ definition. This project provoked by Wills’ writing of dorsality, attends-to modes other than the straightforward or the right. Kershaw’s engagement with reflexivity also suggests a mode other than the straightforward. As I explored in Chapter Two, Massumi explores a sense of reflexivity as a part-subject’s (e.g., a soccer ball’s, or the displacements of the soccer ball’s) ex-expression or drawing out of an action (e.g., a kick of the soccer ball) from a part-object (a foot-leg-eye-player). Massumi differentiates this from reflection, as an intentional activity of a subject or individual. For Kershaw and Nicholson in their introduction chapter, ‘reflexivity is shown to be a methodological key that can unpick the conundrums which plague the discipline of methods in theatre and performance research’ (6). Kershaw and Nicholson advocate ‘reflexivity’,

not only in the conventional sense of subjects being alert to the assumptions on which their ‘reality’ (or ontology) rests, but also in a performative sense. This performativity captures ephemerality as part of its reflexive pedagogy, as Scott Lash and John Urry claim: ‘Reflexive action not only entails the mediation of... abstract systems, it also involves significantly deciding between alternatives’. (Kershaw and Nicholson 2011: 7, Lash and Urry 1994: 50, in Kershaw and Nicholson)

¹⁴⁹ Kershaw’s engagement with practice draws on Theodore R. Schatzki’s discussion of the term *practice* within social research in his introduction of *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory* (Schatzki, Knorr, and Von Savigny, 2001).

Thus the sense of reflexivity in Kershaw and Nicholson's engagement differs from that in Massumi's (2002) discussed in Chapter Two, in which the reflexive occurs in terms of a sensate *part*-subject as a 'channelling of the play' (75), not a subject that might 'alert to' its assumptions. The sense of reflexivity Kershaw and Nicholson engage would thus be closer to Massumi's sense of reflectivity. This project has not engaged with ideas of ephemerality. However, in its engagement with the *trace* it attempts to explore a negotiation of Levinas's 'methodological problem' (1981: 7) which concerns the interlacing of a necessary mode of capture as the *said*, the thematic or ontology, *as* responsibility for *saying* or ethics, the probably impossible problem of how that which was never present might be rendered in a theme.

In relation to 'Bob' Whalley and Lee Miller's *Partly Cloudy, Chance of Rain* (2002) Kershaw writes:

Partly Cloudy, Chance of Rain engaged the motorway-going public through a mix of participation and different modes of spectatorship that is representative of reception regime combinations in PaR more generally. Indirect and direct participation through the carefully placed artefacts, hitch-hiker stories, work-place entertainment and so on. (74)

I propose that the engagements with 'participation' in this exegesis, in terms of passing, attending and tethering, and in the exploration of 'participation' in relation to a sense of radical passivity in Chapter Three, might be placed alongside, and contest, such a formulation of relations between 'participation' and 'spectatorship', and between 'direct' and 'indirect' participation.¹⁵⁰

Addressing

A project of a performer, who was first a recurrence inspired by the other or alterity, pro-jects-to someone or something. Who and what this project targets, and the 'right [or rights] of inspection' of the project differ among the different exposures of this project as performance episodes and exegesis. Watching and listening to the audio-visual recording I made as part of the fourth performance of *Common Series* (2008), I remember that in this episode I was feeling uncomfortable, as if things are going very badly, and I feel that I haven't worked out a sufficient script for what I would say and do. I hear myself sounding apologetic. Feeling a lack of 'material,' or 'routines' to carry out in relation

¹⁵⁰ In relation to Practice-as-Research, Cull writes in *Theatres of Immanence*:

The notion that performance is thinking may already be a 'given' for many, especially on account of the growth and increasing institutional acceptance of 'practice as research' (PaR) in performance, at least in the United Kingdom. However, research is only one way to construe how performance thinks; we need to keep our definition of research open, in order to include the new ways that performance finds to perform it. (2012: 3)

In her lecture notes Cull identifies as one of the stakes of Performance Philosophy 'supporting and providing alternative perspective to PaR [definition of research]. (2013: slide 33)

to the three or four attendeers there, that might have afforded some possibility for attenuation of or shifting out of the awkwardness and frustration or boredom, I feel more exposed to the attendeers, as in a sense there doesn't seem to be a lot going on. But perhaps such a situation is of interest for this reason. It is of interest now, which suggests a varying through time, of what might be of interest, or be considered success or failure in a practice. It may also suggest that, if I was correct in my evaluation that attendeers were not 'enjoying' the episode (however enjoyment might be thought of) there occurs a difference in who receives 'enjoyment' in the 'work.' In writing about it here I am suggesting that it may be of some interest to 'you' singular anonymous reader. There is perhaps also through time a varying of 'who' this project might be successful-for or failure-for, or what it succeeded-to-do or failed-to-do. From this example above, according to my calculation, it was perhaps unsuccessful for the attendeers at the time and successful for me in this *there* now. Not to say that 'success' or 'failure' would ever be decidable, even though a necessity to decide or calculate 'success' or 'failure', or passing-failing, conditions this project probably as with any other project. 'Success' and 'failure' happen in the mode of criticism—in the sense of 'criticism' that Levinas proposes in RS—and hence within an economy of restitution.

To return for a moment to Chapter Three's exploration of appearance and recognizability, Bruns (2002) suggests a homology between Levinas's writing of the saying and 'Blanchot's theory of poetry [in 'Plural Speech'] as "a non-dialectical experience of speech" (Blanchot 1993: 63) in which the subject (the poet or writer, but also evidently the reader) enters into a relation with what is outside the grasp of subjectivity (Bruns 2002: 227). I suggest that in relation to such an experience as Blanchot suggests, distinguishing between writer and reader becomes problematic, and *in* such an experience it is impossible. This is one reason for this project's exploration of the term 'attendeer,' and at the limit of the appearance of the episode, of 'passers-by-becoming attendeers'. I will return to this question in Chapter Five in relation to a question of *ingratitude*.¹⁵¹ In episodes and in my practice generally I am invested in what I imagine as the kind of 'experience' attendeers 'leave with' or remember. Episodes tend to induce attendeers to 'work' hard, for example to find a suburban starting or finishing location and stand out in the weather and probably at times experience feelings of embarrassment or boredom. The responses or, more generally, behaviours, of attendeers affect how I feel and what I do. For example, I may feel encouraged by the laughter of attendeers, or discouraged when it seems they are not attending in a way I would like them to (whatever that might be). It is ambiguous as to what kinds of responsibility episodes have towards attendeers. On the one hand, I invite attendeers to episodes, and in locale visits prior to the episode, I obsessively

¹⁵¹ In relation to this problematic, O'Connor's engagement with the *to* and the *for*, registered in footnote 33 in Chapter Two, may be an area for future research.

imagine how different possible staging places and times will be for attendees. To an extent I welcome and respond to attendees on their arrival. On the other hand, attendees participate in episodes as one of a number of what I have discussed in chapters Two and Three as 'basic units'.

In Chapter One I discussed Butler's account of *Giving an Account of Oneself* (2005) in relation to this exegesis. Perhaps to some extent this exegesis mimes a character of episodes of my practice. Perhaps a better description might be to say that it is a par-egesis, rather than an ex-egesis, as beside the work rather than coming from or leading out of the work. This links back to the sense of byplay, example or *beispiel* I explored in Chapter Two. In relation to what I have explored above as 'bending back, the re- of reconstitution would be *différance* as a turning into difference. Another kind of *tethering* or enfolding in this project occurs in the tetherings among, say; 'my practice', *The Bench or Hello for Dummies*, *Incidental Journey*, RS, 'Levinasian ethics', 'Wills' writing of dorsality', and 'this exegesis' to name a few of the bodies this project is tethered-to or tethered-as. This project thus occurs, in Massumi's (2002) terms, as a field of potential composed of bodies of different kinds. Or, it is a 'part-object' or 'quasi-object', perhaps of 'performance studies' or of some other part-subject. This would occur as a context in the sense Derrida explores in SEC constituted in the incompleteness of its closure. The kinds of bonds or ligations which are at stake are not entirely those of truth as adequation, but they cannot bypass such truth.

Five: Saying

This chapter explores relations between *saying*, *voice*, *listening*, and *hearing* within the performance practices discussed in the previous chapters, in relation to selected texts of Levinas, Nancy, and Derrida. It aims to carry out some reversions, re-turns into—if not reverberations—of parts of the previous three chapters, returning to ideas of belonging and the *there*. In the first section, ‘Materialities’, I revisit my discussion in Chapter Three of language’s materiality and Levinas’s writing of the *there is*. In relation to the performance practices, this section juxtaposes threads of Levinas’s engagement with *saying* and Nancy’s engagement in *Listening* (2007). I emphasize that this is a juxtaposition and by no means a detailed or rigorous *rapprochement*. Nancy’s *Listening* has, as I have outlined in Chapter Two, been one ‘inspiration’ of my explorations of *tending*, *attending*, *tethering*, *spacing* and *relaying* in this exegesis. The section ‘Faciality and Vocality’ registers an ambiguity or closeness of face and voice in Levinas’s philosophy and relates this to parts of Nancy’s engagement with *Listening*. It then explores the performance practices in relation to eavesdropping and Wills’s engagement with Althusser’s (1971) ‘interpellation’. In the section ‘The *Saying* and The *Said*’ I explore Levinas’s writing in *OB* of the intertwining of the *saying* and the *said*, attending to commentaries by Llewelyn and Wyschogrod. In ‘Threads, Knots & Cuts’ this turns to an exploration of performance practices in relation to Levinas’s writing of the *saying* and the *said* and Derrida’s engagement with Levinas’s later writings in the extended essay ‘At this Very Moment In This Work Here I Am’ (1991) (ATVM).

Materialities

To attend-to Levinas’s *saying* as corporeal exposure, and as exceeding any intending-to-say, suggests attending-to the materiality of language proposed by Mallarmé, as Bruns puts it, as ‘the essence of poetry as such’ (2002: 209), explored in Chapter Three. Among the materialities associated with saying, whether Levinas’s *saying* or not, would prominently be those of sound, voice, listening, and hearing (2002: 209). Levinas’s *saying* would be *said* in ‘basic units’, and ‘basic units’, as poetic language, would open onto the *saying*, but there would be no ‘basic units’ of *saying*. In a sense that I will develop later in this chapter I propose that the ‘basic units’ (Bruns 2002: 209) of language’s materiality would be relations of spatial and temporal continuity-discontinuity. That is, basic units might also be explored as basic threads. For Levinas the corporeality of my body is the de-situation of ethical exposure. ‘For Blanchot’, Bruns suggests,

poetry is the materiality – the literal ‘outside’ – of language as such, which he epitomizes with the Mallarméan word *l’écriture*, whereas, by contrast, Levinas figures materiality as the corporeality of the subject: *le Dire* is exposure, ‘the very respiration of the skin’. (Bruns 2002: 228 [ending with a quotation of *OB* 49])

I read ‘the literal’ in this passage as radical alterity or the outside, rather than in terms of an opposition of the literal to the metaphoric.¹⁵² For Levinas, my body is absolutely passively exposed in or as ‘respiration’, as the very processes in which it lives. From a certain angle or in a certain tone, Levinas’s writing of corporeality as the ‘null-site’ (*OB*: 8) of ethics, the ‘centrality’ or ‘recurrence’ of corporeality in Levinas’s ethics, might seem to offer some openings upon the bodily engagements and exposures of performance (art) practices, and I aim to explore some of these in this project. This is not to say that Blanchot’s writings would be less relevant.¹⁵³

‘Respiration’—the re- of which would be heard in the word ‘recurrence’—in one of its senses as ‘breathing’, suggests an associative field that would include aspiration, inspiration, expiration, and voice. In *OB* the subject would be ‘a responsibility for the other, *inspired* by the neighbour’ (*OB*: 145 my emphasis). As I discussed in Chapter Three, for Levinas in *RS*, ‘Sound is the quality most detached from an object.... It resounds impersonally’ (133). This might suggest a voice—insofar as it ‘detaches’ from an object called a body—as a mode of opening of the ‘image’—a suspension of conceptuality in the sense explored in Chapter Three. Levinas’s *saying* is not *voice*, the question of the

¹⁵² As I noted in Chapter One, Gasché (1986), in coining the term ‘quasitranscendental’ picked-up-on in this exegesis, re-marks Derrida’s deconstructive engagement with metaphoricity in ‘White Mythology’ (1982c).

¹⁵³ Bruns suggests that for Levinas in *RS*, ‘the task of criticism would evidently be to acknowledge the inhumanness of art, its material link to the *il y a*’ (Bruns 2002: 219). Bruns suggests this as, ‘the import of Maurice Blanchot’s writings on poetry and art’ (219-220). Bruns notes that in ‘Le Regarde du poète’ [‘The Poet’s Vision’ (1996e)], an essay on Blanchot, Levinas asks ‘How can the Other (which... Blanchot [calls the] ‘eternal streaming of the outside’) appear, that is, be for someone, without already losing its alterity and exteriority by that way of offering itself to view?’ (Levinas 1996e: 130). Bruns suggests that ‘This question is at the heart of Blanchot’s poetics, which is concerned precisely with the alterity of *things*’ (222).

Bruns suggests that in *RS*, ‘[t]he figure of light is a way of formulating the problem,’ ‘of how I can enter into a relation with a thing without destroying it, that is, without absorbing it into myself as an object of consciousness or as part of my grip on existing’, and, ‘the figure of “dark light” is a way of resolving it’ (2002: 220). Bruns differentiates Levinas’s engagement from Blanchot’s: ‘whereas Levinas considers the *il y a* from the standpoint of the subject’s experience of it (ecstasy, horror), Blanchot considers it from the standpoint of things in their freedom from subjectivity’ (222). However, Bruns notes that for Levinas in ‘Language and Proximity’ (1987a) ‘the sensibility of things takes on an ethical significance within the relation of proximity: “The immediacy of the sensible is an event of proximity and not of knowledge”, (*CPP* 116, and Bruns 2002: 225), and in this text the immediacy of the sensible, Bruns notes, occurs as touch rather than visibility. Bruns notes that whereas since ‘Time and the Other,’ for Levinas, ‘the caress’ had been human only, in ‘Language and Proximity’ it includes ‘the world of things,’ as ‘poetry’ (Bruns 2002: 225). Bruns writes that in ‘Language and Proximity’ and *OB*, ‘poetry and the caress are taken up together in a relation of one-for-the-other, no longer part of ‘the world of light’ but characters in ‘the intrigue of proximity and communication’ (*OB* 48), (Bruns 2002: 226). Bruns notes an important difference between Blanchot and Levinas,

alterity for Levinas is always another human being, whereas Blanchot’s argument against Levinas is this: to say that only what is human can be other is already to feature the other within a totality or upon a common ground; it is to assemble with the other a possible (workable) community. (227)

relation of *saying* and *voice* would itself be enigmatic. In ‘The Transcendence of Words’ (1989) (ToW), discussing Daniel Defoe’s story of *Robinson Crusoe*, Levinas writes of the protagonist Crusoe,

in a magnificent tropical landscape, where he has continued to maintain civilization through his tools and his morality and his calendar ... he still finds in his encounter with Man Friday the greatest event of his insular life. It is the moment when finally a man who speaks replaces the inexpressible sadness of echoes (148).¹⁵⁴

While in RS sound resounds impersonally, in ‘ToW’ speech is prioritized among all sounds. The words of the man Crusoe called Friday were not words Crusoe ‘understood’, at least in terms of an accurate recognizing or economy of their *said*. In a Derridean engagement, one might ask with regard to this passage as to the decidability of the differences—or whether there occurs, in Kamuf’s words ‘an always divisible border’ (2002: 2)—among one’s mother tongue, a foreign language, and other sounds in the ‘landscape’. To some extent, perhaps episodes of my practice explore such borders through: mixtures of my frequent incompleteness or interruption of my sentences; engagements with other sounds such as the ‘sentenced’ sound and light of traffic lights explored in Chapter Two; or my repeated setting and relays in anticipation of, the alarm of my mobile phone given to an attendee to hold in *Ripples* in Bundle O of *Oct Dec Series*; what O’Connor (2012: 7) describes as my repeated ‘murmuring’; modes of redundancy occurring through my frequent repetitions of vocalizations or phrases; mixtures of my ‘native’ English with ‘broken’ German; or in my crossings of speech with ‘non-verbal’ vocalizations. Bruns concludes his discussion in ‘The Concept of Art and Poetry in Emmanuel Levinas’s Writings’ discussed in Chapter Three, by recalling that, for Levinas in ‘ToW’ (1949), the priority is not what is spoken but the ‘event’ of speaking. Wyschogrod suggests that in RS for Levinas, ‘The critic treats the artwork as the product of labour so that it may enter the realm of history’ (2002: 199). That is, I suggest, shift from potential irresponsibility and enter into dialogue.¹⁵⁵ As I noted in Chapter Four in relation to a question of what a ‘public’ is, discussing ToW, Bruns suggests a different and related sense of the meaning of ‘critique’ for Levinas to that in RS,

the sound of words is an ethical event, which Levinas does not hesitate to characterize as *critique*, not only because others interrupt me in making themselves felt, setting limits to my autonomy, but because *even when I myself speak* – even in self-expression – I am no longer an ‘I’, am no longer self-identical, but am now beside myself: [Bruns quotes Levinas in ToW in *Outside the Subject (OS)*] ‘To speak is to interrupt my existence as a subject, a master’ (OS 149). Of course this is exactly what Blanchot says happens to the

¹⁵⁴ For a commentary on *Robinson Crusoe* in relation to debates concerning economic individualism that provides a context for a discussion of Levinas’s difference to enlightenment rationality, see Llewelyn’s *Appositions of Jacques Derrida and Emmanuel Levinas* (2002a: 82–86).

¹⁵⁵ In RS Levinas writes, ‘In this intellectualism the artist refuses to be only an artist, not because he wants to defend a thesis or cause, but because he needs to interpret his myths himself’ (143). This suggests the role of the exegesis as analogous to the role of the critic in RS. Such a thought of critique would be complicated by the engagement with the saying and the said in *OB*.

subject in the experience of *l'écriture*. Which is why it is most interesting that in Levinas the materiality of language as Blanchot understands it comes to the foreground not as a theme but as an increasingly dominant and controversial dimension of his (Levinas's) own writing. (229)¹⁵⁶

As I suggested in Chapter Four, a word is conceptual, *and* occurs as an encounter with others prior to concepts. Bruns's reading underlines what might be called a sonorous materiality of *OB*. The quotation suggests that in *ToW* it is 'me' in my autonomy that is critiqued and that the mode of critique is the interruption of my autonomy or totality in hearing others, and in hearing myself. This contrasts with *RS* where critique integrates that interrupted in 'the meanwhile'—or perhaps, interrupts the interruption called 'the meanwhile'—occurring as or enabling a movement 'back' into history and concepts. The figure 'beside myself' recalls Derrida's argument in 'Différance' that consciousness, as self-presence, involves a 'being beside itself of consciousness' (1982a: 16), and the discussions of 'By-play' in Chapters Two and Three, as well as suggesting some resonances with Nancy's engagements in *Listening* (2007) that I will discuss below. Levinas's writing of the intertwining of the *saying* and the *said*, and more particularly Derrida's suggestion of the necessary contamination of one in the other, as I will explore below, implies that we could not simply substitute 'sound' or 'resound' for 'speak' in Bruns's quotation from *ToW*, unless we think of any sounding or resounding of a subject (however we think of a subject), words or not, as occurring as in some way a thematic expression or *said*.

In *Emmanuel Levinas: The genealogy of ethics* (1995) Llewelyn discusses the temporal order and turning of *saying*:

Hearing and listening (*écouter, entendre, audire*) turn into, turn out to, turn out to have been always already turned out to obedience (*écouter, entendre, obaudire*). Since this trope by which the inner ear turns to *Autrui*, is

¹⁵⁶ Both Wills and Butler consider the voice as a mode of, or involved in a 'constitutive' ambiguity with, the Levinasian *face*. In *Precarious Life: Powers of mourning and violence* (2004) Butler considers Levinas's concept of the face in relation to the back, and suggests a sense of non-sense in the relation between the voice and the face,

The face... will be that for which no words really work; the face seems to be a kind of sound, the sound of language excavating its' sense, the sonorous substratum of vocalization that precedes and limits the delivery of any semantic sense. (134)

As I noted in Chapter One relation to Wills's engagement with Levinas and technology, Wills discusses how in 'Peace and Proximity' (1996d), 'Levinas quotes from a scene in Vasili Grossman's *Life and Fate* where a woman waiting in line "can only see the backs of others."' (Wills 2008: 52). Wills quotes Levinas quoting Grossman, 'Persons approaching the counter had a particular way of craning their neck and back, their raised shoulders... seemed to cry, sob, and scream.' Wills notes that, in relation to this, Levinas suggests that 'the face is not... exclusively a human face.' Wills suggests,

while this could also be a way of saying that the face might be not the human face but the human back, it opens the possibility, literally at least—and because he does not elaborate, the idea is left to resonate—that the ethical relation may not be a human relation at all but a relation to the nonhuman other. (2008: 52)

the turning of my skin inside out, it is the turning of the ego into its self, a self whose responding to the other is its obedience, an obedience prior to the knowledge of what is commanded. (1995: 184)

This passage suggests an undecidability or originary ambiguity whereby turning out to the other in hearing, and the turning inside out of my skin, is also a turning-in that is, as Robert Bernasconi puts it, ‘the recurrence of ipseity’ (2002: 242), a being-called to respond to the other. What Llewelyn explicates as the ‘trope’ (196) of hearing in the passage above is not a metaphor, but might be described as a ‘quasimetaphor’ in sense of ‘quasi-’ Gasché proposes, outlined in Chapter One. In the impossibility of a purely presentational language, ‘hearing’ is implicated in what Wills might describe as a ‘tropological turn’, a turn of phrase or a figure of speech and would in this way be material in Mallarmé’s sense. Hearing would in this way occur as exemplary modes of the figuring of the relation of the subject and the other Levinas that articulates in *OB* as ‘the other in the same’ (25).¹⁵⁷ Levinas writes, ‘Ipsity is... a point already identified from the outside’ (*OB*: 107). *There is an unreasonableness of the idea of obedience prior to understanding*, Llewelyn explains,

while my speaking is a response to another’s command, my perception of that command is my signifying of it in obeying it. The call is understood in the response (AE 190, OB 149). I am diachronically in command and commanded. My commanding is at the ‘same’ dia-chronic moment an obedience, an *ob-audire* that is a *Dire*, a ventriloquation of the other’s command; for my command gives voice to the allocation of the other.... The meaning of my command is then not a straightforwardly intentional *meinen* or *vouloir dire*. Motivated by desire carrying an ethical emphasis... my command is at the same time obedience. (2002b: 136)

That is, for Levinas in *OB*, ‘Obedience precedes any hearing of the command’ (148). That, as Llewelyn writes in the above passage, ‘my perception of that command is my signifying of it in obeying it’, suggests the strangeness of the ‘before’ cited in the subtitle of this exegesis, ‘ethics before the voice’.

Now a very provisional juxtaposition: Nancy writes of the relation of hearing to understanding in *Listening* (2007):

Entendre, ‘to hear,’ also means *comprendre*, to understand,” as if ‘hearing’ were above all ‘hearing say’ (rather than ‘hearing sound’), or rather, as if in all ‘hearing’ there had to be a ‘hearing say,’ regardless of whether the sound perceived was a word or not. But even that might be reversible: in all saying (and I mean in all discourse, in the whole chain of meaning) there is hearing, and in hearing itself, at the very bottom of it, a listening. Which means: perhaps it is necessary that sense not be content to make sense (or to be logos), but that it want also to resound. My whole proposal will revolve around such a fundamental resonance, even around a resonance as a foundation, as a first or last profundity of ‘sense’ itself (or of truth). (7)

¹⁵⁷ The sense of exposure in Llewelyn’s passage above recalls Mladen Dolar’s discussion in *A Voice and Nothing More* (2006), of Jacques Lacan’s reiteration of the dictum ‘the ears have no lids’. As I have explored in Chapter Two, the prosthetics of earphones can be inserted into, and tether, my ears, on the one hand reducing or muffling what I hear of one *there* while through them I am exposed to, and rehearsed within, other calls from other *theres*. And my ears can enter into prosthetic relations with earplugs, earmuffs, or fingers, or fail to hear. However, perhaps in general I tend to be able more readily and more quickly avoid seeing than avoid hearing.

‘A resonance as a foundation’ suggests foundational varying or altering. Levinas would probably not agree that listening is at the bottom of hearing if listening is as Nancy suggests, a ‘tense, attentive or anxious state’ of the sensory register as compared to a ‘simple’ hearing (5). While Nancy explores the sense in which sound and voice *relay*; for Levinas, *saying* would have been the other’s ordering me before chronological order. For Nancy, to speak might not so much be to ‘interrupt my presence as a master’, as Levinas suggests in the early essay ToW (1949), rather, for Nancy,

meaning and sound share the space of a referral ... this space can be defined as the space of a *self*, a subject ... the point or occurrence of a *subject* in the substantial sense would never have taken place except in the referral, thus in spacing and resonance, at the very most the dimensionless point of the *re-* of this resonance.... isn’t [sonorous] sense first of all, every time, a *crisis of self*? (9)

Such a sonorous place-subject differs from the ‘recurrence’ as the ego in *OB*, in which Levinas writes, ‘The ego is in itself like the sound that would resound in its own echo, the node of a wave that is not once again consciousness’ (103).¹⁵⁸ For Nancy, such a referral is the subject,

insofar as it does not consist in a being-present-there, in a stable, fixed being, yet is not elsewhere or absent, it is rather in the rebound of ‘there’ or in its setting in motion, which makes it, the sonorous place (‘sonorized,’ one is tempted to say, plugged into sound), a place-of-its-own-self, a place *as* relation to self, a vibrant place as the diapason of a subject or, better, as a diapason-subject. (16)

The way that Nancy figures foundation as resonance suggests another kind of othering of the same – an othering of listening as re-sonance or re-turn into difference. As the space of re-lation or re-sonance this might also be described as a *dorsal* subject.¹⁵⁹ Nancy writes, ‘Meaning ... is made of a totality of referrals ... Sound is also made of referrals: it spreads in space where it resounds while still resounding ‘in me,’ (7). Maybe this would be a figure for referring back. To make a very preliminary proposition, such a sense of the subject as ‘sonorous place’, and, a *partage* as touch-separation, or, perhaps, the ‘sonorous place’ of an episode as modes of differing and tuning, might be remarked in episodes of my practice in the way in which its aural *tetherings* stretch-out or stretch-us-out, or push or pull within the locale. One mode of such tethering or stretching might have something to do with engagements between visual distances (limits of what or who is visible) and auditory ranges (limits of what or who is audible) as I move or am moved in relation to attendeers, and as we each move or are moved in relation to each other.

¹⁵⁸ This would be a key distinction between Levinas’s and Nancy’s engagements, and a direction for further research.

¹⁵⁹ In an endnote to a discussion in the Introduction to *Dorsality* (2008), of the dorsal in relation to seeing, hearing, smell and touch, Wills suggests particular resonances of *Dorsality* with writings of Nancy.

Faciality and Vocality

There occurs an ambiguity of faciality and vocality in Levinas. Remarking on Levinas's formulation in *TI*, 'The eye does not shine, it speaks' (66), Wills suggests, 'it is as if Levinas's theory of the ethical relation were constantly relayed between the face, which first means the eyes, and speech, between visuality and discursivity' (43). In Chapter Four of *OB*, 'Substitution', in the section 'Principle and Anarchy', after suggesting 'sensibility' as 'proximity' where 'proximity appears as the relationship with the other', Levinas writes:

Not able to stay in a theme, not able to appear, this invisibility which becomes contact and obsession is due not to the nonsignifyingness of what is approached, but to a way of signifying quite different from that which connects exposition to sight. Here, beyond visibility there is exposed no signification that would still be thematized in its sign. It is the very transcending characteristic of the beyond that is signification. (100)

I suggest that Levinas could be validly critiqued here as subscribing to and promulgating a problematic conflation of visibility with conceptuality.¹⁶⁰ Considering a suggestion from Nancy in *Listening*, I tentatively suggest that to some extent, within a history that is outside the scope of this project to engage in-depth, there may *tend* to be an association of sonority to *passing* in the sense I have engaged this in this exegesis—or to a resistance or exceeding of form. Nancy suggests such differences between the visual and the sonorous that initiate his inquiry:

There is, at least potentially, more isomorphism between the visual and the conceptual, even if only by virtue of the fact that the *morphē*, the 'form' implied by the idea of 'isomorphism,' is immediately thought or grasped on the visual plane. The sonorous, on the other hand, outweighs form. It does not dissolve it, but rather enlarges it; it gives it an amplitude, a density, and a vibration or undulation which never does

¹⁶⁰ In 'Language and Alterity in the Thought of Levinas', Wyschogrod notes that for Levinas in *TI*, 'Speech cuts across vision' (195). In relation to Levinas's refusal 'to grant transcendent meaning to the face as image' (196), Wyschogrod suggests that Levinas's

[R]esistance to images reflects the strenuous opposition to anthropomorphic imagery in conformity with the Biblical and rabbinic tradition that Levinas affirms... Idolatry is precipitated by the unfettering of a figural imagination required by ordinary mortals in order to render theological truths accessible but which disfigures this truth through figuration itself. (196)

Thus the 'figural imagination' is understood to be required but to disfigure as it figures, 'In accordance with this tradition' Wyschogrod suggests, 'the most serious theological error consists in the imputation of corporeality to God, an error which undergirds idolatry' (196). In relation to Levinas's ethics, the title of this exegesis – 'Figuring Diachrony: Ethics before the voice,' therefore suggests figuring as a necessary dis-figuring, or as the contamination of a *said* in *saying* that is, as Derrida suggests 'a fatality that must be assumed' (ATVM: 30). In footnote 18 in Chapter One I outlined Putnam's (2002) account in relation to Levinas's philosophy, of, Abraham's unreserved offering himself to God, *hineni!*, *me voici*, which Levinas engages as the inauguration of the subject in *saying*, occurs through or as speech and hearing. What Bruns describes as Levinas's 'iconoclasm' (2002: 218) may be in-keeping with a theological tradition, and not traditional to western metaphysics, as suggested in the indented quotation of Nancy in the main text above. Sound may be for Levinas in RS the exemplary modality of the separation of the image from the object, but, in terms of in the senses of 'image' and 'resemblance' explored in RS, the visual would also become 'image'.

anything but approach. The visual persists until its disappearance; the sonorous appears and fades away into its permanence. (2007: 2)¹⁶¹

If there *tends* to be an association of sonority to *passing* or to a resistance or exceeding of form, this might suggest that sound might in some way contest the idea of a stable, transcendent *said*. However, as I explored in Chapter Three, for Levinas, while sound is the exemplary modality for the detachment of the image from the object, the conceptual ‘perspective of the world’ (*EE* 52), can become non-conceptual, non-perspective ‘image’. That is to say that I cannot assume that visuality is limited to ‘the perspective of the world’.

What might ‘permanence’ mean in the passage above? A sound, as vibrations, perhaps would never stop so much as endlessly dissipate, emanate and attenuate. There might thus be a rough analogy with what I suggested in Chapter Two of episodes of my practice with a starting time, that the tether or tensile bond between those attending and me gradually becomes stretched, or occluded, masked or dissolved by other forces in the locale, even if I do sometimes suggest something of a punctuation or ‘finish’ in saying—probably without interruption—something like ‘I’ll leave it there for today’. But I doubt such a sense of permanence, as endless attenuation, that might in principle be calculable, would be what Nancy is concerned with. The passage seems to suggest differing kinds of trace-structure of the visual and the sonorous. Perhaps this invokes Levinas’s figure of sound as the exemplary modality of the separation of image from object in RS.

Attending to listening in an ‘ontological tonality’, Nancy asks ‘What does it mean for a being to be immersed entirely in listening, formed by listening or in listening, listening with all his being?’ (4) Nancy retrieves some usages of the word *écoute*, including, “‘*Être aux écoutes*’”, “‘to listen in, to eavesdrop’”, and “‘*Être à l’écoute*’”, “‘to be tuned in, to be listening’” (4). *Oct Dec Series*’ relocating within and between episodes (in differing suburbs), between each *there* and each time, perhaps remarked a differing of tunings. (Or a differing ‘misfitting of the template’, discussed in Chapter Two in relation to *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* where the ‘template’ might be the routines and rituals that, to recall Derrida’s ‘The Law of Genre’ (1992c), perhaps participate without belonging in a practice). Such differing tunings might be, in Massumi’s terms, the relationality out of which the ‘basic units’ (Bruns 2002: 209) of each episode would have occurred. Perhaps modes of differing of an episode within the *there* would be the differing of codes, and differing tunings-in of attendeears

¹⁶¹ There are some significant philosophical differences between Levinas and Nancy. As Nancy writes in ‘The Political and/or Politics,’ (2012) ‘Being is the with’. To be is originarily ‘being-together’. For Nancy he *with* occurs as *partage*, ‘division and exchange’. Nancy’s thinking of the with thus differs from Levinas’s thinking of a preoriginal diachrony that cuts the with of syntax and synchrony. Critchley critiques Nancy’s *Being Singular Plural* (2000) in a Levinasian mode in *Ethics Politics Subjectivity: Essays on Derrida, Levinas and contemporary French thought* (1999a).

and passeers-by. However, this digresses from Nancy's question, as such tunings would not be 'immersed entirely in listening'. *Being-tuned-in* and *tethering* (and *being-turned-in*) may be versions of each other, I am always tethered or tuned in to something prior to deciding to tether myself or or tune-myself-in. The 'audio-vocal-verbal' tethering discussed in Chapter Two may be a version of being-tuned-in. In its association with eavesdropping, being-tuned-in suggests a kind of concealed passage between an interiority and an exteriority, a code, bandwidth, room, building or house, or an episode marked out by and within iterating voicings, codes and choreographies. Perhaps modes of eavesdropping occur in locale visits and episodes of my practice. The falling into forgetfulness of the video camera in episodes, or its non-recognition or non-appearance as a camera and so possible non-recognition or non-appearance as an audio recording prosthetic, might enable, engender or provoke kinds of eavesdropping. As I suggested in Chapter Two, the zone between the inside and outside of the pick-up angle and range of a microphone contrasts with the 'sharper' border between the 'in-shot' and the 'out-of-shot' produced in the orientation of a lens. In some way in episodes the modes of appearance and non-appearance of lens and microphone of the camera would seem to differ. Sometimes, in order to carry something else, I put, (or 'immersed') the camera in my pocket, where, in a sense 'unseen', it recorded audio—perhaps eavesdropped—with the lens recording at very low light levels. It may have stolen, or 'pocketed', this audio. I might perpetrate or participate in such an eavesdropping when I replay to myself the audiovisual footage produced. This turns us back to the engagement with interiorizing-exteriorizing in Chapter Two in relation to Wills' commentary on 'Interiority and Economy' in *TI*. Eaves guard and frame the house. A dropping of eaves leaves the house unprotected or exposed to the elements. Insofar as the episode occurs as an interiorizing—and so an exteriorizing—eavesdropping would threaten to open the episode to the outside and risk it in some way, through dissolution or dissemination. Such a replaying to myself of the audiovisual recording might engender the exposure of the episode to the outside—whether or not as a memorializing—for example, in its exposure in or as this exegesis. Such an opening or exteriority, as Wills suggests of the house in *TI*, would only have been possible from the erection or solidification, analogous to the 'hypostasis', of the interiorizing 'house' a solidification protected and framed by the eaves. To the extent that an episode appears in excess of intending to appear, it might be eavesdropped while it eavesdrops or feigns eavesdropping. To what extent or in what sense this means the practice is eavesdropping on others, on me, or itself, would be questions of borders or *partage*.

I am listening to myself murmuring, repeating Ulmer, reading Derrida, saying, 'homophones "know" something' (1985: 46). Or perhaps I am obeying prior to hearing or understanding. The dropping of eve is nightfall. Levinas writes of the night of the *il y a*, the night of anonymous being. That night would be the dropping, or suspension, of frames, margins, eaves, categories, and objects. Perhaps in that sense an eavesdropping of an episode on itself might remark the division or opening of its

borders. The night would only have been possible beginning from the eve.¹⁶² The solidification of the house is necessary for the visiting of ‘the other in the same’. While homophones might know something, *I* could not know that night, remember it or verify it; it would be only a fiction.

Another way eavesdropping might happen in episodes and locale visits would be in the way that attendeers-attendecars and I deliberately go to a street, in part, for-the-sake-of attending to this street, without necessarily, at least intentionally, ‘showing’ those in the street that we are there, in this *somewhat* uncommon way, to attend-to the episode-street, to attend-to what happens. So as to attempt to not ‘appear’ or be detected—that is perhaps, in order to attempt to *pass* from the standpoint of those who are in the locale, and so perhaps to be able to eavesdrop in this *passing*—I or we may in different ways feign modes of attending and passing other than that of a locale visit or of attending an episode. However, feigning modes of attending or passing *other* than those of attending an episode or locale visit would be complicated to the extent that attending an episode or locale visit occur *as* such feigning of what one is *not* doing there. That is not to say that at times episodes or locale visits do not deliberately show themselves, or allow themselves to appear, as something like episodes or locale visits, but even then such modes are not without feigning. Butler’s engagements with performativity, for example in *Gender Trouble* (1990), would suggest that attending or passing in general would occur as feigning. That is, such attending as feigning in episodes or locale visits would only be the ‘determined modification’ of attending generally, or of attending in a street generally. In a sense, I am always where I am in-order-to attend-to that there. Perhaps a sense of eavesdropping might attend to my feeling of myself being an under-cover-agent discussed in Chapter Three. As an under-cover-agent, such a feigning might be turned-into conversation or negotiation, or more generally, altered, if the under-cover-agent was to hear or listen to someone addressing her, for example with the question, ‘What are you doing?’ But insofar as the possibility of such a being-called—the calling of a bluff—would be constitutive of the feign, the possibility of such a call would turn the under-cover-agent into itself. That is not to say that a subsequent turning, conversation, negotiation or test would not occur in response to such a call. But, perhaps, as Butler suggests in *Psychic Life* (2004), such a turning might occur in my misrecognition of another sound in the locale, as a voice.¹⁶³

¹⁶² In the last paragraph of ‘The Ends of Man’ (1982), Derrida writes, ‘Are we to understand the eve as the guard mounted around the house or as the awakening to the day that is coming, at whose eve are we? Is there an economy of the eve?’ (136).

¹⁶³ As Wills (2008) notes, Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power*, in a discussion of misrecognition in relation to Althusser’s writing of interpellation, suggests, that I may misrecognize my name being called—be interpellated—by ‘a radiator which for a moment approximates a human voice’ (95-96).

There is thus a resonance between the performance practices I discuss, and Wills' (2008) engagement with Althusser's (1971) 'hailing' or 'interpellation', a word, which Wills notes, Levinas uses at times.¹⁶⁴ I noted in Chapter One that, of Levinas's ethics Wills suggests, 'The Other doesn't appear in front of me, facing me, so much as turn or incline itself toward me, summoning me as responsible from outside my consciousness or perception' (45). To use a word that is pivotal in Nancy's texts, what of the *sense* of such a summons? If visibility is conflated or associated with conceptuality, the other, as other than conceptual, might be figured as having called me from behind. As I noted in Introduction, Wills quotes Althusser, 'There are individuals walking along. Somewhere (*usually behind them*) the hail rings out' (Althusser 1971: 163; quoted here with Wills's emphasis, Wills 2008: 36). Firstly, in a very banal sense, episodes of my practice as engagements within a body's varying orientations and disorientations within streets, or varying fronts, backs and sides, or varying frontings backings and sidings, as well as varying heights or 'levels' perhaps avail themselves to exploration of ways in which I am called from behind, for example, by a sound of traffic, a traffic signal or a voice.¹⁶⁵ It is not clear as to what extent such a 'behind' may be analogous with a being-outside of what Levinas describes in RS as 'the perspective of the world' (*EE*: 52). Even more banally, episodes might avail themselves to exploration of different ways in which I might call or tether others from behind. However, the *intentionality* of such an engagement would be exceeded in a participation in an 'interpellating'. This might be my being-interpellated to turn-myself-into a ventriloquizing of 'the policeman', or more generally, of that which hails; while those who hear the hail, including me, might turn-into 'attendeers', 'attendecars', 'attendrears', 'turneers', or 'turnears', 'turneyes', or 'turn-'I's' of an episode. But there would be an undecidability in the assignment of roles of hailing and hailed in such an engagement. Chapter Two's engagement with audio-vocal-verbal *tethering* would be in part a version of such an idea. As I noted in the Introduction, Wills

The saying would retract or alter again the undecidability of the *there* or locale discussed in Chapter Two. As Wyschogrod suggests, to say *me voici* ... is not to designate spatial coordinates but rather to place oneself at the disposal of another (*OB*: 145). Levinas writes in 'Language and Proximity', 'A sign is given from one to the other before the constitution of any system of signs, any common place formed by culture and sites, a sign given from *null site* to *null site*' (*CPP*: 122, my emphasis).

¹⁶⁴ Wills quotes from *TI*:

The claim to know and to reach the other is realized in the relationship with the Other that is cast in the relation of language, where the essential is the interpellation, the vocative.... The interpellated one is called to speak. (*TI* 69)

¹⁶⁵ Within choreographic terminology, 'levels' pertain to the relative height or level, in the vertical dimension, of a body-in-movement. In the chapter 'Stumbling Dance: William Pope L.'s Crawls' of *Exhausting Dance: Performance and the politics of movement* (2006), Andre Lepecki discusses Pope L.'s crawls on streets in relation to writings of Heidegger, Frantz Fanon and others. Lepecki explores the horizontality of Pope L.'s crawls in relation to 'racial interpellation' (98) and Paul Carter's engagement with 'a politics of the ground' (Carter 1996: 302, cited in Lepecki 2006: 99). In that Pope L.'s crawls turn, show, and expose his back also suggests Wills' engagement with the *dorsal*.

remarks that both Levinas's ethical relation, and Althusser's engagement with hailing, notwithstanding the very different contexts in which their writings occur, each, in different ways, involve an obedience as a turning into, or inauguration, of a subject. For Levinas as I have discussed, this would have been an obedience prior to hearing.

The Saying and the Said

The 'quasitranscendental' senses of *passing* in my discussion so far, have to some extent been drawn out in advance or ex-pressed from behind, by Levinas's writing of the *saying*; while the 'quasi-transcendental' senses of *attending* in my discussion so far have, to some extent, been drawn out or ex-pressed by Levinas's writing of the *said*. However, there is far from an equation or parallelism of these two pairs or twins. I suggest that this family would include the amphibologically relating 'twins': totality and infinity, concept and image, synchrony and diachrony. The *saying* and the *said*, while terms within *TI*, are most fully elaborated in Levinas's later work *OB*, which takes up the 'methodological problem' (7) of ethics, as how pre-original saying might be said, or traced, in the only language available, that of ontology.

For Levinas, *saying* says the *ipseity* of the subject, its corporeal recurrence to itself as its de-situation in responding to the other. In 'God and Philosophy' (*BPW*: 1996), Levinas writes, 'The Infinite is not "in front of" me; I express it, but precisely by giving a sign of the giving of signs, of the "for-the-other" in which I am dis-interested: here I am (*me voice*)!' (146). Therefore to some extent there occurs an analogy between Levinas's *saying* and what Bruns notes of Mallarmé, that, as Bruns puts it 'poetry is not a form of mediation that brings something other than itself into view' (209). As Llewelyn explains in *The Genealogy of Ethics*, 'Poetry', for Levinas in 'Sur Maurice Blanchot', is *poiesis*, 'inseparable from the word.... It overflows infinitely, because poetry is the origin of language, language as origin' (Llewelyn 1995: 192). Llewelyn continues, 'because poetry calls to be interpreted again and again, language as origin is also language as pre-original address' (192).¹⁶⁶

As I suggested in Chapter One, the difference between the *saying* and the *said* would have occurred as a temporal difference. The time of *saying* is *diachrony* as the breakup, 'at this very moment' (*OB*: 170), of the present. The *saying* occurs as affirmation prior to its opposition to negation or the opposition of truth to falsity, and so prior to contradiction as that which occurs syn-chronously or con-temporaneously with that which it con-tradicts. As Llewelyn suggests, 'the other's imperative

¹⁶⁶ The call for interpretation would be analogous to Levinas's call for criticism in *RS*. In this sense, ethics calls for politics. For Levinas, *saying* as non-correlative with a *said* (Llewelyn 2002b: 127), as absolute interruption, would be a sociality prior to the sociality of a synchrony, rendezvous, or *with*. That is, absolute interruption would have been the mode of such sociality.

both belongs to and exceeds a systematic *syntax* of tenses and aspects and cases' (2002b: 130). The *said* occurs in *synchrony*, the chronological time of the clock and the rendezvous. It is the necessary mode of representation, propositions, com-prehension, justice, and politics, the mode of ontology, in which the question 'what is' can be asked.¹⁶⁷ Therefore in figuring ethics as *saying*, Levinas writes at the limit of philosophical discourse as that which is *said* or *written* by way of propositions and themes. Wills notes, in relation to 'formulations' of 'corporality' in *OB* that their repetition is 'relentless' (Wills 2008: 50). This is a relentless repetition characteristic of *OB*. Critchley describes such repetition as 'incantation'. It recalls something like the kind of 'rhythm' with which Levinas is concerned in *RS*. In my encountering it, reading *OB* has a strange effect, it does something strange.

For Levinas, the *said* is interlaced with the *saying*. To explicate the *saying*, as I am attempting to do, is necessarily to betray the *saying*. As Wyschogrod suggests, 'Generalization as an invoking of the world in acts of nomination [that is the said, or the saying *and* the said] is an offering of the world to another' (2002: 195). Derrida notes the necessity of the betrayal, 'Contamination is no longer a risk but a fatality that must be assumed' (ATVM: 11). In a way that recalls my discussion of the trace in the previous chapter, Derrida suggests that such a betrayal is, positively, the way by which the *saying* enters or intertwines with, the *said*:

The contamination between the 'he' beyond language and the "he" within the economic immanence of language and its dominant interpretation, is not merely an evil or "negative" contamination, rather it describes the very process of the trace insofar as it makes a work, in a work-making that must neither be grasped by means of work nor of making, but instead by means of what is said of the work in his work, by the saying of the said, by its intr(el)aced performance. (ATVM: 38)

Llewelyn makes a related suggestion:

I am in a double bind: the face as saying and responsibility is the 'essence' of language as what is said, of what is, of being and of conceptual essence because the latter require the former if they are not to be a violence; at the same time the former requires the latter in order to meet the demand for justice for every other. (*OB*: 45, 159) (2002b: 130)

As I suggested in the introduction, *OB* could be described as a 'performative' response to the 'methodological problem' (7) that the *saying* cannot be *said*. In relation to this, a suggestion of Llewelyn underscores a sense of speech, discussing the relation of Levinas's writings to writings of Franz Rosenzweig, suggests a 'quasi-performative' Llewelyn suggests:

Even the double denial, Nay Nay, of Nietzsche's ass is doubled by an Amen Amen posited in the beginning, however remotely the beginning is postponed, however immemorial its past, the past past quasi-performative Thereby to which every Hereby owes its force. (2002a: 99)

¹⁶⁷ Insofar as it is the mode of information, truth and falsity, the *said* might participate in, or occur as in some way analogous with, the mode of Austin's (1962) 'constative,' were it not for the complex interlacing of the *said* with the *saying* and the relation of *diachrony* and *synchrony*.

The ‘quasi’ here would suggest *saying* as a conditional of (im)possibility of the force of a ‘Hereby’. In relation to my engagement in Chapter Four with fiction, any writing of the *saying* is fictional, as *saying* would not have occurred within truth. As I noted in Chapter Four, the relation of the *il y a* or *there is* to the height of the absolute other, the *il* or *Il* of *illicité* is, as Llewelyn suggests, ambiguous. This ambiguity, Llewelyn suggests, perhaps names ethics in Levinas. The *saying* would leave a trace, perhaps, in its interruption of the thematic continuity of discourse. In relation to Levinas’s ‘methodological problem’, he asks whether it is possible to ‘at the same time know’ the saying, and free it ‘of the marks which thematization leaves on it by subordinating it to ontology’ (7). This might be described as one of the *appearance* and *recognizability*, or *epiphany*, of the *saying*, a ‘perhaps’ of rendering the *saying* – which is to say, ethics – within philosophical discourse. The very marks which thematization leaves would re-mark themselves, or, in the terms of RS, become image, and thus also would be the nonsite of alterity. Levinas outlines ‘reduction’:

A philosopher’s effort, and his unnatural position, consists, while showing the hither side, in immediately reducing the eon which triumphs in the said and in the monstrations, and, despite the reduction, retaining an echo of the reduced said in the form of ambiguity, of diachronic expression. For the saying is both an affirmation and a retraction of the said. (*OB*: 44)

Threads, Knots and Cuts

For Levinas, the ethical interruption of the *said* occurs ‘at this very moment’ (*OB* 170), a phrase which partly ‘entitles’ Derrida’s essay on Levinas which I discuss in this section. As I have outlined above, while for Levinas, *saying* would have passed prior to any ‘with’ of synchrony, if *saying* is traced it is in a *said*. For Levinas, this problem would also be the problem of the relation of ethics to politics: a recurring engagement of this project. Perhaps to an extent I have turned Levinas’s ‘methodological problem’ into my methodological problem. In this section I will explore the proposition that my practice produces some versions, semblances or resemblances of such a problem. One strand of Derrida’s complex engagement in his essay ‘At this Very Moment in this Work Here I Am’ (1991) (*ATVM*) occurs as an exploration of Levinas’s attempt to say, write, or figure the *saying* as bound (or tethered) up with temporal ordering—syntax and seriality. Derrida quotes the following passage of *OB*:

Every contesting and interruption of this power of discourse is at once related and invested by discourse. It thus recommences as soon as one interrupts it... This discourse will assert itself to be coherent and one. In relating the interruption of the discourse or my being ravished into discourse I connect its thread... Are we not at this very moment in the process of barring the issue that our whole essay attempts, and of encircling our position from all sides? (*ATVM*: 21, *OB*: 169)¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁸ Partially orienting this reading of Derrida’s engagement with Levinas is Critchley’s chapter ‘*Clotural Readings I: ‘Bois’ – Derrida’s Final Word on Levinas*’ in *The Ethics of Deconstruction* (1999b).

In this passage, the ‘at this very moment,’ is the ever repeating moment in which a discourse re-links the gaps of ethical interruption by relating, thematizing, that very interruption. As Derrida puts it, ‘the ‘at this very moment’ would constitute the form or web of a text resuming without end all its tears within itself’ (21). Derrida draws attention to a repetition, after an interval, a body of text, the passing of a passage, longer than this paragraph, of the phrase ‘at this very moment’,

And I still interrupt the ultimate discourse in which all the discourses are stated, in saying to one that listens to it, and who is situated outside the said that the discourse says, outside all it includes. That is true of the discussion I am elaborating at this very moment. This reference to an interlocutor permanently breaks through the text that the discourse claims to weave in thematizing and enveloping all things. In totalizing being, discourse qua discourse thus belies the very claim to totalize. (*OB*: 170)

Discussing a similar repetition in Levinas’ text *Le Nom de Dieu* (1969 [in Derrida 1991]), Derrida suggests, ‘The second ‘moment’ will have forced the first towards its own condition of possibility... It will have in advance, but after the fact within the serial rhetoric—torn the envelope’ (26). In *OB* Levinas suggests that skepticism haunts philosophy because the skeptical claim and its refutation do not occur in the same time, and suggests this as an analogy to the signification of ethics. In this sense the first ‘at this very moment’ would not be not syn-chronous with the affirmation of the second ‘at this very moment’. The ‘interval’ between the two readings-writings of ‘at this very moment’ which Derrida remarks would, aside from anything else, perhaps have been an interval, and a body, in which I probably ‘forgot’ the first ‘at this very moment,’ (or in which the first ‘at this very moment’ passed me by or in which I passed into the next part of the text), which, in its repetition after the interval, I am provoked to recall, re-turn back to, re-tune into, or recollect. Such a ‘forgetting’ would have a psychological or physiological sense, in relation to a capacity to remember of a subject. However, it would also have a more primordial sense as my absolute passivity’ in relation to the passing of time. Any reading or attending-to takes some time. The interval was spatial, temporal, and material. It was also only the continuation of Levinas’s text in its saying—in the more usual or conventional sense of saying as ‘a speech-act correlative with what is said’ (Llewelyn 2002b: 127). In *Radical Passivity*, Wall suggests that ethics could not be other than forgotten:

Ethics, for Levinas, is a command that cannot be recalled, that is olamic, forgotten. It is the forgetting that holds me hostage to the Other and that constrains me beyond my powers and my initiative. This forgetting is beyond me for the simple reason that it is not in my power to forget (no one is ‘able’ to forget; forgetting is precisely a lapse in our ability to remember). Thus, forgetting takes me outside my egoity. It denucleates the ego, stripping it nude. I am originally a third person neuter whom *I* forget (because forgetting, outside egoity, is a forgetting of the *one who* forgets; the ‘subject’ of the forgetting remains always anonymous and is thus pre-eminently forgettable). My relation to the Other prior to myself is, as it were, contracted by this one who is forgotten, and who forgets. And the relation he (the anonymous *il*, the Neuter) contracts is likewise forgotten, along with the Other. (1999: 36)

This might be like feigning a feign insofar as the one feigning may not be able to tell one feign from another. In *ATVM* Derrida (1991) describes Levinas’ text as forming ‘knotted threads’ (27). The knots mend the tears of the said by the interruptions of the saying. Derrida admits that this knotting

and interrupting happens in all texts. However, in Levinas' text, there is 'perhaps, a supplementary nodal complication, another way of retying without retying' (28). For Derrida, this supplement is a series that 'does not retie threads but the interruptions without thread' (29). This series, for Derrida, 'enchains' (or perhaps *tethers*), in many ways, the interruptions. Derrida suggests that it is necessary that there are many ways of enchaining so that the ethical opening is not itself readily rendered as a theme. Derrida describes this series as a *sériature*:

A *series*, (a stringed series of enlaced erasures), an interrupted series, a *series* of interlaced interruptions, a series of *hiatuses* (gaping mouth, mouth opened out to the cut-off word, or to the gift of the other... that I shall henceforth call, in order to formalize in economical fashion and so as not to dissociate what is no longer dissociable within this fabric, *sériature*. (36)

Such is what I am provisionally suggesting about my practice. To graft Derrida's suggestion above, I suggest that such knotting and interrupting happens in all performance practices, and I suggest that there may to some extent occur a 'supplementary nodal complication' (28) within episodes or within my practice, a retying of interruptions rather than a retying of threads. Insofar as *sériature* occurs in or as my practice it may be the tethering of an impossible trace structure of *participation* precisely as a performative relational differentiating of attendeers and passers-by or attendings and passings-by, the *ily a* of episodic-eventing, an allegory of the passing of that which never has taken place. This sense of *participation* thus, links (in a way that I have not precisely articulated)—or conflates—what Levinas refers to as 'participation' in RS with Derrida's reading of Levinas's *ethics* in *OB*. This recalls Llewelyn's suggestion that I quoted in Chapter Four, 'I can only witness to the other in responsibility if, beyond knowing and doubt, there may be no more to illeity than ilyaity. The ambiguity or enigma of this incognitive 'may be' (Levinas's *peut-être*) is necessary to the good beyond being' (2002b: 132). In Chapter Three I discussed how, for Levinas in RS, rhythm is 'the way the poetic order affects us. Closed wholes whose elements call for one another like the syllables of a verse' (132). Perhaps a sense of the closedness of a whole, where the whole is considered as a sequence, is pivotal to Derrida's reading of *OB* in *ATVM*.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁹ Derrida's *ATVM* thus provokes another way of attending to RS. As I noted in Chapter Three, for Levinas in RS, 'time' in 'the non-plastic arts such as music, literature, theatre and cinema,' does not 'shatter the fixity of images ...the characters in a book ...can be narrated because their being *resembles* itself, doubles itself and immobilizes ...By its reflection in a narrative, being has a non-dialectical fixity, stops dialectics and time' (139). Levinas writes,

A novel shuts beings up in a fate despite their freedom. Life solicits the novelist when it seems to him as if it were already something out of a book. Something somehow completed arises in it, as though a whole set of facts were *immobilized and formed a series*. They are described between two well-determined moments, in the space of a time existence had traversed *as through a tunnel*. The events related formed a *situation* – akin to a plastic ideal. That is what myth is: the plasticity of a history. What we call the artist's choice is the natural selection of facts and traits which are fixed in a rhythm, and transform time into images (RS 139 first two emphases mine).

If there were a ‘supplementary nodal complication’ in my practice, how would it occur? I propose that at times my practice thwarts or remarks a passage from appearance to recognizability through a fracturing of syntactical order or codes. The ‘codes’ in question would include syntactical structures of very common routines of sociality. This is perhaps one sense of what O’Connor (2012) suggests in ‘night drifts’, of her encounter with *Ripples*, in Bundle O of *Oct Dec Series* (2011). The commonness of what O’Connor writes is of ‘the everyday banality of simple encounter and ritual in forms of bodily and vocal instructive invitations’ (5). O’Connor suggests that the ‘demand’ of the work is ‘made on what is most ordinary, most common, and everyday, what is most predictable, knowable, seeable and sayable’ (5). In the discussion of ToW in the ‘Materialities’ section above, in relation to the border between speech, foreign language and sounds in the locale, I suggested some engagements in my practice with sentencing, speech, interruption, voice, and other sounds. These may occur within, as, or among what O’Connor describes as ‘simple encounter and ritual in forms of bodily and vocal instructive invitations’. Such a ‘supplementary nodal complication’ (ATVM: 28) may be the tying together, not of the knots or resumptions, but of the interruptions, of such different threads. If I say that this occurs, to say that it occurs to or for me is a different kind of claim than to say that it occurs to or for us attendeers, or to or for attendeers orchestrated but not undergone by me.

Ingratitude

In Chapter Four I noted that for Levinas ethics occurs as a ‘one-way movement’ from the same to the other without a return journey home (Meaning and Sense 1996c: 49). But for Levinas, the subject was never at home in its body or in its house, Wills suggests, as I noted in Chapter Four, ‘The house is constructed in order to have its doors opened; even inhabiting is for Levinas a form of exile or *errance*’ (2008: 60). For Levinas, the subject’s bending back upon itself in recurrence would have been this ‘one-way movement’ of giving without reserve from the same to the other. In the section ‘Movement Without Return’, of TO, Levinas suggests that, ‘*A work conceived radically is a movement of the same unto the other which never returns to the same.*’ (348, italics Levinas’s).¹⁷⁰ In the next section ‘Need and Desire’, Levinas links such a movement to ingratitude.

A work conceived in its ultimate nature requires a radical generosity of the same who in the work goes unto the other. It then requires an *ingratitude* of the other. Gratitude would in fact be the *return* of the movement to its origin. (349)

In ‘Meaning and Sense’ (1996c), in the section ‘Sense and Work’ in *BPW*, Levinas writes,

¹⁷⁰ Just prior to this, Levinas had suggested, ‘we must not conceive of a work ... as a technical operation, which through its much proclaimed negativity reduces an alien world to a world whose alterity is converted into my idea.’ (348). This is a very different, arguably more ‘traditional’, thinking of technics than in Wills’ reading of Levinas’s suggestion in *TI*, discussed in Chapter Two, that, ‘The hand is by essence groping... groping is not a technically imperfect action, but the condition for all technique’ (*TI* 167).

[A] departure with no return, which, however, does not go forth into the void, would lose its absolute *orientation* if it sought recompense in the immediacy of its triumph, if it awaited the triumph of its cause impatiently. The one-way movement of ‘unique sense’ would be reversed and become a reciprocity.... As an absolute orientation to the Other, as sense, a work is possible only in patience. (49-50)

Insofar as this project or this exegesis is a ‘work’, or insofar as it ‘works’ in a Levinasian mode, gratitude would thus be one kind of ‘bending back’ that it has been called to evade. On the one hand, as I have discussed, no bending back would bend back to the same *there*; and on the other hand, as Levinas writes in *OB*, ‘Being’s essence’, and so ontology and economy, ‘carries on like a vigilance exercised without respite on this very vigilance, like a self-possession’ (103). A radical generosity would hardly be possible; economics and restitution are very likely to return. This resembles the relation between the two instances of ‘at this very moment’ in *OB* that Derrida remarks in *ATVM*, where one suggests totality, the said or economy, and the other infinity or the *saying*. Levinas’s ethics would call for the remarking of the interruption in the circle of restitution, or the bending of such a circle into what Critchley describes, in relation to Levinas’s engagement with skepticism in *OB*, as a spiral. Critchley suggests that for Levinas:

The philosopher’s effort is to enact within language a spiraling movement between the Saying and the Said, an ethical writing that Levinas performs in *Otherwise than Being*. The reduction uses the unavoidable language of the Said, and attempts to avoid, or unsay, that Said by finding the Saying within it. Yet – and this is crucial – *this reduced Said retains a residue of the unsaid Said within the Saying. The reduction is never pure or complete*. This leaves philosophy in a spiraling movement between two orders of discourse, that of the Saying and that of the Said, whereby the ethical signifies through the oscillation, or alternation, of these orders. It is precisely this alternation that constitutes, for Levinas, the enigma of philosophy (*DQVI* 270) (Critchley 1999b: 165)

‘At This Very Moment in This Work Here I Am’ (*ATVM*) (1991), which appeared in a collection entitled *Textes pour Emmanuel Levinas*, was in this sense a text *for (pour)* Levinas. The text begins ‘He will have obligated (*il aura obligé*) (11). An obligation would be a species of bond, and thus related to a *tether*. Insofar as it is faithful to Levinas, this exegesis would have been called, *tethered* or *ob-ligated* to turn into an ungrateful deviation. One of the interlocutors of *ATVM* formulates the ‘logic’ of ingratitude:

if I must conform my gesture to what makes the Work in his Work, which is older than his work, and whose Saying according to his own terms is not reducible to the Said, there we are, engaged before all engagement, in an incredible logic, formal and nonformal. If I retribute, if I retribute without fault, I am at fault. And if I do not retribute, by *giving* beyond acknowledgement, I risk the fault. I leave for now this word–fault–the liberty of all its registers, from crime to a fault of spelling. As to the proper name of what finds itself at issue here, as to the proper name of the other, that would, perhaps, return/amount to the same. (14)¹⁷¹

¹⁷¹ As Llewelyn explains, the ‘interlocutors’ of *ATVM*

Llewelyn writes that it appears that ATVM ‘purportedly for Emmanuel Levinas’ (2002a: 157) passes Levinas by. How to figure, feign, or characterize the fault, in this work at this very moment? It would be necessary for my project to pass me by. I would have been called to a betrayal of my performances, my supervisors, attendeers, and those who faithfully wanted to be with me. This would be the continual impasse of an ingratitude that re-turns to me.

devise a work in which ingratitude is translated by a dislocation of personal and other pronouns. A dislocation that traduces itself as dis-location insofar as the interlocutors are distinguished as locator, locutrix, lector, letrix, speaking, or writing. (2002a: 156)

This dislocation occurs as a slippage from Emmanuel Levinas to E.L. to *il*, to *elle*. The ingratitude of Derrida’s text hinges on the proposition of the feminine other *elle*, as absolutely other to the absolute other *il* (he/it). Derrida asks of Levinas’s ethics, ‘Since it (*elle*) is under-signed by the Pro-noun He (*il*) (before he/she, certainly, but it is not She) could it be that in making sexual alterity secondary’ (42) to ethical alterity, there occurs a ‘mastery’ of sexual difference and thus ‘a mastery *of* femininity, ‘or at least [an] attempting to master’ (ATVM: 42).

Six: Pre-text

Perhaps I am getting things back-to-front or being-backed-into myself or reverting towards a performance to come. For Levinas, I first occur in response to an order. In *The Pre-Text of Ethics: Derrida and Levinas*, which inspires the title of this 'chapter', Diane Moira Duncan (2001) quotes Derrida's 'Before the Law', in which Derrida quotes in full and discusses, Franz Kafka's parable *Before the Law*, Derrida writes:

What is deferred forever till death is entry into the law itself, which is nothing other than what dictates the delay. The law prohibits by interfering with and deferring the "ference" ("ferance"), the reference, the rapport, the relation. What *must not* and cannot be approached is the origin of *différance*: it must not be presented or represented and above all not penetrated. That is the law of the law... we can never say, "There it is," it is here or there. (Derrida in Duncan 2001: 19; Derrida 1992a: 205)

As I suggested in the Introduction, this project is called both to bring itself to conclusion and remain before the law. This exegesis might be considered a pre-text of three performance practices, or my performance practice, or of a performance chronologically programmed to make its rendezvous between 10.30am and 4pm on Wednesday April 3 2013. Perhaps the tensile bond between this exegesis and me, or you, has been stretched or occluded, masked or dissolved by other forces in the locale. The performance for which this exegesis would be a pre-text should take place otherwise than as retreating, 're-treading', or retracing my previous performance projects, or the stumbles and steps of this exegesis, even if my practice occurs in part in incessant repetitions.¹⁷²

'Examination of a PhD project within the School of Art & Design at AUT University', would occur as a programme and choreography, and a tissue or bundle incorporating, for example: a submitted exegesis, a creative work such as an exhibition or performance, a candidate, a convenor, three examiners, supervisor(s), attendeers, passers-pasees-by, protocols, regulations, brief written reports, an oral examination, the AUT University Postgraduate Centre, and a place to hold the oral examination. The examineers' and the convenor's encounters with the practice will probably have been choreographed in advance to an extent in readings of this exegesis.

The sequence could in principle have been the reverse, with examineers reading the exegesis subsequent to attending the episode of examination. In either case, examineers would pass through some kind of induction or introduction to the examination and episodes of examination that would

¹⁷² The word 'retreading' as in repairing a worn car tyre, attaching a new surface on an older 'back', but also as in retracing one's steps, occurs to me in relation to hearing Jon Spencer, interviewed on Radio New Zealand National on 'Music 101' on 16.2.2013, suggesting that the latest album of his band 'The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion' is exploring new territory and not just a 're-tread' of previous albums.

differ greatly from, for example, the encounter with a booking process of an attendee of *Oct Dec Series* (2011). The episodes for examination must be carried out both for the examination and for something or someone other than the examination.

After the examination process incorporating performance work and oral examination, I intend to make a post-script to this pre-text that briefly explores and gives an account of the practice as it encounters its examination.

Conclusion

The amendments I have added in response to the recommendations from the examination panel, and the anonymous examiners' reports, take the place of the 'post-script' that I suggest above. In conclusion, I will summarize the project, and say again what I feel are the main contributions this project makes to its fields.

This practice-led PhD project has explored my performance art practice in relation to questions of participation and the relation of ethics to politics. These explorations occurred in a reference field occurring among: selected texts of the contemporary philosophers Emmanuel Levinas, Jacques Derrida, and David Wills; an experimental theatre work by Ant Hampton and Glen Neath, performance works of dancer and choreographer Martin Nachbar, among performance works of other artists; and writings on performance of André Lepecki, Brian Massumi, Liza Kharoubi, and Alan Read. This exegesis has explored performance practices as opened by, and opening, a sense of *participation* as a passivity, anonymity, or interruption of conceptuality and the trace-structure of such an 'experience' or enigma. This engagement with participation has been most strongly provoked by Levinas' essay 'Reality and its Shadow' (1987b)—but not exclusively so, as Massumi's engagement with expression and Wills's and Derrida's engagements with prosthetics each informed the senses of participation this exegesis has explored. That is also to say that the exegesis has folded its engagement with participation together with a number of other related explorations; of becoming and belonging, locale or the *there*, prosthetics, and recording. Of Levinas's texts, I have engaged most with 'Reality and Its Shadow' and *Otherwise than Being* (1981) for the way these open an engagement between ethics and aesthetics. Chapter Four of the exegesis considers this project's methodology in relation to Levinas's essay 'The Trace of the Other' (1986). Derrida's engagement with Austin's 'performative' and with Stéphane Mallarmé's understanding of *writing*, have occurred as provocations throughout the project and the exegesis. The exegesis has engaged Wills's *Dorsality* (2008) not only as commentary on Levinas and Derrida (among others), but as an 'original' contribution to engagements with technology and performance.

In the remainder of this section I will reiterate what I outlined in the introduction of what I feel are the main contributions this project makes to its fields. Firstly, I suggest that this project contributes an original engagement with its philosophical reference-field of Derrida, Wills, Levinas and others, to performance studies and performance philosophy. I suggest that the exegesis has demonstrated that this project performs a more sustained and in-depth engagement with the selected writings of Levinas that it engages in relation to performance than previous engagements with these texts in the field of performance studies and performance philosophy. If this project has been performance philosophy, and performance philosophy is characterized by mutual affectings of each other of ‘performance’ and ‘philosophy’, then this project must by definition have offered something to understandings of aspects of writings of Derrida, Levinas, and Wills. Of most significance, in relation to the writings of Levinas that this project engages, is the exploration in Chapter Three of performance practices in relation to Levinas’s engagement with participation in RS. This project also offered an engagement with questions of the relation of ethics to politics within writings of Levinas. This has been explored in philosophy, for example in Critchley’s *The Ethics of Deconstruction* (1999b) and *Infinitely Demanding* (2007). I suggest that this project, particularly in ‘Responsibility’ in Chapter Four, *began* a micro-engagement which aims to resonate or opens up *some* of the concerns Critchley explores in *Infinitely Demanding*, for example of the operation of humour in anarchist political performance, and in so doing constructively and critically expanded on aspects of Kharoubi’s engagement with writings of Critchley and Levinas in performance philosophy. I suggest that this project’s engagement with *OB* contributes to engagements with philosophy as performance within performance philosophy.

I suggest that the exegesis has contributed, most directly in the section ‘Dance and Dance Studies’ of the Introduction, a brief but original engagement with the influential work of André Lepecki in relation to dance and choreography and Lepecki’s engagement with Seremetakis’s (1994) ‘still-act’. I suggest that this project has offered an ‘original’ engagement with choreography through its engagement with my practice and Ant Hampton and Glen Neath’s *The Bench or Hello for Dummies* (2012) and writings of Wills concerning dorsality and prosthetics, writings of Derrida in relation to re-cording, and Massumi’s writing on becoming and belonging. This engagement with choreography takes place most explicitly in Chapter Two; *Becoming and Belonging*. I suggest that the exegesis has put aspects of Wills’s *Dorsality* (2008)—which I suggest the exegesis has shown has much to offer engagements with techniques and technologies of dance—into conversation with performance studies and performance philosophy within a practice-led performance as research project. I suggest that the project has invented a performance practice that, as far as I know according to my research in the field of contemporary performance, differs in important and productive ways from other related performance practices. I suggest that ways it differs from related practices include: the difficulty of distinguishing it from life in general and so the opening of a

question of appearance and enigma; the way that, choreographically it opens a question of communicability through interruption, and stammering; its engagement with spatial and temporal punctuality in its experimentation with 'finishing time'; and its opening of an exegetical exploration of the reference-field of works of Hampton and Neath, Nachbar, LIGNA, the manoeuvres of Tim Brennan, and philosophical writings of Wills, Levinas, Derrida, Massumi and others. As I suggested in the introduction, this claim-staking leads to the question of what, and to whom, a practice-led, performance as research PhD would aim to contribute at all. If it is practice-led, then perhaps one contribution is that it proposes and test a 'novel' model of practice that others might appropriate, and I suggest that this is also a contribution this project may make.

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