

# ***m/OTHER(-ing): Dubble Duch at W-E-R-K!*<sup>1</sup>**

*m/OTHER(-ing): Dubble Duch at W-E-R-K! // m/OTHER(-ing): Dubble Duch at W-E-R-K!*

**Dana Dugan<sup>2</sup>**

Concordia University, Montreal, QC  
danadu75@gmail.com

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<sup>1</sup> **Artículo de investigación**

<sup>2</sup> Who is Dana Dugan? (always greater than the sum of its parts)

Dana Dugan is a Montreal-based artist-scholar, mother, performer, teacher, and dramaturg. She was a founding member of the Chicago Contemporary Circus Festival (Chicago, 2014-15) and CirqueOFF (Montreal, 2017). Currently, she is a member of Le PARC (Performance Arts Research Cluster) at the Milieux Institute for Arts, Culture, and Technology (Montreal); works as a research assistant for the Dramaturgical Ecologies Research Collective (Montreal); and serves on the editorial board for *TURBA: The Journal of Global Practices in Live Arts Curation* (Montreal). Dana completed her Master's Degree at Concordia University (Montreal, 2018) under fellowship as a practice-based researcher investigating her circus body as a site for cultivating critical dialogues through the concept and practice of *(dis)obedience*. She continues her embodied research on (dis)obedience as a doctoral student in the Humanities Interdisciplinary Program at Concordia University (Montreal), using the body as an interface with Performance Studies and Black Studies toward an ontogenerative disruptive, transformative and affirmative politic.

## Resumen

Este artículo se basa en la conferencia-performance presentada en *Circus and its Others* (CaiO) en Bogotá, Colombia, en febrero/marzo de 2024, por Dana Dugan—una artista-estudiosa estadounidense, artista independiente y candidata a doctora en la Universidad Concordia, Montreal, QC. El componente corporal de esta conferencia-performance no está incluido, aparte de algunas fotos del proceso de investigación-creación. Sin embargo, la conferencia-performance, como artista de performance y académica, entrelaza el texto corporal con la palabra escrita. El contenido principal de este artículo constituye la representación de una performance corporal a través de un texto de las 'voces' polivalentes enredadas con la experiencia sensorial y material de la performance.

Este artículo experimental/no convencional intenta llevar el cuerpo escritor a la página y hacer justicia a las líneas difusas entre lo conceptual y lo corporal en la investigación-creación y esta conferencia-performance. La tarea resulta desafiante al intentar reconciliar la comprensión de lo tridimensional a lo bidimensional, los medios lineales, y todo el espeso compromiso sensorial, efímero y afectivo, la riqueza de los intermedios, las grietas, las respuestas somáticas, los percances de la performance, los tartamudeos, los estornudos, las risas, los "umms", los silencios incómodos, los suspiros, los "ho-hums", etc. de la experiencia misma que escapan al lenguaje escrito. Una imagen vale más que mil palabras. Pero lo mismo ocurre con el olfato, el gusto, el tacto y el oído. ¿Cómo se puede honrar y rendir tributo justo a la componente de performance de la conferencia-performance y proporcionar palabras a lo inefable? ¿Cómo hacemos que la performance corporal se convierta en texto, y cómo se convierte el texto en la performance corporal? El desarrollo de este artículo intenta hacer justamente eso.

El contenido, tanto estructural como gramaticalmente, de este artículo está contorneado experimentalmente a través del entrelazado de teoría y práctica, mostrando el

movimiento auto-perpetuante entre lo teórico y lo práctico en la investigación-creación. Esta se convierte en una intersección consciente del cuerpo y la escritura que, en el caso de este proyecto bajo el paraguas de BLAKshēp, que abarca m/OTHER-ing: Dubble Duch at WERK, depende en gran medida del cuerpo como herramienta primaria para la investigación y la producción de conocimiento. En este artículo, se presentan neologismos derivados de modulaciones conceptuales como líneas de fuga que se desplazan a lo largo del texto: m/OTHER-ing, WERK o W-E-R-K, CUNT-fabulation, ethics of care, CUNT-time

## Abstract

This article pulls from the lecture-performance presented at *Circus and its Others* (CaiO) in Bogotá, Colombia, in February/March 2024 by Dana Dugan—an American artist-scholar, independent artist, and PhD candidate at Concordia University, Montreal, QC. The embodied component of this performance-lecture is not included aside from some photos from the research-creation process. The lecture-performance itself as performance artist and scholar weaves embodied text with the written word. The primary content of this article constitutes the rendering of an embodied performance through a text of the polyvalent 'voices' entangled with the sensorial, material experience of the performance. This experimental/unconventional article attempts to bring the writing body to the page and do justice to the blurred lines between the conceptual and the embodied of research-creation and this lecture performance. The task at hand proves challenging reconciling the compression from the three to the two-dimensional linear mediums and all the thick sensory, ephemeral, and affective engagement, the richness of the in-betweens, the cracks, the somatic responses, performance mishaps, stutters, sneezes, laughter, umms, awkward silences, sighs, ho-hums, etc. of the experience itself that escapes written language. A picture is a thousand words. But so is smell,

taste, touch, and hearing this space needs to be deleted. it's all the same paragraph.

How might the performance component of the lecture performance be honored and given fair tribute and provide words to the ineffable? How do we make the embodied performance, text, and how does the text become the embodied performance? The article's unfolding attempts to do just that.

The content, structurally, and grammatically of this article is experimentally contoured through the weaving of both theory and practice showcasing the self-perpetuating movement between the theoretical and practical in research-creation. Research-creation becomes a mindful intersection of the body and writing that, in the case of the umbrella research-creation project BLAKshēp, which encompasses *m/OTHER-ing: Dubble Duch at WERK*, relies heavily on the body as the primary tool for investigation and knowledge production.

Specific to this article, neologisms derived from conceptual modulations as lines of flight that move throughout the article concepts include:

m/OTHER-ing  
WERK or W-E-R-K  
CUNT-fabulation  
Ethics of care  
CUNT-time

## Keywords

research-creation, metaphysical speculative pragmatics, identity/representation, m/OTHER, care, WERK, fabulation

## Resumo

Este artigo se baseia na palestra-performance apresentada no Circus and its Others (CaiO) em Bogotá, Colômbia, em fevereiro/março de 2024 por Dana Dugan – uma

artista-estudante estadunidense, artista independente e candidata a doutora na Universidade de Concordia, Montreal, QC. O componente corporal desta palestra-performance não está incluído, para além de algumas fotografias do processo de pesquisa-criação. No entanto, a palestra-performance, enquanto artista performativa e acadêmica, entrelaça o texto corporal com a palavra escrita. O conteúdo principal deste artigo constitui a representação de uma performance corporal através de um texto de “vozes” polivalentes enredadas com a experiência sensorial e material da performance. Este artigo experimental/não convencional tenta trazer o corpo da escrita para a página e fazer justiça às linhas difusas entre o conceitual e o corporal na pesquisa-criação desta palestra-performance. A tarefa é desafiante, na tentativa de conciliar a compressão do tridimensional ao bidimensional, os meios lineares e todo o espesso compromisso sensorial, efêmero e afetivo, a riqueza dos intermédios, as fissuras, as respostas somáticas, os percalços da performance, os gaguejos, os espirros, as risadas, os “humms”, os silêncios incômodos, os suspiros, os “u-hums”, etc. da própria experiência que escapam à linguagem escrita. Uma imagem vale mais que mil palavras. Mas o mesmo é válido para o olfato, o paladar, o tato e a audição. Como se pode honrar e prestar uma justa homenagem ao componente performativo da palestra-performance e proporcionar palavras ao inefável? Como fazer com que a performance corporal se torne um texto, e como é que o texto se torna a performance corporal? O desenvolvimento deste artigo tenta fazer justamente isso. O conteúdo, tanto estrutural como gramaticalmente deste artigo, é experiencialmente contornado através do entrelaçamento da teoria e da prática, mostrando o movimento autoperpetuante entre o teórico e o prático na pesquisa-criação. Esta se converte em uma intersecção consciente do corpo e da escrita que, no caso deste projeto debaixo do guarda-chuvas de BLAKshēp, que abarca *m/OTHER-ing: Dubble Duch at WERK*, depende em grande medida do corpo como ferramenta primária para a investigação e a produção de conhecimento. Neste artigo

se apresentam neologismos derivados de modulações conceituais como linhas de fuga que percorrem todo o texto: m/OTHER-ing  
WERK ou W-E-R-K  
CUNT-fabulação  
éticas do cuidado  
CUNT-tempo

### **Palavras-chave**

pesquisa-criação; pragmática especulativa metafísica; identidade/representação; m/OTHER-ing; cuidado; WERK; fabulação

**Program notes...**

This is clown werk – Dubble Duch or Dubble D is at WERK. But also Dana Dugan or DuDu – scholar. DD – artist, mother, lover. It’s potentially confusing with all this complexity but aren’t we all? At the risk of the clown trope taking the imagination in objectionable directions, let’s take a moment to give shape to the clown at play. PINK, always pink. Why? Because I have a strong distaste for it and it sets up a beautiful operational differential for the ontogenerative.

Failure, always failure. Why? Because it requires love, joy, and gratitude to navigate it toward ontogenerative, creative possibility.

Serious, but silly. Why serious? Becase silliness is serious business.

Banana, always a banana. Why? Well because my clown is a Drag King.

Lastly, LOVE. Always about looking for LOVE. Why? Because it what everyone needs.

The presentation embodied both the scholar and the artist in a single site, Dubble Duch – a sh/im or what is sometimes called a half-and-half or morphodites in the freakshow tradition of circus<sup>3</sup>. This article will attempt to showcase both the theoretical and practical work around a dynamic concept of *m/OTHER-ing* and its WERK. The WERK of *m/OTHER-ing* (*m/O*) is care, developing an *ethics of care*. Through practical explorations of Dubble Duch, the theoretical work of *m/OTHER-ing* advances. Dubble Duch’s *m/OTHER-ing* (*m/O*) and WERK operate as an ontogenerative life force of immanent critique. As a gesture of speculation and critique, the concepts of *m/other* and *afro-fabulation* in a processual orientation come into play mobilizing thinkers Alex Pauline Gumb, Tavia Nyong’O, Erin Manning, Brian Massumi, Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guatarri and many more.

All that follows unfolds in CUNT-time. Without getting too deep into the meaning of CUNT-time just yet, the important functional aspects of such time unfold as non-linear, durational<sup>4</sup>, and elastic (as it expands and contracts), as a force that makes space and time inseparable. It’s durational, space-time. It moves with lived experience qualitatively in contrast to quotidian quantitative notions of time. The notion of CUNT-time came into being with CUNTfabulation and was shaped by space-time<sup>5</sup>. It plays with our plastic capacities to re-think and re-create the directional forces of worlding through speculation. Deleuze and Guattari attest that the realm of the arts, unlike the virtual domain of philosophy and the actual domain of the sciences, is that of the possible. A work of art “does not actualize the virtual event but incorporates or embodies it : it gives it a body, a life, a universe.... These universes are neither virtual nor actual; they are possibles, the possible as aesthetic category.” (Deleuze & Guatarri, 1994, p. 177), but also that philosophy should “invent modes of existence or possibilities of life” (p. 72), or what Henri Bergson first introduces as fabulation<sup>6</sup>

As an artist, my work tends to require an active audience to truly enter into the work. It is a kind of engagement that seeks to stimulate activity at multiple registers. The activation might appear in different ways. (Try not to be anxious about understanding it all.) There is no one right, correct way. There is only your way, the audience, the reader, and the fellow relational body organically encountering one another. The work may conjure questions,

4 Henri Bergson’s duration, *Time and Free Will* (1889, 2001) – Typically time is framed as a series of discrete units. Bergson believed this drastically misrepresents and misunderstands what time feels like. He preferred the word “duration.” Bergson was a forerunner of “phenomenology,” and popular phrases like “lived experience” owe much to his philosophy.

5 A union between space and time where what is true for space is true for time that knits together a universe. – *Elegant Universe* p. 66. This is what is important here

6 A term deriving from the Latin *fabula*, meaning either talk, conversation, discourse, or a story, tale, myth, legend, or fable. The term was coined by Henri Bergson.

3 Half-and-halves found refuge and sustainable living free of persecution in circus communities that was not possible in.

epiphanies, confusion, an array of emotional responses. Let them breathe and take flight. That being said, I offer some guiding gestures to chaperon the journey through this experimental reading. It plays with different ways to contour a universe of words as a new narrative of fluidity and complexity of experience that allow new possibilities of artistic expression, which shape existence and new worlding. Not a linear progression of moments but a living breathing entity the shapes a fabulatory world of possibility that embraces the uncertainty in the fabric of our being. It defies easy categorization, which enables the audience to delve into complexity and continues to challenge, inspire, and provoke.

To begin, the voice of the article is a continual becoming a relational being (always more than one) but of a polyvalent self – heterogeneous yet interpenetrating. Each voice is like a note in a piece of music. To listen to music is not to focus on a single note but to hear the notes in composition to make the music. The lecture performance illustrates this quite well in terms of harmonizations of the different modalities of expression – embodied and verbal. The blurring harmonizes allowing for the expression of complexity and fluidity. This slippery layering presents a challenge when bringing the body to paper and the many voices expressing it. How to do this? Orientations of the text:

Left justification in a formal academic voice – scholar voice, Dr. DuDu

Never left justified, middle, cascading, right justification– thoughts of Dana Dugan

Centered italicized – drag-king clown speaking Dubble Duch

Centered Bold – drag-king clown in action, Dubble Duch

SELF as an enabling constraint and not to refer to or represents an individual.

The SELF moves in/through/with this work as a relation being.

Without falling into the need to define SELF, The importance of self in this work is not about conceptual defining, but in this context the SELF constitutes mind-body-spirit.

In spirit (DD) first person, talking to myself, cascading thoughts falling across the page. In person, it is the faciality and an affective radiance.

In mind (DuDu or Dana Dugan) formal, big words that are formally structured grammatically with academic notations. Typically not expressed in an embodied.

In body (Dubble Duch) to come out of no-where, queering the of the space on the page, got pinked. The polyvalent aspect is self-evident in the lecture presentation. They all come from the spirit of Dana Dugan present at different moments, sometimes oscillating between the three expressions quickly but typically all at once, one more foregrounded than the other.

All present all the time, one or all with foregrounded expression. An indivisible embodiment of difference with a queer dusting of pink throughout that guide the imagination into the universe.

Move into the space of the imagination  
Think sense but also non-sense  
Be open to the possibility of not knowing and where that takes you.  
Move with LOVE-JOY-GRATITUDE

### **Bon Spectacle!**

A BODY, A BEING, A BECOMING THAT DEFIES CATEGORY

SORRY, NOT SORRY

PINK, PINK , PINK AND MORE PINK

THINGS, SO MANY THINGS...ALL PINK

FRENETIC AND ABSURD



This short section as swinging the door open and arriving – both Dubble Duch and DD

ORGANIZED CHAOS *Werk!?*

The werk is care.

*Who is werking?*

Sh/im as drag king as qween, cloaked in pink, m/OTHER – ing, who goes by the name Dubble Duch.

*The KWEEN has arrived!*

Puzzled? Exactly! The feeling is mutual. It is a werk in progress.

At W-E-R-K (versus doing the WERK)... an orientation, a leaning toward OTHER, RE/worlding

A re-orientation of Self

*My, I, self, the individual, identity* giving way, as consent not to be a single being.

*My, I, self* gives way—not to objects, but to an *other*, an other *self*. Together instantiating a

relational inseparability that preserves otherness. Moving away from the dialectic of self-other or a concrete sense of self and other, but rather offering a proposition of metaphysical

structure, organizing experience which dissolves the individual as primary.

Deleuze (1990) names the “a priori Other” enabling the “the structure of the possible” (p. 307).

## A WORLDING

YES, PINK, ALWAYS PINK

PINK HEAD TO TOE

PINK SUITCASES

PINK DISCO BALLS

FURRY PINK THING

PINK BAGS FULL OF PINK THINGS

A PINK TORNADO OF SHAPE SHIFTING CHAOS TENSION BUILDING

ABSURDITY IN ABUNDANCE

ALL BUSINESS

SILLINESS IS SERIOUS BUSINESS

Let's begin... entering into "possibilities of life"

How might we create the conditions for ontogenerative possibility?

In no particular order of importance.



Please read aloud.

0. immanent critique
1. ethics of care, responsibility not obligatory
2. move with the non-prejudicial
3. offer a generous read
4. operate at the register of the impersonal
5. hold humble curiosity
6. LOVE-JOY-GRATITUDE
7. tend to mind-body-soul
8. continual SELF-inventory
9. SELF-love, be kind to yourSELF
10. give the gift of self, a moving toward
11. enabling constraints
12. invent ways to escape capture
13. practice (dis)obedience when necessary
14. embrace a politic of asymmetry versus hierarchy
15. attune, improvise, imagine
16. pursue an array of knowledges
17. fall into failure
18. surrender, know when to let go
19. value the useless
20. live artfully
21. fabulate, dealer's choice

READ AGAIN,

aloud,

STARTING AT

0. immanent critique

GRATITUDE,

Erin Manning + Brian Massumi  
for your guidance and inspiration  
for this line of flight  
moving with  
Thinking in the Act, 2014

## **TRANS\*(figur)–ING: a BEGINNING from the MIDDLE**

Mother Earth

The Mother Tree

non/human mothers???

mothers

mothers

mothers

married mothers

single mothers

step-mothers

birth/biological mothers

adoptive mothers

foster mothers

heterosexual mothers

homosexual mothers

bisexual mothers

polyamorous mothers

mothers as women

mothers as men

transmothers

drag mothers

surrogate mothers

grandmothers

OTHER-mothers

mothers who are separated from their children – physically and/or legally

and so on...

(slow down...right, translators, thank you translators)

INHALE, EXHALE,

Be a good sport and actually do it,

INHALE.....EXHALE

Please and thank you!

The remix and myriad of intersectional possibilities are endless and not biologically determined. All mothers are all tethered to different degrees of separation, but without separability as an ecology of experience which resonates with Denise Fierrera da Silva's *difference without separability*<sup>7</sup> – existentially and ontologically, moving as a matrix of inseparable difference.

Further, difference does not equate to different or the space between but speaks to the differential fielding that emerges in the worldings of relational beings, which is infinite and nonlinear. In Deleuze's philosophy of difference, difference makes itself, self-determines that is *a priori* substance and/or identity; not one that is determined as an individual. "[I]nstead of something distinguished from something else, imagine something which distinguishes itself – and yet that from which it distinguishes itself does not distinguish itself from it...it makes the difference" (Deleuze, 1994, p. 38). The notion of difference that moves through this work side steps difference that negates and excludes toward affirmative difference of inclusion.

difference

difference

difference makes all the difference.

difference, its necessary

there is only difference  
and repetition  
never sameness  
only constant change  
an ontological becoming  
rather than being

<sup>7</sup> On *Difference Without Separability* (Ferreira da Silva, 2016).

## BOOKS, BOOKS, AND MORE BOOKS

### SO MANY BOOKS

#### GETTING A PHD REQUIRES LOTS OF BOOKS

*A PRAGMATICS FOR THE USE-  
LESS* by Erin Manning

*THE BLACK GAZE* by Tina Campt

*AFRO-FABULATION* by Tavia N'yongo

*PROCESS AND REALITY* by Al-  
fred North Whitehead

*WHAT IS PHILOSOPHY?* by Gi-  
lles Deleuze and Félix Guatarri

*THOUGHT IN THE ACT* by Erin Man-  
ning and Brian Massumi

*TIME AND FREE WILL* by Henri Bergson

### OH YEAH, AND MORE PINK

Thinking-making,  
research-creation,  
scholar-artist entangled,

embraces an array of knowledges and explores other modes of thought, like intuition and embodied practice, unfolding as a thought experiment of think-making. Such modalities are not necessarily meant to be fully understood, but to let thought take flight in the feltness of complexity. Try not to hang onto the words spoken but to try to feel what is becoming, palpitating that our impoverished language fails to grasp. As evolved thinking that cannot be reduced to language or conceptual determinations or representations or identity. Research-creation opens new possibilities for thought and allows for



breathing life into the differential between artistic and scholarly practice.

BUT really, it's about what the work moves through, provokes, conjures, sparks  
in one's body, mind and spirit.

At the threshold of CUNT-time, durational feltness of space-time  
opening up imaginative possibility.

Inhale....Exhale,

Be a good sport and actually do it,

Inhale....Exhale,

Please and thank you!

BLAKshēp, a research-creation endeavor employing errant modalities of improvisation, experimentations, and attunement, often with promiscuous engagement and idiosyncratic slippages, evade capture of clear articulation, holds the space for the conditions of exploration between the practical, Dubble Duch (clown-dragking-s/him) and the conceptual, m/OTHER-ing. BLAKshēp works with a primary enabling constraint, both practically and conceptually, a DUET with SELF. As a choreographic object<sup>8</sup>, DUET with SELF, which shapes and unfolds in different modalities, negotiates an ontological turning inside out the many paradoxical mysteries of SELF. SELF, not a predicated SELF that is centralized who supervises unfoldings, but one of relation, a leaky SELF of continual becomings always leaning toward OTHER. A RE/worlding where Dubble Duch materializes and m/OTHER-ing articulates.

<sup>8</sup> "These 'objects' are in fact propositions co-constituted by the environments they make possible. They urge participation...The object becomes a missile for experience that inflects a given spacetime with a spirit of experimentation" (Manning, 2013, p. 92).

AGAIN WITH THE PINK

MORE UNPACKING

AAAAAAND MORE BOOKS

*THE LOGIC OF SENSE* by Gilles Deleuze  
*THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF MOTHERHOOD* by Patrice DiQuinzio  
*REVOLUTIONARY MOTHERING* by Alexis Pauline Gumbs  
*SISTER OUTSIDER* by Audre Lord  
*ALWAYS MORE THAN ONE* by Erin Manning  
*WHAT ANIMALS TEACH US ABOUT POLITICS* by Brian Massumi  
*POETICS OF RELATION* by Édouardo Glissant  
*DIFFERENCE AND REPETITION* by Gilles Deleuze



PILES AND PILES MORE!

Ok...reel-it-in,

15 minutes

15 minutes

15 minutes

So much complexity so little time!

Where was I?

Oh yes, thinking of motherhood, mothering, and mamas....

This thinking-making is not an account of *Motherhood*, but rather a politico-aesthetic-philosophical thought experiment that IS NOT about the *what* of Motherhood, but the *how* of Motherhood, and rethinking its essentialized subjectification and ways of being in the world, calling forward a proposal of becoming and a mode of practice, *m/OTHER(-ing)*. A lure to rethink possible philosophical, political and social habits and assumptions but also to speak to the ontological and existential force of mothering that escapes representation. This fabulatory experimental thinking-making asks what if...

what if...

what if...

what if Motherhood were free of representation and essentialism?

What are the speculative pragmatics of the practice of *m/OTHER(-ing)*?

Where to begin? In which middle?

The impossibility  
of  
Motherhood (capital M)  
and/or  
essential motherhood  
and/or  
institutional motherhood  
and/or  
what I like to call, Big M  
toward  
impossibility

Patrice DiQuinzio (1999) in *The Impossibility of Motherhood* speaks to an issue she names the ‘dilemma of difference’” (p. xv). Let’s stay with this for a moment. The dilemma of difference finds itself at the center of individualism and identity politics.

Identity politics stems from the notion of the individual or what Édouardo Glissant refers to as “a single being”, in his *Poetics of Relation* (1997), on relational belonging of a process-oriented metaphysics. In contrast, identity politics by way of individualism is firmly rooted in a metaphysics of substance which functions as the ontological and epistemological foundation of Modernity and Western philosophical tradition. A metaphysics of substance, at its core, structures substance as beings ontologically independent of each *other* – an individual.

In addition to identity politics, a logic of representation also finds its footing in a metaphysics of substance. All life as we know it, socially, politically, theoretical, and practical- identity and its politics function under ideological individualism and a logic of representation of a metaphysics of substance that operates on exclusionary binaries. These exclusive binary logics move across all aspects of experience, ontologically, and epistemologically. As such, the notion of identity (and its politics) which holds high stakes for marginalized bodies, must appeal to individualism to claim a seat at the table for political rights and power. While identity or individualism can function as a tool for analysis and representation and works to advance the conditions (politically, socially, economically, discursively) of marginalized, underrepresented, and invisibilized communities or person, reaches a limit in its effectivity in its inability to exist under inclusive difference. This modality inevitably places those who are fighting for inclusion in a position of misrepresentation or exclusion in its denial of difference. In this situation, the mechanism for inclusion- identity- always maintains an aspect of exclusion because of the mechanism of binary logics of representation (DiQuinzio, 1999, p. 6). Identity politics operates as a technique to mask a kind of promise of a right to subjectivity yet falls short only to reproduce the mechanism of exclusion that identity politics fights against continuing the SELF/OTHER paradigm that denies difference. This presents the dilemma of difference for feminism, queer studies, and all paradigms that build discourse on a metaphysics of substance. This is not a rejection or denial of the need and work of identity politics. It simply illuminates a dilemma. A dilemma of difference that allows for a site to expand thinking and grow thought. Its power is that the critique comes from within making it immanent and transformative. This dilemma resonates with Fred Moten’s addendum to Glissant, “(consent) not to be a single being.”

How might we consent not to be a single being?

How might difference enable inseparability?

Individualism “as a theory of subjectivity presupposed by the individualist ideological formation” dominates (DiQuinzio, 1999, p. xxii). Individualism and Motherhood (essential motherhood, institutional motherhood or shorthand, Big M), as an ideological formation, moves hand and hand. DiQuinzio (1999) states,

...individualism represents subjectivity in terms of identity, denies the effectivity of difference in subjectivity, and construes subjectivity in terms consistent with traditional western conception of masculinity. Individualism relies on the metaphysics of substance, the modern, Western philosophical tradition that understand subjectivity in terms of mind/body dualism and includes an analysis of embodiment, social relations, and social contexts as instrumental to rather than constitutive of subjectivity” (p. xiii).

Big M presupposes, (operating assumptions of Motherhood), notions of feminine/maternal subjectivity and in its institutional nature and hegemonic fielding, translates to a requirement of this naturalized subjectivity of all women at the exclusion of so many. Motherhood places femininity and mothering at odds. In turn, a kind of double bind emerges where mothering becomes a requirement of women but also denies mothers’ and women’s individualist subjectivity by masking the contradiction implicit in this social formation based on individualism or the individual (p. xiii). Subjectivity is formed on the basis of the notion of the individual.

Individualism excludes, negates, and denies difference, difference without separability (Da Silva), denies a poetics of Relation (Édourado Glissant), and denies a body always more than one (Erin Manning). As Audre Lorde would say, these are the master's tools. If not with the masters’ tools, then, what tools might be realized to pivot away from identity politics’ conflicted relationship to individualism and the logics of representation of a metaphysics of substance?

Releasing the biologically determined womb from the clenches of the Patriarchy, the womb holds the space for the ontogenerative, the site of unfolding of potentiality as the preacceleration of becoming. To conceive, gestate, and birth a human child, a female body remains necessary – the biological mother. This modality does make births specifically female but Mothering is not biologically determined despite the tyrannical attempts by nature, biology, and/or patriarchal control. Hence, it often becomes a gendered endeavor, but for any of us who have spent any time in the world, a womb does not equal a mother. It is the medium, the threshold, or the site of relay to becoming a mother whether the birth mother participates beyond birth or not.

Identity politics operates  
as a technique  
to mask a kind of promise of  
a right-to-subjectivity,  
yet falls short,  
only to re/produce  
the mechanism of exclusion that  
identity politics fights against,  
continuing the SELF/OTHER paradigm that  
denies difference.

This presents the dilemma of difference for feminism, queer studies, and all paradigms that are grounded in the Western philosophical tradition of a metaphysics of substance and champion individualism.

This is not a rejection or denial of the need and work of identity politics. This line of thinking illuminates a dilemma. A dilemma of difference that allows for thinking to expand and grow thought. Its power lies within a critique shaped from within, making it immanent and transformative.

Motherhood (capital M)  
and/or  
essential motherhood  
and/or  
institutional motherhood  
and/or  
what I like to call, Big M  
enmeshed with individualism in its ideological formation moves with a logic of representation,  
dictating essential attributes and representational parameters over all aspects of mothering.

In terms of the subjectivation of Big M, identity denies the effectivity of difference in subjectivity, and construes subjectivity in terms, consistent with traditional Western conception of masculinity. Here subjectivity is contoured by individuality of sameness versus multiplicity of oneness and functions as what Audre Lorde might refer to as *the master's tools*<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> *"For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us temporality to beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change. And this fact is only threatening to those women who still define the master's house as their only source of support"* (Lorde, 2007, p. 111).

“In order to acquire learning, we must first shake ourselves free of it.  
We must grasp the topic in the rough, before we smooth it out and shape it.”  
Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 1978

PINK CALLING!

TAKING A LOOK INWARD

TAKING INVENTORY

MIRROR, MIRROR

DUET WITH THE SELF, A POLYVALENT SELF

ARTIST-MOTHER-LOVER

LOVE?

HOW DOES IT GROW?

### **UN-hinging: becoming-clown, becoming-m/OTHER (m/O)**

Motherhood rescued and (re)framed as an activity, a force lived and practiced might spark new concepts and escapes the capture of representation. A *kinetic vocabulary*<sup>10</sup> for how this movement becomes thought. A force of being that inflects and exceeds representation – speculative and pragmatic where “[t]hought is ontogenetic: it propels more thought” (Manning, 2009, p.8). This thinking-making takes a line of flight. Motherhood to mother to m/other to m/OTHER-ing.

This kind of thinking requires a new kind of metaphysics, what Alfred North Whitehead calls a metaphysics of the organism also called process philosophy, speculative pragmatics that enables the shaping of experience differently, one that leans into the ontogenerative potential of inclusive difference versus exclusive. It is not about what the concepts *are* but what they *do*.

Black Feminist scholar, Alex Pauline Gumb’s proposition of *m/other* as a kind of *revolutionary mothering* lured a thinking-making. Thinking with Gumb (2016) where she proposes m/other as the “radical potential of the word ‘mother’ comes after the ‘m.’” – OTHER (p. 21). *m/OTHER(-ing)* as a thought experiment (of thinking-

10 A term I have coined when thinking of how thought emerges from thinking-making.



making) and propositional modulation moves to advance Gumb's radical and revolutionary proposal to amplify the differential of 'other' and 'm', and in turn, away from a 'dilemma of difference.' The difference between difference – a difference of exclusive Self/Other of individualism and substantive metaphysics versus a difference of inclusion SELF both/and OTHER of relational, processual metaphysics. As a relational being, selfOTHER are indivisible and interpenetrated.

m/OTHER(-ing), or m/O for short, stages difference, a leaning toward OTHER, as a relational being, always more than one, always made possible only by its difference. As such, reciprocally, 'm' interpenetrates, enfolds OTHER moving inclusively, inseparable in difference. The force unfolds where OTHER moves as an *antagonistic cooperative*<sup>11</sup> to 'm' and vice versa. Dubble Duch, or Dubble D for short, hyperbolizes registers of difference as a drag-king/queen clown moving dynamically in its capacity to shapeshift and flow with changing patterns and code switching with SELF, but also its relational OTHER, making the polyvalent SELF a proposition. The embodied hick-up step amplifies the asymmetrical necessity of difference, a coming in, that turns the inside out enfolding impossibility. Dubble Duch (and OTHERs) unapologetically insists on a kind of thinking-moving other-wise – *OTHER-wise*.

The experimental emergent process of Dubble Duch pulls lived experience into a mode of activity (research-creation) "occurring at the constitutive level of both art practice and theoretical research" that advance concepts-in-the-making through continuous experimentation and recasting toward the affirmative and inventive. A process which embraces difference. Thinking-in-action and conceptualization as a practice in its own right..."embodying techniques of emergence takes it seriously that creative art or design practice launches concepts in-the-making...These concepts....continue to invent" (Manning & Massumi, 2014, p. 89). Again, it is not about what the concepts *are* but what they *do*.

Performance fields heightened awareness. Will the audience notice the little explorations and staging of *difference* as an ontogenerative proposition? The making the polyvalent SELF a proposition. The dramaturgically constructed laying of the 'little things', the pulls of the minor;– The pink the cooperative antagonist (antagonistic cooperation) to my masculine tendencies, body holds a shapeshifting asymmetry, the 'duet', the intentional negotiation of embodied asymmetrical binaries of masculine and feminine, the drag king and the drag queen. Foregroundingbackgrounding shifts, but nothing...nothing is arbitrary in an ecology of worlding. Noticing and understanding concerns are secondary. The encounter with its provocative affective totality – the feltness, the textures.

11 Tavia Nyong'O's (2019) concept of antagonistic cooperation, borrowed from Ralph Ellison, highlights the complex and dynamic nature of social interaction. It recognizes that cooperation and conflict are not mutually exclusive and that individuals and groups can work together while still pursuing their own interests and goals. Antagonistic cooperation is a key feature of social exchange and cultural production, and it can create new forms of social relations and alliances (p. 37).

The embodied, asymmetrical, hick-up step amplifies the interval of difference, a site of potential to turn the inside out. The physical expression of the difference negotiated within. “The outside is not in juxtaposition to an inside: its coming in turns the inside out” (Manning & Massumi, 2014, p. 64). The difference in SELF is asymmetrical just as it is with OTHER, or in inclusive difference.

SELF or ‘m’ and OTHER grows in asymmetrical difference (versus hierarchy) that acknowledges the politic, the disparate power that can exist in a relational selfOTHER like in ‘mother’ and ‘child,’ with reciprocity. This politics is negotiated through intuition, instinct, creativity, improvisation, empathy and love-joy-gratitude activated by an *ethics of care*. Fundamentally an embodied, performative, and imaginative endeavor, it moves away from paradigms governed by morals and obligation toward a gesture of responsibility and respect as a voluntary act in response to an OTHER.

The conceptual proposition m/O and embodied Dubble D as thinking-doing propositionally lures toward RE/worlding, a performative gesture of co-composing dancing in the entanglement of difference. What emerged serves as an ontogenerative reciprocity between theory and practice, Dubble D and m/O, operationalize W-E-R-K, fielding conditions through an *ethics of care*, a performative and loving gesture of speculation and critique while also acting as an ontogenerative life force.

The experimental emergent process, Dubble Duch pulls lived experience into a mode of activity, the W-E-R-K of m/O setting the conditions for a certain kind affective work, to allow SELF to be affected but also affect. Allowing to need, care but also be held accountable to care. The proposed concept and practice of m/OTHER(-ing) as a thinking-doing drag-king/queen clown operationalizes difference, asymmetrically, obliquely and idiosyncratically, fielding conditions for a proposition, W-E-R-K, the werk of an ethics of care as a performative and loving gesture of speculation and critique while also acting as an ontogenerative life force. In a thinking-making, thinking-doing drag-clown, the concept of *m/OTHER-ing* and the *W-E-R-K* moves as a relational *ethics of care*.

Ok...let’s talk a bit about the W-E-R-K

At WERK

A move toward,

Werk but also werq...(exclamation): A complimentary exclamation of high praise. Can also be seen as “werk” or “werq.” YOU BETTER WORK! NOTE: This term originated in the Black gay community.

It has been appropriated by the larger LGBTQIA+ community and mainstream culture. (p. 321).

werk

1. v. A term meaning to "work your body."
2. v. To strut, especially on a runway.
3. v. To give an outstanding presentation.

i.e. "You betta werk bitch!" \_ - RuPaul

more later....



TIME FOR MORE PINK!

THRESHOLD OF TRANSFORMATION

SHAPE SHIFTING  
CUNT

CUNT-FABULATION

CUNT-TIME

WORLDING POSSIBILITY THROUGH A *PRIOR OTHER*

The self is only a threshold, a door, a becoming between two multiplicities.”  
(Deleuze & Guattari, 1987)

At the tender age of five a journey of **GENDER dysphoria, BODY dysmorphia** comes into expression. While taking a bath with my little brother Kevin, I asked my mother when I was going to grow a penis. That was 45 years ago and well of course that did not literally happen. Oh, AND I hated the color pink. Despised it. Coming to grips with never having the opportunity to castrate a phallus (oh Freud) softened with time and found its way into expression as a tomboy and then as a kiki as an adult. Being a tomboy was acceptable but not preferred. Being the eldest of five and having three brothers allowed a certain freedom to be boyish and hang with the boys. Also, as a jock since the age of five—female acrobatic body— enabled a kind of masculine corporeality. The genetic disposition of androgyny, tomboy modality and being an acrobat since five, the incongruencies of the inside and out felt pacified. BUT THEN the boobs, the blood, the boys, the babes and with it, a constant negotiation of incongruencies of sex, gender, and sexuality. A fledgling SELF-love deteriorated.

Until...

the modality of mothering came into being.

becoming a mother, 25 years ago

AND then

DRAGkingCLOWN + m/OTHER(-ing) + CUNTfab-ing in the PhD.

(parenthesis:

friend: What was the most valuable thing learned working on your PhD?

me: I learned how to love myself.

:end parenthesis)

In this idiosyncratic, unpredictable process of CUNTfabulating, Dubble D thinking-moving reciprocally with-and-through m/O, in relation to personal experience with mothering, LOVE emerges as an affective tonality in the fielding of becoming-m/OTHER. Becoming a mother is where SELF, I, first felt LOVE through an OTHER. BUT, also, encountered how an OTHER and its pure potentiality, fields LOVE at its most intense. Becoming a mother is where myself, SELF encountered the potentiality of LOVE through the LOVE from an OTHER, my child.

M=SELF= n

/ = infolding + unfolding = +

OTHER = 1

Becoming mother = n+1

The many become one and are increased by one.

LOVE

LOVE

LOVE

LOVE, when activated, SELF and OTHER as inseparable

Relation RE/worlding through LOVE.

Are you still with me?

Any confusion, questions?

Confusion is my norm.

As a symptom of learning, it triggers deeper thinking.

Inhale....Exhale,

Be a good sport and actually do it,

Inhale.... Exhale,

Please and thank you!

THE PINK BOX<sup>12</sup>

CONTRACTION

DIALATION

EFFACEMENT

LOVE IS CROWING

12 A box is a slang reference to woman's vagina.



**Sometimes you have INTERCESSORS. Sometimes you have CANCER.**  
**Sometimes you have BOTH-AND.**

"What is essential, are intercessors."

-Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations*, 1995

The big C. Some resonate with this ontological crisis through and with an intimate corporeal experience, a fleshy portal of empathy, having a proximity to cancer particularly those who have had a mastectomy. An invisible life-threatening, life altering monster living inside. A cut, an amputation, a tear necessary to continue living, no choice, shapes as an intercessor. "The intercessor is a complex singularity that activates a process, a force that acts as a differential within an ongoing movement of thought. The intercessor: the felt force that activates the threshold between thinking and feeling" (Manning & Massumi, 2014, p. 65). A female body shapeshift to having one tit and a 12-inch winking scar across the chest. A fissure in the fabric of a SELF, holding its many anarchic multiplicities. The scar, a crack, a threshold of becoming, the relay to a crack of possibility and potentiality.. To fall into the crack, to lean in, emanates a new kind of turning inside out. The intercessor brings into expression a corporeality, the physical SELF that surprisingly aligns more genuinely with the spiritual SELF. What lives in the crack? Liveness and the art of living. Dubble Duch needs the intercessor for expression and the intercessor cannot exist without Dubble Duch. Serving CUNT.

Cancer and its subsequent removal of a breast functioned as a kind of intercessory, a force that shapes thought in the making, research-creation. It enabled a thinking-making. "Thought gathers in the work. It is the event of the work's unfolding. Not in language, but in painting, on a canvas that seeks to activate a new way of seeing, a new effort at participation. The intercessor propels thought, gives it a place to land, across works" (Massumi, 2014, p. 65). The asymmetry of Dubble D emerged by way of a necessary edge, a cut, and a crack. Ontologically and existentially, it because a necessity to continue to live. At completion, what can and/or does this cut do? It opens opportunities for new ways of doing and thinking. / both separates and connects; it relational. As a force of form, it moves thought. A thinking-making emerged and unfolded with Dubble D furthering the conceptual development of the proposition m/O.

LAYERS OF PINK DRAG MOLTING

IN THE FABRIC OF A SINGULAR CORPOREAL EXPRESSION

ON ONE SIDE – A BREAST

ON THE *OTHER*- A PINK SCAR, A CRACK, AN EDGE

A SITE OF CREATIVE POSSIBILITY

INCOMPOSSIBILITY IN THE FLESH

## **CUNTfabulation**

Cunt<sup>13</sup>-

A synonym for vagina.

A derogatory slur typically directed at a woman.

Emphasizing extreme femininity from ballroom culture.

C.U.N.T.<sup>14</sup> –

(acronym): charisma, unique, nerve, talent

m/O continues the W-E-R-K with-and-through Dubble D, launching the invention of the concept and practice or technique, CUNTfabulation

<sup>13</sup> (Davis, 2021, p. 79)

<sup>14</sup> (RuPaul, n.d. )

DRAG STORY HOUR!

WITH A FULL PINK GLITTER BEARD

Or maybe just a few minutes, 'cause tick tock (or TicTok)



Once upon a time there was a scholar name, Tavia Nyong'O (2019), who wrote the book *Afro-fabulation: the queer drama of black life*, and Dubble Duch infold in a mutual interpenetrative process at the interstice of fabulation. It's a love story. Enamored and seduced by the processual eventing of afro-fabulation and promiscuously engaging with its interrelated conceptual propositions, CUNTfabulation, takes flight on the wings of love.

But seriously....JOY!

JOY!

JOY!

JOY!

Dubble Duch rightfully and unapologetically actuates as a fabulation, a CUNTfaulation, RE/worlding, expressing multiplicity through a schizoanalytic clown car of personality. Q, Dr. Dudu Brown, Dildo Dickens, Dirk Dongle, Dubble Duch and the many OTHERs make visible that which should never have been allowed to be visible. An activating as a gesture of lifeforce, the giving of SELF towards OTHER, always gesturing towards *LOVE-JOY-GRATITUDE* – offering a “vision of relationality—a *fabulationality*—in which another world is not only possible, yet it is virtually present” in all its multiplicities. When the world you need or want does not exist, you imagine it, you grow it, you care for it, your love it. RE/worlding its limitations, living the paradox of life and death, there is, NO CHOICE, to continue living (Nyong'O, 2019, p. 18).

As an immanent critique it opens up onto the future—the past performatively enacting a future in the present. Its CUNT-time; not time in the linear sense, but in space-time. But also it is what Henri Bergson refers to as duration<sup>15</sup>. CUNT-time creates a curvature in the space-time fabric that affects (but also can be affected). Time is not measured but felt conjuring the intuitive, spiritual that opens onto the possible.

Its plasticity shapeshifts with CUNT entanglement. CUNT relationally encounters from the oblique and angular as a cooperative antagonist<sup>16</sup> that moves otherwise; its lure pulls through portals of the flesh, cracks, fissures, folds and edges. It agitates, entangles, complexifies. CUNT is a threshold, a door to life from the womb, a continuous site of becoming. CUNTfabulation moves as lifeforce invoking ontogenerative planes of composition. CUNTfabulation travels as a technique for thinking-making against a politics of representation and a metaphysics of substance. As to the study of

<sup>15</sup> A concept coined by Henri Bergson in *Time and Free Will* (1889) pre-phenomenology refers to the qualitative forces of time versus the quantitative. Its focus on time explores how perception makes time felt and lived versus an abstract, external measurement.

<sup>16</sup> Refers to and modulates from Ralph Ellison's notion of antagonistic cooperation from *Shadow and Act* (1972) and *Going to the Territory* (1986) first discovered in *Afro-fabulation: the queer drama of black life* (Nyong'O, 2019)

performance and theory of performativity, DD clumsily CUNTfabulates prompting a remix of any naturalized notions of self or self-other. Doing the W-E-R-K durationally and performatively re/worlding a future in the present through a fielding of fabulationality of redress (Nyong'O, 2019, p. 21).

To be clear, the exploratory embodied proposition seeks not to re/produce the categorical divides of SELF-OTHER but to linger in the tension and intensity of its differential toward a mutually inclusive ontogenerative difference. Situated in a metaphysics of activity versus substance, the CUNT of CUNTfabulation re/orients from the exclusive binary of self/other toward a relational encounter of an inclusive binary of self-other, drawing from m/OTHER-ing in its re/birth processual nature. A practice of the social SELF-OTHER-ing (duetting) of thinking-moving embraces the ontogenerative power of difference.

SELF can never really know the para/ontological struggles of OTHER. However, lingering in the tension, the differential, walking the line of discomfort and legacy of exclusionary binaries, living across the paraontological, allows for the m/OTHER(ing)'s W-E-R-K. How might movements and conditions, required for the passage of the thresholds of privileged asymmetrical intensities and capacities, confront, embrace, hold and move toward transformative becomings and re/worldings?

m/OTHER-ing

W-E-R-K

CUNT-fabulating

LOVE

It is a swirling and slipping into the experimental movements and spills into m/OTHER-ing at W-E-R-K and CUNT-fabulating fielding LOVE-JOY-GRATITUDE. Artfulness as a practice that teeters on the cusp of it becoming that honors complex ways of collective knowing and are collective As an artful gesture to create, RE/worlding alongside the many modalities of OTHER, how might thinking-making and making-thinking with an array of knowledges, take shape as a mutually inclusive artful practice of ontogenerative relation? How might feltness express itself duetting in such a way? How might feltness steer its emergent fabulatory potential of a thinking-body to dislocate duet or coupling requiring consent of two-single and separate-beings towards moving with an ethics of care not as a single being, a relational being?

What if...

What if...

What if...

Too much to say and not enough time...

Wind it up!

DRAGGING AND PACKING, PAINTED IN PINK

THE KWEEN HAS ARRIVED

HEAD, SHOULDER, KNEES, TOES

NAILS, HAIR, HIP, HEEL

LEGS, FACE, EYES, LIPS

BEARD, KICKS, FUR, BANANA

DOOOWWWWN!

### **GIVING FACE:**

Time to GIVE FACE<sup>17</sup> but first a love-note to SELF...

*Let me you tell about yourself.*

*You are amazing.*

*You are phenomenal.*

*You pulled yourself out of shit that people thought would keep you down.*

*You rose like yeast.*

*You are gorgeous.*

*You are fabulous.*

*And every single time you look in the mirror.*

*That is what you should see.*

*You are great.*

<sup>17</sup> face/giving face: (idiom):an acknowledgement of beauty and fierceness. Often used in the phrase “giving face” (Davis, 2021, p. 111)



*So, allow yourself to be great.  
Baby you are here for a reason.  
You are here for a purpose.  
You are powerful.  
You are strong.  
BUT You gotta believe it.  
I believe in you.  
Believe in yourself.  
Now go out there and be great in their face!  
And let's always have a good day on purpose!*

**Let's have a KIKI<sup>18</sup>!**SERVE<sup>19</sup>, SELL<sup>20</sup> and SLAY<sup>21</sup>

STRUT

WERK

PLAY

POSE

HICCUP

STUMBLE

CHASSÉ

GOT MY LIFE!

*HIIIIII!**It's me, Dubble Duch –**Coming in hot with my neurotypical alphabet soup**USA, DMD, MDD, ADHD, ASD, almost PhD.**Out of time SOOOO**Let's get to W-E-R-K<sup>22</sup>!****Thank you.***

18 kiki: (noun): A social gathering of like-minded friends. A kiki is marked by intimate, fun-filled conversations and hot gossip. An onomatopoeia for the sound of laughter. NOTE: a term originating in ballroom but now more widely used in LGBTQIA+ community and mainstream culture. ALSO, a Scissor Sister's song (2012).

19 serving (Davis, 2021, p. 274).

20 selling (Davis, 2021, p. 273).

21 slay (Davis, 2021, p. 281).

22 W-E-R-K launches from work/werk/werq: (exclamation): A complimentary exclamation of high praise. Can also be seen as "werk" or "werq." YOU BETTER WORK! NOTE: This term originated in the Black gay community. It has been appropriated by the larger LGBTQIA+ community and mainstream culture. (Davis, 2021, p. 321).



***Merci.  
Gracias.  
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