

MRPJ54: SPATIAL PRACTICE

Interior Cover  
ABOLITIONIST TOOLKIT  
Critical Resistance

12–13  
THANK YOU FOR YOUR FLEXIBILITY  
Alan Ruiz

14–15  
INVESTMENTS AND EXPANSIONS

16–17  
THE BED AND THE DRILL HALL  
Lluís Alexandre Casanovas Blanco

18–19  
DISSECTING THE PARK AVENUE ARMORY SOCIAL SYSTEM

20–21  
THERE IS A BOUNTY IN WHAT IS LOST  
Julie Tolentino and Sadia Shirazi

22–23  
FALLEN ON HARD TIMES:  
POPE.L, PRECARITY, AND NEW YORK IN THE 1970s  
Kaegan Sparks

24–25  
THE BOWERY IN TWO INADEQUATE DESCRIPTIVE SYSTEMS,  
1974–1975  
Martha Rosler

26–27  
STOLEN ARTICLE: CULTURE AS CONSUMPTION  
Suzanne Stephens

28–29  
SCOTCH TAPE URBANISM  
Joshua Lubin-Levy

30, 59  
GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONIES

60–61  
INSTITUTION BUILDING: ABRONS ARTS CENTER 1975–2017  
Lo-Yi Chan and Tim Hartung

62–63  
DANCE AND REAL ESTATE IN LOS ANGELES:  
RECONSIDERING GLORYA KAUFMAN’S DANCE PHILANTHROPY  
Olive McKeon

64–65  
LIVENESS, MOVEMENT, ARCHITECTURE  
Alice Sheppard

66–67  
MEMORY WORK: EXCAVATING THE ROOM  
Biba Bell

68–69  
BECOMING UNDONE  
Erik Thurmond

70–71  
POPS  
BRANDT : HAFERD

72–73  
WHEN BIRDS REFUSED TO FLY: A DIALOGUE  
V. Mitch McEwen and Olivier Tarpaga

74–75  
PIVOT AND SLIDE  
Sarah Oppenheimer

76–77  
GIVING A BODY TO AN IMAGE  
Jimmy Robert in Conversation with Mario Gooden

78–79  
UNCONTAINABLE  
Dominic Cullinan

MRPJ54: PERFORMANCE JOURNAL

Interior Cover  
ARE PRISONS OBSOLETE: ABOLITIONIST ALTERNATIVES  
Angela Davis

34–35  
THE DANCE UNION’S TOWN HALL FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION:  
DISMANTLING WHITE SUPREMACY WITHIN DANCE INSTITUTIONS  
J. Bouey and Melanie Greene

36–37  
NANCY STARK SMITH: A TRIBUTE  
Lisa Nelson

38–39  
MULTIPLICITY OF PRACTICES  
Diana Crum

40–41  
dunked  
Kristopher K.Q. Pourzal

42–43  
FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY: STAGING THE VERBATIM  
FBI INTERROGATION OF WHISTLEBLOWER REALITY WINNER  
Jess Barbagallo

44–45  
RUMORS  
Simon Asencio interviewed by John Hoobyar

46–47  
OF CIRCLES AND CYCLES: REMEMBERING, RITUAL,  
AND RHYTHM IN BLACK QUEER FEMALE DANCES  
Layla Zami

48–49  
UNBEER SONATA  
Cristiane Bouger

50–51  
IT IS NECESSARY TO LOOK AT WHAT IS VITAL  
Daria Faïn interviewed by Marjana Krajač

52–53  
GERMAINE ACOGNY AND HELMUT VOGT  
Interviewed by André M. Zachery

54–55  
CONVERSATIONS  
Milka Djordjevich and Tim Reid

56–57  
DARK UTTERING  
Melanie Maar

**OF CIRCLES AND CYCLES: REMEMBERING, RITUAL,  
AND RHYTHM IN BLACK QUEER FEMALE DANCES**  
Layla Zami

On a full moon night, I scroll mentally through my memories of the past year. This full moon marks the first day of the year 2018 in the solar calendar. Some scientists call it a supermoon, while some media refer to it by the Native American appellation “wolf moon.” Images, sounds, feelings of 2017 come up to the surface of my mind, and these various textures overlap into a moving memory assemblage. I remember how another New Year started a few months ago, on September 20, 2017, Rosh Hashana, year 5778 in the lunar-based Jewish calendar. I think about my upbringing in a Black and Jewish household that celebrated two New Year’s Eves a year and wonder how this experience developed my affinity for the multidimensionality of time. I zoom into the ten days preceding Rosh Hashana, a narrow time frame within which I attended four dance events in Lower Manhattan. Experiencing such different and differentiated performances successively almost felt like journeying through a cycle, witnessing Black Queer female embodied perspectives on life, death, survival, mourning, visibility, and spirituality.

The physical settings that housed the performances varied greatly. The ample sanctuary of Judson Church hosted the Movement Research fall season opening on September 18, featuring works by Oxana Chi, Feng Jiang, Melanie Maar, Zac Mosely, and Nia & Ness. Outside, the waiting line curled around the building, reaching up to the backstage entrance on the corner. When the doors opened, a rush of moving bodies, enthusiastic voices, and immanent emotions flew in and formed a half-circle around the wide-open space. The Movement Research at the Judson Church opening was a cycle in itself, punctuated by Black Queer female performers, with Oxana Chi opening the event and Nia & Ness closing the night. This circular dynamic seemed to contain the different energies of the massive audience, which included artists and curators, religious ministers, tourists, local students, and scholars.

Ten days earlier, I had attended Taja Lindley’s *The Bag Lady Manifesta*, an “immersive performance” co-directed with Tanisha Christie at the legendary queer performance laboratory Dixon Place. Here, the waiting space felt narrow, yet also friendly, with several familiar faces and many artists greeting each other. Each audience member was handed a black plastic bag in place of a ticket and had to slowly descend into and pass through an audiovisual installation to enter the theater where the stage, partly filled with chairs, turned each spectator into a potential object of gaze.

In between these two events, I attended a new iteration (and the New York premiere) of MBDance’s *dying and dying and dying* at Gibney Dance. Entering this venue, located a few steps away from the African Burial Ground Monument, felt—that night—like entering a floating bubble made of gentle music, dim light and otherworldly intimacy. Indeed, the audience was invited to participate in a pre-show ritual. Before choosing seats, we were invited to choose one of the many personal objects dispersed across the stage, to pick it up and set it aside. Thus, the entering audience progressively cleared the stage, more or less consciously leaving enough space for Maria Bauman and her crew to move freely.

What do these four performances share? A powerful and passionate relation to movement, and the fact that they were choreographed, conceived, and performed by artists identifying and openly working as Black Queer women. I am aware that some artists expressed doubts around the term “queer,” for instance Maria Bauman (in a conversation with editor Jaime Shearn Coan) and Oxana Chi (in conversations with me), especially because of its appropriation by mainstream culture. At the time of writing, the five artists discussed here may have other words to define their identity. For instance, Nia & Ness clearly self-identify as “lesbian” in their performances. Yet, I hold on to the term “queer” as an umbrella under which many bodies may stand, to name ways of life that clearly, openly and boldly, question and challenge the norms of heteronormative patriarchy in the intimate, public, and publicly intimate spheres. Here I also think of Natasha Tinsley Omise’eke’s understanding of LGBT\* identities beyond the realm of sexuality, and her definition

of “queer” as a “praxis of resistance [...] marking disruption against the violence of normative order.”<sup>1</sup> In her analysis of Caribbean literature, the author unearths queer “fluid-embodied imaginary, historical-contemporary spaces.”<sup>2</sup> I contend that these spaces are also created on stage, where and when the Black Queer dancing bodies themselves may well be, or become, those spaces.<sup>3</sup>

My proximity to the artists and works discussed here varies greatly.<sup>4</sup> It stretches from the new encounter with Nia & Ness, who I had met a few weeks earlier at their evening-length *Run* premiere, to the close, long-term relationship to my life and work partner Oxana Chi. As a Resident Artist (music, poetry, theater, film) and Scholar with Oxana Chi’s dance company since 2010, I have had many opportunities to be an observant participant in her work.

I was on stage with her when she premiered excerpts of *Psyche* in Berlin (at the HAU theater) and in New York (at Dixon Place).<sup>5</sup> What an excitement to witness the piece again, this time from the audience’s viewpoint, holding a video camera in one hand and the program notes in the other hand. The notes describe “a choreographic exploration of body memory,” in which Oxana Chi “searches for the affinities between Psyche and Soul,” and “dives deeper and deeper into her inner self, to discover her own humanity.” Gently, the soulful sound of Sylvestre Soleil’s didgeridoo fills the church. Solar energy carries the flow of Oxana Chi’s movement, occasionally disrupted by pauses, which are sometimes restful, sometimes explosive. They often bring about a change of rhythm, almost as if the solo dancer would enter a different space-time, in which her motion is much slower than the sound. In a seamless blend of Afro-diasporic storytelling tradition and German *Ausdruckstanz*, the dancer at times alternates between mellow jumps reminiscent of Trisha Brown, with one leg bent at a ninety-degree angle, the arms reaching to the sides, and a propelling jump which transforms the body into an X with sharp lines. *Psyche*’s dancescapes are earthy, yet the ground is a base to reach up from. In her red-and-black costume, filled with lines which could be blood vessels, energy channels or geological paths, the dancer seems to embody an Afrofuturist twist on Pearl Primus’s words: “The earth is a magic dancer. She lifts her arms and mountains rise. She rolls down gently into the valleys. She hurls herself into space to form the jutting cliffs. In her is birth and death, the From and the Into of all physical forms. The earth is a magic dancer.”<sup>6</sup>

In *Psyche*, the dancer conjures telluric magic from the dance floor, channels it up through her twisting, struggling, jumping body, and releases it out into an energizing, empowering dance. I see movements of suffocation and salvation expanding into a svelte dance in which the soul becomes corporeally perceptible. I smile when I witness associate pastor Micah Busey thanking Oxana Chi after the show for the highly spiritual energy that she set in motion in the church. Through the activation of her body memory, she seems to simultaneously embody and transcend Black Queer womanhood, making her (and potentially her audience) experience a sense of transformation of the past, liberation of the present, and connection to the future.

In a different aesthetic but kindred spirit, the group work *dying and dying and dying* possesses the rhythm of a long river, traversing changing environments. The title is already a rhythmic move in itself, and to say it is almost to speak out a raga-like beat. Both the piece and its maker Maria Bauman seem at times like a little stream emerging in the mountains. At other times, they carry the energy of a rushing ocean swirling from the United States to the African continent. The cast includes the graceful Courtney Cook, Valerie Ifill, and Audrey Hailes, complemented by the powerful spoken performance of dancer–actor Alicia Raquel (Maria Bauman’s wife). The piece plays with the synchronicity and overlapping of the performers’ bodies and voices in a gentle, uplifting and sometimes disturbing manner. The dancers also use their sublime voices to name their ancestors and to sing their praises. With the use of an evocative soundtrack featuring Alice Coltrane, the piece connects not only to the familial lineage of the dancers, but also to the legacy of African American dance and music cultures. At one point, they perform a sumptuous, rewritten version of the spiritual “Run, Mary, Run,” singing “the right to a natural death” and the need to “run” or “fly” to “get to the other side,” a feat which they also enact through dance. Maria Bauman describes the work as “an evening-length meditation on various kinds of endings.”<sup>7</sup> The piece transposes in movement her will to “juxtapose” the realm of death—which she also associates

with rest and pause, as in the Yoga shavasana pose, and restlessness, or the pressure of capitalist Western socialization—which she calls a “U.S. factory-mentality.”

The inflexibility of time in a Western linear sense is also addressed and critiqued in the solo performance *The Bag Lady Manifesta*—which is part of a larger interdisciplinary body of work by Taja Lindley. By challenging the notion that past, present and future are distinct from each other, the performance is in tune with Michelle M. Wright’s *Physics of Blackness*, in which she advocates to shift from a “hierarchical or vertical” to a more “horizontal” analysis when we examine Black identities, and to account for “relationships” in the “now of the present moment.”<sup>8</sup> In Lindley’s work, the “now” pierces through the performance space-time when a clock suddenly starts ticking, putting an end to the initially celebratory soundtrack and atmosphere. The harsh, repetitive rhythm stretches over several minutes, and accompanies the performer in her physical transition towards becoming “the Bag Lady,” as she changes from a white burlesque outfit to a costume constituted of black plastic bags. Some members of the audience sit on chairs placed across the stage, and there Lindley takes a seat and waits, at times patient, at times nervous, staring afar. She challenges me to reflect upon my own position as a spectator who sits on the audience’s side and waits for the performer to “act”. Later she will also ask the audience to speak out loud and repeat the names of many Black and Brown people killed in the United States. But now she raises her arms up, and abruptly freezes with her hands in the air—as the clock momentarily stops. I think of the “stop and search,” or what Sara Ahmed calls a “technology of racism” in *Queer Phenomenology*: “How does it feel to be stopped? Being stopped is not only stressful, but also makes the ‘body’ itself the ‘site’ of social stress.”<sup>9</sup>

Ahmed’s point suggests kinetic vulnerability for bodies of color in the public space. Lindley and other Black Queer women reclaim their bodies on stage, embodying not only stories of oppression, but also bringing to a corporeal life counter-hegemonic feelings of bodily agency, power, and resilience.

Nia & Ness thematize and perform what it feels like for Black Queer women to experience racism-sexism “again, and again, and again, and again...” as says Ness White in *blind spot*. This cyclic statement echoes, in my ears, with MBDance’s emphasis on the “and” in the title *dying and dying and dying*. In this Black Queer women world, the “and” is togetherness, yet it also rhymes a liminal space of endless remembering and ritual. Nia & Ness’s intimate relationship to each other is simultaneously the theme and the structuring feature of their work. Although the artists have a soundtrack running in the background, it is clear that the rhythm of the piece—and of the movement—comes from the relationship between Ness’s intonation and Nia’s flexions. Nia’s dance is fierce, and she moves fast and intensely, raising her foot above her head, or briefly squatting down. Her agile moves pop through the air where they meet her lover’s cascade of spoken words.

Interestingly, Black/PoC female couple collaborations play a role for all artists discussed here. I already mentioned my daily personal and professional involvement with Oxana Chi’s dance. Maria Bauman featured her life partner Alicia Raquel. And after I attended Taja Lindley’s show at Dixon Place, it was her partner who sold me the book that documents the performance creation. This may suggest that for these Black Queer women dancers, the partner is not only a significant other, but also a strong element of the work—and the self.

In a way, all the pieces discussed here deal with the “social stress” encountered regularly by Black Queer female bodies, and its rhythmic patterns in their lives. They also embody the recurrence of their resilience strategies, their beauty, and assert without a doubt that Black Queer women are “Strong, powerful, wise!” as affirmed repeatedly by Nia & Ness at the end of *blind spot*. This moment felt incredibly intense, even more so because upon invitation, almost everyone in the audience started repeating the magic triad. I have witnessed the duo in other venues and contexts ever since and have always been mesmerized by the feel of individual and communal empowerment across boundaries of race. In this interactive aspect of the performance, Nia & Ness’s perspective briefly becomes a “norm” that streams and vibrates through the space. In *The Bag Lady Manifesta*, Taja Lindley motivates the audience to repeat that “we grow gardens out of graves,” and I sense how it becomes a mantra. I also think of the heteronormative protest song “Where Have All the Flowers Gone?” also about cycles. This new imagery is queer and emphasizes the collective “we” as a subject of growth. Lindley’s plastic



costume actually reminded me of a traditional healer I met in Douala, Cameroon, except that hers was made completely out of beige straw. The black plastic bags serve Lindley's intent of "drawing parallels between discarded materials and the violent treatment of Black people in the United States."<sup>10</sup> Here I see parallels with Maria Bauman's critique of the commodification of bodies, time and life. I also find a fascinating kinship between the individual dance flow of Maria Bauman and Oxana Chi. (Chi is Afro-German and has been based in New York since 2015.) Despite diverse styles, they share similar preoccupations and a strong expressive quality of embodied emotions.

The four performances correspond to what I call perforMemory, which I use both as a noun and a verb to conceptualize the intersections between shaping performance practices and informing memory discourses.<sup>11</sup> For Black Queer women, to perforMemory often leads to defying Western linear dichotomies between life and death, past and present, subject and object, observer and participant, grief and joy. The dances of perforMemory allow the "wake" to be a space-time to celebrate life and invite the audience to find their own way through their own spheres of remembering, rhythm, and ritual.<sup>12</sup>

As I conclude the first draft of this article, I come back to lunar cycles. One month after the "wolf moon" that launched 2018, the Dog sign spearheads the approaching Chinese New Year scheduled for new moon on February 16. I walk through Chinatown in Manhattan, and see people selling dog items in all shapes and sizes. I watch people recycling tremendous amounts of bags, which may well end up in China, knowing that plastic trash is the sixth-largest U.S. export to China.<sup>13</sup> I find bodies of all races and genders populating the urban landscape, sometimes sharing a narrow strip of space with the disposable plastic bags. In a country where not every human being actually has a right to housing, I feel how urgent and precious it is to experience the diverse ways in which artists inhabit their bodies as a dancing, malleable home. These gifted gatekeepers have the ability to arise in their audiences a sense of hope. Their performances invite us to value "the individual artist, their creative process and their vital role within society" as much as their collaborative endeavors.<sup>14</sup> These dancers not only claim, but physically embody their right to be and to live as humans, and affirm, with each cycle of opening and closing a performance, the realities and possibilities of Black Queer female circles of life.

This article was written and initially scheduled to be published by Movement Research Performance Journal during 2018.

Dr. Layla Zami is an interdisciplinary artist-scholar-teacher. She is Visiting Assistant Professor at Pratt Institute and a Resident Artist with Oxana Chi Dance Art. She is Co-Curator of Dance at the International Human Rights Art Festival.

- 1 Natasha Tinsley Omise'eke, "Black Atlantic, Queer Atlantic: Queer Imaginings of the Middle Passage," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, vol. 14, no. 2-3, 2008, 199.
- 2 Ibid, 194.
- 3 See also Layla Zami, "Dancing the Past in the Present Tense - Queer Afropean Presence in Oxana Chi's Dancescapes," *Lambda Nordica*, vol. Postcolonial Queer Europe, no. 2-3, 2017, pp. 126-50.
- 4 My proximity to the artists and works varies greatly. I am a Resident Artist with Oxana Chi Dance Art, and tour with my wife Oxana Chi as a musician/poet/scholar/filmmaker since 2010. I met Maria Bauman at the Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance in 2015 when she had a split bill with Oxana and I, and have followed and appreciated her work ever since. I attended MBDance's premiere of *dying and dying and dying* in Philadelphia in February 2017. In the case of Nia & Ness, I had seen the work a few weeks earlier as part of their *Run* premiere. Taja Lindley's work was new to me.
- 5 For visual impressions of the piece, see Oxana Chi's website, <http://oxanachi.de/productions/psyche.html>

- 6 Pearl Primus, "African Dance," *African Dance: An Artistic, Historical and Philosophical Inquiry*, edited by Kariamu Welsh Asante, (Trenton / Asmara: Africa World Press, 2002) p. 7.
- 7 Maria Bauman, *dying and dying and dying*, Gibney Dance DTI Video, <https://vimeo.com/231402496> (Accessed on 2018/02/08).
- 8 Michelle M. Wright, *Physics of Blackness: Beyond the Middle Passage Epistemology*, University of Minnesota Press, 2015, 20-21.
- 9 Ahmed, Sara. *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006,) p. 140.
- 10 <https://www.tajalindley.com/thebagladymanifesta> (Accessed on 2018/02/08).
- 11 Layla Zami, *Contemporary PerforMemory: Moving Through Diasporic Dancescapes in the 21st Century*, (Berlin: Humboldt-Universitaet Press, 2018).
- 12 Christina Sharpe, *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016) p. 35.
- 13 Kimiko de Freytas-Tamura. "Plastics Pile Up as China Refuses to Take the West's Recycling," *The New York Times*, November 1, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/11/world/china-recyclables-ban.html> (Accessed on 2018/02/08).
- 14 Movement Research, Mission Statement. <https://movementresearch.org/about> (Accessed on 2018/02/08).



Oxana Chi in *Psyche*, performed at "Back Queer Night" at Dixon Place, New York, 2016. Photograph by Kearra Gopee.



INSTITUTION BUILDING: ABRONS ARTS CENTER 1975–2017  
Lo-Yi Chan and Tim Hartung

Following the Vietnam War, and amidst a bankrupt New York City, miraculously the Abrons Arts for Living Center (as it was originally called) was constructed and opened as a part of the Henry Street Settlement in 1975 to house its various arts programs. New York Times architectural critic Ada Louise Huxtable celebrated the building as an “urban triumph,” perhaps referring to the way its design ran counter to the top-down model of most modernist planning.

I first met Lo-Yi Chan—the architect who designed Abrons Arts Center—in April 2017 while I was an artist-in-residence, along with fellow artists-in-residence Kristen Jensen and Xavi Acarín. We were interested in learning more about the building we’d been spending so much time in, which has served the New York arts and lower east side community for more than 45 years. I was immediately taken by Lo-Yi’s kindness and generosity, but also by the rich history of the building and its inception.

On my second meeting with Lo-Yi, I had the pleasure of joining him as he gave a tour of Abrons to the Bloomingdale Aging in Place Group, a senior community to which he belongs. After the tour, I began to think about the idea of “aging in place” as a curious proposition. What is architecture’s fate if not to age in place? As theorist Michel de Certeau has said in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, “New York has never learned the art of growing old by playing on all its pasts. Its present invests itself, from hour to hour, in the act of throwing away its previous accomplishments and challenging the future.”

Following these meetings, I facilitated a more public discussion between Lo-Yi and the architectural team designing Abrons’s next stage of renovations. The following is an excerpt of that longer conversation, featuring myself, Lo-Yi Chan and Timothy Hartung of Ennead Architects, held on August 10, 2017, at Abrons Arts Center. My hope, then as now, was to commemorate not only the Abrons Arts Center on the eve of its renovation, but its architect as well.

—Alan Ruiz

**Lo-Yi Chan:** I can’t see with this light, but when I can, I see a bunch of people who weren’t born yet when this building was built. So, I’d like to start with a little bit of history. When I say Henry Street Settlement people say, “Oh wow, you’re helping immigrants settle.” Well that’s true, but that’s not how settlements started. The settlement program began in the late 19th century in England, which was going through an enormous period of industrialization in cities. There were pockets of poverty, with people working in some awful conditions, and some of the wealthy middle class felt that they should move in and settle in these poverty areas and in doing so they would improve the health, welfare, culture. I mean, you think about it today, it’s so quaint, it’s moralistic, but that’s the way they thought and, of course, the Americans picked it up. In 1893, a wonderful lady named Lillian Wald established Henry Street Settlement. She was one of the people who settled into the lower east side and created the settlement house, and originally it was really intended to help to bring in children’s education and cultural activities. Then, in 1915 she created the Playhouse next door.

Now let me go to the issue of 1975. Those of us who were in school, back in those days, remember very strongly the whole focus of our education was on the cities, and the whole idea was, “Save the cities by design!” Almost. Because of the interstate system, the white middle class moved to the suburbs, and many cities were just dying. Our focus, as young architects, was that we wanted to serve the cities. In fact, when I was in grad school, there were three programs: city planning, architecture and landscape architecture. What we thought as students was, “We’re gonna do all three,” and the institution gave it a name: “urban design.” Urban design, we don’t hear about it much these days, but it was the keyword back in the 60s. What is urban design? It’s as Jane Jacobs proposed, about bringing the city back to the people.

Now, how does this relate to this building? One of the important things in urban design is public, open space. If you look around on the lower east side, there’s a tremendous amount of open space, scattered around with lawns and trees, but what the public has access to are the streets and a few playgrounds. With Abrons, I felt there needed to be a coherent, open space that the public was invited to use. What I wanted to do was take various pieces of the building and shape them in such a way that there was an open space that was compelling. It pleases me to think about a snow storm some years back when children were sledding down those steps. There is also a farmers market on those steps. So people were using the space.

The second thing I want to talk about has to do with the balance between education and performance, and what I call escalating aspirations. When I was starting to work on this project, I didn’t know that much about Henry Street, but I found instructive one particular story about the dancer, Alwin Nikolais. As an up-and-coming artist, Nikolais had come to the Henry Street Playhouse and, over about 20 years, developed his program, Nikolais Dance Company, which became internationally known. Now he started here because of an educational project at the Playhouse. It eventually became Nikolais Dance Program, and what happened was the educational function shifted to a presentational function and the presentational escalated to the point where it was international. And what happened was Henry Street kicked Alwin Nikolais out. You take someone with international reputation and say, “No, you’re not doing what our mission needs.” I’m bringing that up because what we are seeing—in the plans today for the next step for this building as this area becomes gentrified, I think it’s a cautionary tale. I’ve been around a long time, so I’ve seen these progressions, and I’m hoping I won’t see the same thing again.

**Alan Ruiz:** Thank you for that great introduction, Lo-Yi. Picking up on your last point, something you’ve articulated in a previous conversation that I appreciate is the difference between architecture as art versus architecture as a social function. For instance, you’ve distinguished yourself from architects like Richard Meier who views architecture as an art form. I would love for you

to unpack that statement because I think it’s an important distinction, especially as it relates to the Abrons Art Center.

**LYC:** Here, Tim and I have something in common. Because James Polshek and I are two of five architects who met five times over the course of maybe four or five years at the request, or suggestion, of a famous man named Philip Johnson, one of the founders of the Museum of Modern Art. At the time, he was a connoisseur, not yet an architect, but he was thinking about becoming an architect. He got five of us together to talk about our work so he could learn what we were doing. We had these wonderful soirees where we would go to some fancy east side apartment where there would be a butler with white gloves serving us martinis, and we would argue about the social purpose of architecture. It quickly divided us into two camps: James and I were in one camp and the other three were of the belief that architecture was an art, period. In fact, Richard Meier once said to me—and I think back to this every time I’d see him—“Social purpose is the death of architecture.” But our firm, Prentice & Chan, Ohlhausen, as well as Polcheck (now Ennead), has stuck with our shared belief that architecture is a balance. Of course you need both social purpose and artistic excellence.

**Tim Hartung:** I think that ties back into urban design in terms of where some of us came from, actually, and some people ignored that because they were in the same schools.

**LYC:** I thought back on my design and wondered whether I could have been more like Richard Meier. Could I have done that? And I thought, maybe, but no. My position is too strongly etched in. I look back on the social purpose of some past projects and I feel very good about it.

**AR:** Speaking of this idea of social purpose, I’m curious if the original construction of Abrons Art Center in 1975 received any federal funding. How was the institution supported?

**LYC:** There’s an interesting history here. The lower east side was populated by mostly European Jewish immigrants working in the garment industry. The people who started those industries became quite wealthy, and they were the ones who funded Henry Street Settlement. Even as families moved to Long Island or Westchester, they sent lots of money back, and that’s what funded this place. And also that’s caused a bit of a problem. Like when I said about how Alwin Nikolais was finally forced out because he was too good, there was a music school here, too—still is, upstairs—and it got so good that these garment industry merchants who lived in fancy houses on Long Island, they would send their children here on the weekends to take music lessons.

**AR:** Tim, how do you approach a project like the renovation of Abrons, particularly one with such a rich history and also one so specific to its context and community?

**TH:** It was a real honor to be asked to come in and preserve and at the same time, renew, what I consider, a mid-nineteenth-century wonder. There’s a lot of talk about mid-century building and a lot of them have real muscle and bravado. Abrons, however, is a quieter building that sits here in the neighborhood and serves the community in a way that honors its original aspirations. When we were brought on board, there was a different program director that was driving things at that time, that was interested in the issue of Abrons’ place in the community and New York City at large as a presenter. There was a desire to make the Abrons Center more of a threshold, or a place to celebrate the arts, than has happened in the past. So our mandate was: how to make it more of a beacon for the community and for the city at large, how to put it more on the map, how to enhance the public spaces to allow more public events like this discussion tonight, how to prepare the spaces for more people than had originally been planned for. Our approach to it was not to change things, but to create a system of layers, if you will, that could enhance all these existing aspects. It was about looking at how it was originally designed, although I must admit we never talked to Lo-Yi originally. We were primarily following the direction of the leaders of Henry Street in terms of what they hoped this renewal would do.

**AR:** Your comment on what one has come to expect of mid-century architecture is interesting, raising perhaps, the question of social and symbolic dimensions of the building. Modernist buildings are not often landmarked, but are commonly demolished instead. The Playhouse, which Abrons is connected to, is a landmarked building, yet Abrons is not. Do either of you have any thoughts about historic preservation and the kind of architecture that is preserved and isn’t? It seems that there are certain histories and value structures implicitly tied to this process.

**LYC:** I’ve often wondered whether this building should be landmarked. Yet, because it’s an art center and art changes so fast, I think it’s better that it be allowed to change. And it’s happening. Looking back at my practice, I’ve seen a lot of my buildings change dramatically, so I’ve gotten used to that idea.

**AR:** What is that like to see?

**LYC:** I think it’s good, because it means it’s still alive. These buildings are to be used, and to be used for different generations. One of the most difficult buildings I ever designed, which I poured my heart into, was the Connecticut Hospice, the first hospice in America. It worked for about twenty years, but by the end of the twenty years, it had fulfilled its function. It’s now a nunnery because it had a chapel, so things change. I see a question in the audience.

**AUDIENCE 1:** I don’t know if anyone can answer this question: Why is the building being renovated and not restored? What is the objective?

**TH:** I can respond in terms of the task we were presented with by the organization, which was to make it more public-friendly, more open, and to enhance the presence of the building in the community—not just the community locally, but the community in New York City. I think going back to the leadership of Abrons would be maybe more direct in answering your questions, but that was the mission we were presented with.

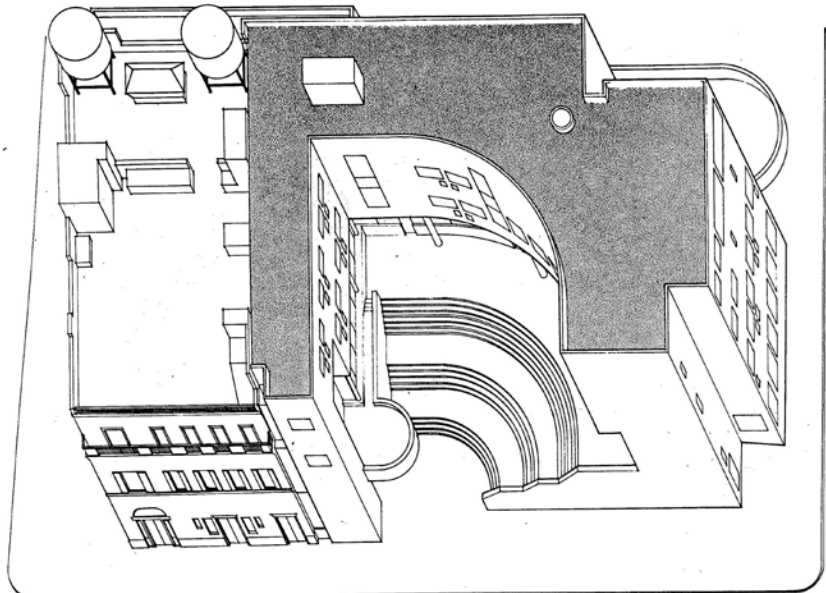
**AUDIENCE 2:** We are very familiar with Abrons, being that we are inhabitants of the neighborhood, and our children use it. The space that you are opening up, this very large window, is currently an art studio. Where is that program being moved to?

**Tim:** In terms of that space that is on the second floor, that will become a two-story gallery space. There is a new two-story space being created on the





Abrons Arts for Living Center, Prentice & Chan, Ohlhausen. 1975. New York, New York.



ROOF LEVEL

Axonometric Drawing. Abrons Arts for Living Center. Prentice & Chan, Ohlhausen.

second and part of the third floor adjacent to that new open staircase, but it's not the same size, so I think there are plans for a shifting program within the space, but I couldn't answer that directly.

**LYC:** Originally that space was artists' studios. We put the artists right out in the open because we felt that that was the purpose, to showcase these people and their work. For the residents of the lower east side, for the kids coming for their music lessons and so forth. That, of course, meant that the artists were very public, and it's very hard to make art when you're that public. Over time, it didn't work, but that was the original idea.

**AR:** As an artist-in-residence, I can tell you I very much liked having my privacy, so I'm grateful that it was moved! But I understand the impetus of trying to bring artistic process to the public, as it were. However, it does raise some questions about transparency and how effective that actually is in bringing in the public, because it presumes that some of these things are not based on symbolic privileges. Perhaps there's no real answer, but can either of you speculate as to why there is a turn toward the use of transparency through glass repeatedly in contemporary cultural spaces?

**TH:** I think transparency is used to entice people to participate more. You showed the Brooklyn Museum earlier as a reference, which originally had a grand staircase like the Metropolitan Museum. It was torn off in the 50s, and what was left was a little mouse hole at the bottom against this huge blank wall. The message to the community is, "You must be very privileged to come into this space." So, now with the invention of modern materials, glass being a primary one, one can do a lot more in terms of exposing what's inside the building to entice people to come in and share in what's going on. I can say on all our cultural projects, that's a big push right now. Institutions want people to be engaged. They don't want to guess what's going on in those spaces. They want to share what's going on in those spaces.

**AUDIENCE 3:** Were steps being taken during the design process to ensure that the new design still matched the aesthetics of the neighborhood and the community? It was asked earlier: What if this new design might increase real estate in a somewhat already gentrified neighborhood?

**TH:** It's a hard question to answer. I think there is a fine line between how much do you enhance something and make it attractive so that it becomes more iconic within the neighborhood, as opposed to being a quiet little something that no one knows about. But I would hope what we are doing here will be drawing in the people who are already here and have been here for a long time. This building is meant for people who live here and trying to bring a different kind of people in.

**LYC:** Let me try to answer this question, too; I appreciate what you just asked. I think there is a fairly substantial change here, and the change is program-driven. The shift is from arts for living centers (as primarily an educational program) to the Abrons Center (with a greater emphasis on presenting the arts). In order to do that, this renovation changes the whole entry process. The steps in the original design were not the entrance to the building. This initially worked because you came in as a student, a teacher, and the public presentation was mostly focused on the Playhouse. The black box theater was a fairly small function of the program; it was mainly a school. Now there is much more emphasis on presentation, so when you have a production in the black box theater, you're going to have a reception in front, and so on. It makes sense to relocate the entrance up the steps. That is to say, I accept that the program has changed. I'm also suggesting that the program may change back someday. That's the life of the building.

Timothy Hartung is a Founding Partner and Management Partner at Ennead Architects.

Lo-Yi Chan is an architect and campus planner known for his careful balance of social responsibility and aesthetic excellence, including the original Abrons Arts Center which opened in 1975 under the title of the Abrons Arts for Living Center.



Abolitionist Alternatives

ARE PRISONS OBSOLETE?

Angela Y. Davis

An Open Media Book

SEVEN STORIES PRESS  
New York

“Forget about reform, it’s time to talk about abolishing jails and prisons in American society . . . Still—abolition? Where do you put the prisoners? The ‘criminals’? What’s the alternative? First, having no alternative at all would create less crime than the present criminal training centers do. Second, the only full alternative is building the kind of society that does not need prisons: A decent redistribution of power and income so as to put out the hidden fire of burning envy that now flames up in crimes of property—both burglary by the poor and embezzlement by the affluent. And a decent sense of community that can support, reintegrate and truly rehabilitate those who suddenly become filled with fury or despair, and that can face them not as objects—‘criminals’—but as people who have committed illegal acts, as have almost all of us.”

—Arthur Waskow, Institute for Policy Studies<sup>129</sup>

If jails and prisons are to be abolished, then what will replace them? This is the puzzling question that often interrupts further consideration of the prospects for abolition. Why should it be so difficult to imagine alternatives to our current system of incarceration? There are a number of reasons why we tend to balk at the idea that it may be possible to eventually create an entirely different—and perhaps more egalitarian—system of justice. First of all, we think of the

racism within the criminal justice system and further the abolitionist agenda of decarceration. Thus, with respect to the project of challenging the role played by the so-called War on Drugs in bringing huge numbers of people of color into the prison system, proposals to decriminalize drug use should be linked to the development of a constellation of free, community-based programs accessible to all people who wish to tackle their drug problems. This is not to suggest that all people who use drugs—or that only people who use illicit drugs—need such help. However, anyone, regardless of economic status, who wishes to conquer drug addiction should be able to enter treatment programs.

Such institutions are, indeed, available to affluent communities. The most well known program is the Betty Ford Center, which, according to its Web site, “accepts patients dependent on alcohol and other mood altering chemicals. Treatment services are open to all men and women eighteen years of age and older regardless of race, creed, sex, national origin, religion or sources of payment for care.”<sup>130</sup> However, the cost for the first six days is \$1,175 per day, and after that \$525 per day.<sup>131</sup> If a person requires thirty days of treatment, the cost would amount to \$19,000, almost twice the annual salary of a person working a minimum-wage job.

Poor people deserve to have access to effective, voluntary drug treatment programs. Like the Betty Ford program, their operation should not be under the auspices of the criminal justice system. As at the Ford Center, family members also should be permitted to participate. But unlike the Betty Ford program, they should be free of charge. For such programs to count as “abolitionist alternatives,” they would not be linked—unlike existing programs, to which individuals are “sentenced”—to imprisonment as a last resort.

The campaign to decriminalize drug use—from marijua-

current system, with its exaggerated dependence on imprisonment, as an unconditional standard and thus have great difficulty envisioning any other way of dealing with the more than two million people who are currently being held in the country’s jails, prisons, youth facilities, and immigration detention centers. Ironically, even the anti-death penalty campaign tends to rely on the assumption that life imprisonment is the most rational alternative to capital punishment. As important as it may be to abolish the death penalty, we should be conscious of the way the contemporary campaign against capital punishment has a propensity to recapitulate the very historical patterns that led to the emergence of the prison as the dominant form of punishment. The death penalty has coexisted with the prison, though imprisonment was supposed to serve as an alternative to corporal and capital punishment. This is a major dichotomy. A critical engagement with this dichotomy would involve taking seriously the possibility of linking the goal of death penalty abolitionism with strategies for prison abolition.

It is true that if we focus myopically on the existing system—and perhaps this is the problem that leads to the assumption that imprisonment is the only alternative to death—it is very hard to imagine a structurally similar system capable of handling such a vast population of lawbreakers. If, however, we shift our attention from the prison, perceived as an isolated institution, to the set of relationships that comprise the prison industrial complex, it may be easier to think about alternatives. In other words, a more complicated framework may yield more options than if we simply attempt to discover a single substitute for the prison system. The first step, then, would be to let go of the desire to discover one single alternative system of punishment that would occupy the same footprint as the prison system.

na to heroin—is international in scope and has led countries such as the Netherlands to revise their laws, legalizing personal use of such drugs as marijuana and hashish. The Netherlands also has a history of legalized sex work, another area in which there has been extensive campaigning for decriminalization. In the cases of drugs and sex work, decriminalization would simply require repeal of all those laws that penalize individuals who use drugs and who work in the sex industry. The decriminalization of alcohol use serves as a historical example. In both these cases, decriminalization would advance the abolitionist strategy of decarceration—that is, the consistent reduction in the numbers of people who are sent to prison—with the ultimate aim of dismantling the prison system as the dominant mode of punishment. A further challenge for abolitionists is to identify other behaviors that might be appropriately decriminalized as preliminary steps toward abolition.

One obvious and very urgent aspect of the work of decriminalization is associated with the defense of immigrants’ rights. The growing numbers of immigrants—especially since the attacks on September 11, 2001—who are incarcerated in immigrant detention centers, as well as in jails and prisons, can be halted by dismantling the processes that punish people for their failure to enter this country without documents. Current campaigns that call for the decriminalization of undocumented immigrants are making important contributions to the overall struggle against the prison industrial complex and are challenging the expansive reach of racism and male dominance. When women from countries in the southern region are imprisoned because they have entered this country to escape sexual violence, instead of being granted refugee status, this reinforces the generalized tendency to punish people who are persecuted in

Since the 1980s, the prison system has become increasingly ensconced in the economic, political and ideological life of the United States and the transnational trafficking in U.S. commodities, culture, and ideas. Thus, the prison industrial complex is much more than the sum of all the jails and prisons in this country. It is a set of symbiotic relationships among correctional communities, transnational corporations, media conglomerates, guards’ unions, and legislative and court agendas. If it is true that the contemporary meaning of punishment is fashioned through these relationships, then the most effective abolitionist strategies will contest these relationships and propose alternatives that pull them apart. What, then, would it mean to imagine a system in which punishment is not allowed to become the source of corporate profit? How can we imagine a society in which race and class are not primary determinants of punishment? Or one in which punishment itself is no longer the central concern in the making of justice?

An abolitionist approach that seeks to answer questions such as these would require us to imagine a constellation of alternative strategies and institutions, with the ultimate aim of removing the prison from the social and ideological landscapes of our society. In other words, we would not be looking for prisonlike substitutes for the prison, such as house arrest safeguarded by electronic surveillance bracelets. Rather, positing decarceration as our overarching strategy, we would try to envision a continuum of alternatives to imprisonment—demilitarization of schools, revitalization of education at all levels, a health system that provides free physical and mental care to all, and a justice system based on reparation and reconciliation rather than retribution and vengeance.

The creation of new institutions that lay claim to the

their intimate lives as a direct consequence of pandemics of violence that continue to be legitimized by ideological and legal structures.

Within the United States, the “battered women’s syndrome” legal defense reflects an attempt to argue that a woman who kills an abusive spouse should not be convicted of murder. This defense has been abundantly criticized, both by detractors and proponents of feminism; the former do not want to recognize the pervasiveness and dangers of intimate violence against women and the latter challenge the idea that the legitimacy of this defense resides in the assertion that those who kill their batterers are not responsible for their actions. The point feminist movements attempt to make—regardless of their specific positions on battered women’s syndrome—is that violence against women is a pervasive and complicated social problem that cannot be solved by imprisoning women who fight back against their abusers. Thus, a vast range of alternative strategies of minimizing violence against women—within intimate relationships and within relationships to the state—should be the focus of our concern.

The alternatives toward which I have gestured thus far—and this is only a small selection of examples, which can also include job and living wage programs, alternatives to the disestablished welfare program, community-based recreation, and many more—are associated both directly and indirectly with the existing system of criminal justice. But, however mediated their relation might be to the current system of jails and prisons, these alternatives are attempting to reverse the impact of the prison industrial complex on our world. As they contest racism and other networks of social domination, their implementation will certainly advance the abolitionist agenda of decarceration.

space now occupied by the prison can eventually start to crowd out the prison so that it would inhabit increasingly smaller areas of our social and psychic landscape. Schools can therefore be seen as the most powerful alternative to jails and prisons. Unless the current structures of violence are eliminated from schools in impoverished communities of color—including the presence of armed security guards and police—and unless schools become places that encourage the joy of learning, these schools will remain the major conduits to prisons. The alternative would be to transform schools into vehicles for decarceration. Within the health care system, it is important to emphasize the current scarcity of institutions available to poor people who suffer severe mental and emotional illnesses. There are currently more people with mental and emotional disorders in jails and prisons than in mental institutions. This call for new facilities designed to assist poor people should not be taken as an appeal to reinstitute the old system of mental institutions, which were—and in many cases still are—as repressive as the prisons. It is simply to suggest that the racial and class disparities in care available to the affluent and the deprived need to be eradicated, thus creating another vehicle for decarceration.

To reiterate, rather than try to imagine one single alternative to the existing system of incarceration, we might envision an array of alternatives that will require radical transformations of many aspects of our society. Alternatives that fail to address racism, male dominance, homophobia, class bias, and other structures of domination will not, in the final analysis, lead to decarceration and will not advance the goal of abolition.

It is within this context that it makes sense to consider the decriminalization of drug use as a significant component of a larger strategy to simultaneously oppose structures of



Creating agendas of decarceration and broadly casting the net of alternatives helps us to do the ideological work of pulling apart the conceptual link between crime and punishment. This more nuanced understanding of the social role of the punishment system requires us to give up our usual way of thinking about punishment as an inevitable consequence of crime. We would recognize that “punishment” does not follow from “crime” in the neat and logical sequence offered by discourses that insist on the justice of imprisonment, but rather punishment—primarily through imprisonment (and sometimes death)—is linked to the agendas of politicians, the profit drive of corporations, and media representations of crime. Imprisonment is associated with the racialization of those most likely to be punished. It is associated with their class and, as we have seen, gender structures the punishment system as well. If we insist that abolitionist alternatives trouble these relationships, that they strive to disarticulate crime and punishment, race and punishment, class and punishment, and gender and punishment, then our focus must not rest only on the prison system as an isolated institution but must also be directed at all the social relations that support the permanence of the prison.

An attempt to create a new conceptual terrain for imagining alternatives to imprisonment involves the ideological work of questioning why “criminals” have been constituted as a class and, indeed, a class of human beings undeserving of the civil and human rights accorded to others. Radical criminologists have long pointed out that the category “law-breakers” is far greater than the category of individuals who are deemed criminals since, many point out, almost all of us have broken the law at one time or another. Even President Bill Clinton admitted that he had smoked marijuana at one time, insisting, though, that he did not inhale. However,

acknowledged disparities in the intensity of police surveillance—as indicated by the present-day currency of the term “racial profiling” which ought to cover far more territory than “driving while black or brown”—account in part for racial and class-based disparities in arrest and imprisonment rates. Thus, if we are willing to take seriously the consequences of a racist and class-biased justice system, we will reach the conclusion that enormous numbers of people are in prison simply because they are, for example, black, Chicano, Vietnamese, Native American or poor, regardless of their ethnic background. They are sent to prison, not so much because of the crimes they may have indeed committed, but largely because their communities have been criminalized. Thus, programs for decriminalization will not only have to address specific activities that have been criminalized—such as drug use and sex work—but also criminalized populations and communities.

It is against the backdrop of these more broadly conceived abolitionist alternatives that it makes sense to take up the question of radical transformations within the existing justice system. Thus, aside from minimizing, through various strategies, the kinds of behaviors that will bring people into contact with the police and justice systems, there is the question of how to treat those who assault the rights and bodies of others. Many organizations and individuals both in the United States and other countries offer alternative modes of making justice. In limited instances, some governments have attempted to implement alternatives that range from conflict resolution to restorative or reparative justice. Such scholars as Herman Bianchi have suggested that crime needs to be defined in terms of tort and, instead of criminal law, should be reparative law. In his words, “[The lawbreaker] is thus no longer an evil-minded man or woman, but simply a debtor, a

liable person whose human duty is to take responsibility for his or her acts, and to assume the duty of repair.”<sup>132</sup>

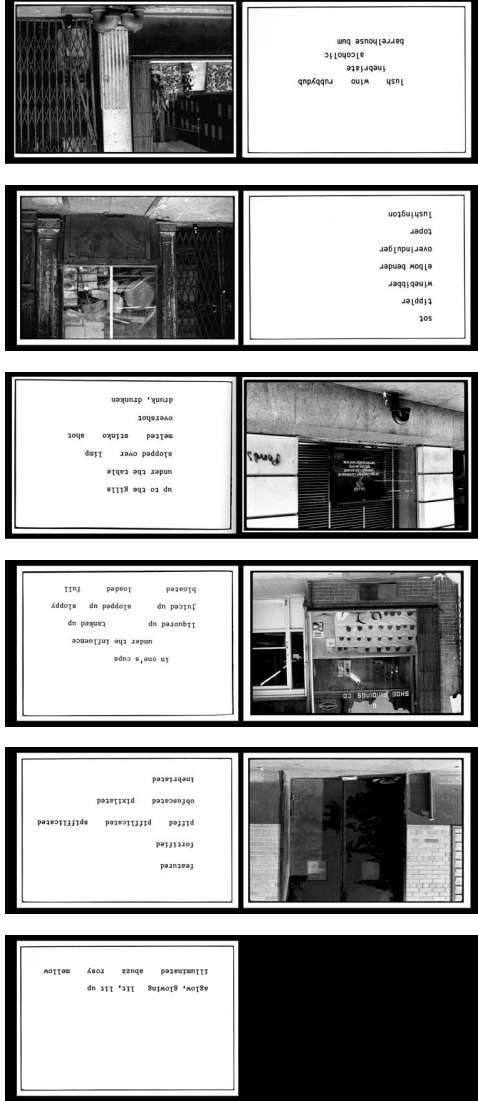
There is a growing body of literature on reshaping systems of justice around strategies of reparation, rather than retribution, as well as a growing body of experiential evidence of the advantages of these approaches to justice and of the democratic possibilities they promise. Instead of rehearsing the numerous debates that have emerged over the last decades—including the most persistent question, “What will happen to the murderers and rapists?”—I will conclude with a story of one of the most dramatic successes of these experiments in reconciliation. I refer to the case of Amy Biehl, the white Fulbright scholar from Newport Beach, California, who was killed by young South African men in Guguletu, a black township in Capetown, South Africa.

In 1993, when South Africa was on the cusp of its transition, Amy Biehl was devoting a significant amount of her time as a foreign student to the work of rebuilding South Africa. Nelson Mandela had been freed in 1990, but had not yet been elected president. On August 25, Biehl was driving several black friends to their home in Guguletu when a crowd shouting antiwhite slogans confronted her, and some of them stoned and stabbed her to death. Four of the men participating in the attack were convicted of her murder and sentenced to eighteen years in prison. In 1997, Linda and Peter Biehl—Amy’s mother and father—decided to support the amnesty petition the men presented to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The four apologized to the Biehls and were released in July 1998. Two of them—Easy Nofemela and Ntobeko Peni—later met with the Biehls, who, despite much pressure to the contrary, agreed to see them.<sup>133</sup> According to Nofemela, he wanted to say more about his own sorrow for killing their daughter than what

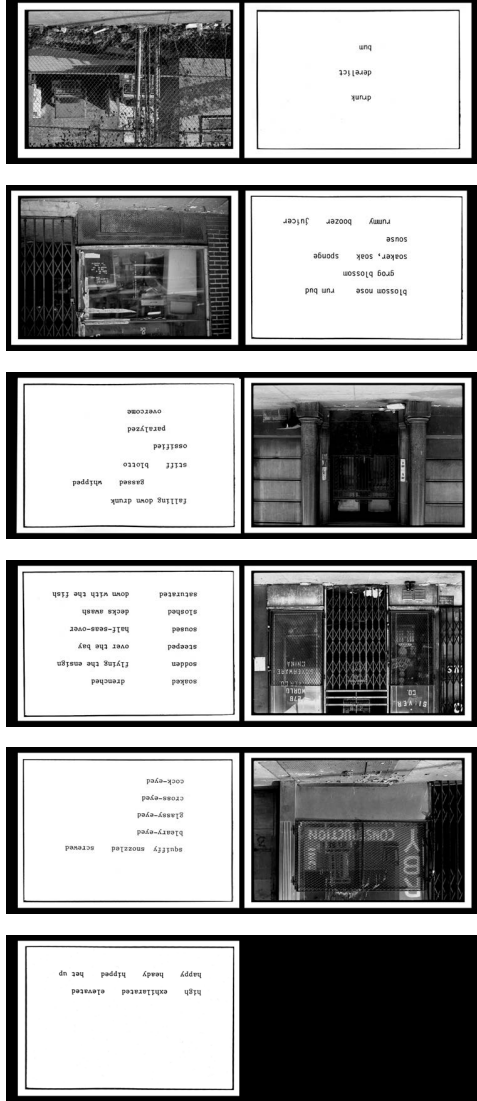
had been possible during Truth and Reconciliation hearings. “I know you lost a person you love,” he says he told them during that meeting. “I want you to forgive me and take me as your child.”<sup>134</sup>

The Biehls, who had established the Amy Biehl Foundation in the aftermath of their daughter’s death, asked Nofemela and Peni to work at the Guguletu branch of the foundation. Nofemela became an instructor in an after-school sports program and Peni an administrator. In June 2002, they accompanied Linda Biehl to New York, where they all spoke before the American Family Therapy Academy on reconciliation and restorative justice. In a *Boston Globe* interview, Linda Biehl, when asked how she now feels about the men who killed her daughter, said, “I have a lot of love for them.” After Peter Biehl died in 2002, she bought two plots of land for them in memory of her husband so that Nofemela and Peni can build their own homes.<sup>135</sup> A few days after the September 11 attacks, the Biehls had been asked to speak at a synagogue in their community. According to Peter Biehl, “We tried to explain that sometimes it pays to shut up and listen to what other people have to say, to ask: ‘Why do these terrible things happen?’ instead of simply reacting.”<sup>136</sup>





THE BOWERLY IN TWO INADEQUATE DESCRIPTIVE SYSTEMS, 1974-1975  
Martha Rosler



45 black-and-white photographs and 3 black panels mounted on 24 black mat boards  
Dimensions variable  
Photographs, 8 x 10 in. (20.3 x 25.4 cm) each  
Courtesy of the artist and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York  
Martha Rosler works in video, photography, text, installation, and performance.  
Her work focuses on the public sphere, exploring issues from everyday life  
and the media to architecture and the built environment, especially as they  
affect women.



Movement Research  
Performance Journal  
#54, June 2020

Published twice annually  
By Movement Research, Inc.  
150 First Avenue  
New York, NY 10009  
212.598.0551  
www.movementresearch.org  
info@movementresearch.org

MRPJ 54 EDITORIAL TEAM

Editor-in-Chief: Moriah Evans  
Managing Editor: John Arthur Peetz  
Issue Editor: Alan Ruiz  
Assistant Editor: Emily Bartsch  
Graphic Design: Yotam Hadar & Sean Yendrys  
Copy Editor: John Dodig  
Interns: Juli Brandano, Natalia Flores Zalles, Nadia Hannan  
Contributing Editors: Matthew Lyons, Niall Jones, Rennie McDougall, Jaime Shearn Coan  
Ad Layout: Kate Patchett  
Special Thanks: Lauren Bakst, Ayano Elson, John Hoobyar, Matthew Lyons, Lydia Okrent, Rosy Simas, Ben Pryor, Benjamin Akio Kimitch

MOVEMENT RESEARCH STAFF

Executive Director: Barbara Bryan  
Managing Director: Anna Adams Stark  
Programming Director: Amanda Loulaki  
Programs & Events Manager: Martita Abril  
Operations Manager: Kristel Faye Baldoz  
Operations Associate: Julianne Rencher  
Finance Associate: Amanda Stambrosky  
Interim Development Manager: Ursula Eagly  
Development Associate: Njeri Rutherford  
Media & Communications Manager: Mary Anne Bodnar  
Media & Archive Associate: Caroline Ciferno  
Publications Associate: Kate Patchett  
Director of International Initiatives: Maríya Wethers  
Dance Makers in the Schools Program Director: Diana Crum  
Artists of Color Council Coordinator: Jessica Angima  
Movement Research at the Judson Church Coordinator: Martita Abril  
Open Performance Coordinator: Donna Carnow  
Interns: Mac Allen, Dot Armstrong, Mariah Busk, Janet Cesarotti, Cat Eng, Catherine Fisher, Sterling Gates, Adi Helman, Eris Jaldin III, Juwon Jun, Maddie Katz, Emily Kessler, Jessie McLaughlin, Cianci Kalid Melo-Carrillo, Ixchel Mendez, Makenna Pearlman-Bantillo, Nikole Pittman, Elliot Reed, Mercedes Searer, Harry Shunyao Zhang, Vicky Spachou, Ashley Tillman, Gabriel G. Torres, Cy X, Harry Shunyao Zhang

MR/PUBLISHING

Performance Journal: Moriah Evans, John Arthur Peetz, and Emily Bartsch  
Critical Correspondence: Leslie Cuyjet and Lydia Adler Okrent

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Barbara Bryan, Kevin Beasley, Yanira Castro, Adrienne Edwards, Stephen Facey, Boo Froebel, Ishmael Houston-Jones, André Lepecki, Sarah Michelson, Kay Takeda, Edisa Weeks

ARTISTS OF COLOR COUNCIL

Jessica Angima, Oluwadamilare Ayorinde, Ahimsa Timoteo Bodhrán, Bryanna Bradley, IV Castellanos, Remi Harris, Monica Nyenkan, Julianne Rencher

ARTIST ADVISORY COUNCIL

Laurie Berg, Marjani Forté-Saunders, Danielle Goldman, Joe Levasseur, Mariangela Lopez, Melanie Maar, Jennifer Miller, Jill Sigman, Kathy Westwater

ADVISORY BOARD

Wendell Beavers, David Dorfman, Simone Forti, Cynthia Hedstrom, Bill T. Jones, Daniel Lepkoff, Mary Overlie, Steve Paxton, Yvonne Rainer, Jim Staley

The *Movement Research Performance Journal* is deeply grateful for the visionary support from our LEGACY PARTNERS:

Artforum  
Artists Space  
Center for the Art of Performance UCLA  
Danspace Project  
The Kitchen  
Lower Manhattan Cultural Council  
Department of Media and Performance MoMA  
Walker Art Center

Very special thanks to Joel Wachs and The Andy Warhol Foundation for their commitment to art practice and for providing crucial timely support.

ABOUT MOVEMENT RESEARCH

Movement Research is one of the world’s leading laboratories for the investigation of dance and movement-based forms. Valuing the individual artist, their creative process, and their vital role within society, Movement Research is dedicated to the creation and implementation of free and low-cost programs that nurture and instigate discourse and experimentation. Movement Research strives to reflect the cultural, political, and economic diversity of its moving community, including artists and audiences alike.

Movement Research accomplishes its mission through a range of programs including ongoing classes and workshops taught by artist educators and innovators; creative residencies offered for choreographers and movement-based artists; festivals bringing together leaders in the field; and publications and public events providing artists with forums for discourse on a broad range of issues. For more information, please visit [www.movementresearch.org](http://www.movementresearch.org).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Movement Research gratefully acknowledges public support from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council; City Council Member Carlina Rivera; Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer’s Manhattan Community Award Program; Materials for the Arts (a program of NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, NYC Department of Sanitation, and NYC Department of Education); The New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; and the National Endowment for the Arts (a federal agency).

Movement Research gratefully acknowledges the generous contributions of private support from The Blanchette Hooker Rockefeller Fund; Dance/NYC’s New York City Dance Rehearsal Space Subsidy Program, made possible by The Andrew M. Mellon Foundation; Davis/Dauray Family Fund; Harkness Foundation for Dance; Howard Gilman Foundation; James E. Robison Foundation; Jerome Foundation; Marta Heflin Foundation; Mertz Gilmore Foundation; New York Community Trust; NYU Community Fund; The Scherman Foundation’s Katharine S. and Axel G. Rosin Fund; Sustainable Arts Foundation; Trust for Mutual Understanding; from MRX partners Konstnärsnämnden/The Swedish Arts Grants Committee and the Seoul Dance Center and from all of the individual donors and dear Friends of Movement Research, who contribute financial support, labor, and love.

Movement Research extends profound gratitude to Kathy Halbreich, Sharon Ullman, and The Robert Rauschenberg Foundation for their catalytic support of our new home. Movement Research also warmly recognizes the thoughtful contributions to our Capital Campaign from the Bessmer National Gift Fund, The Hyde & Watson Foundation, the Mertz Gilmore Foundation, all of the contributors to our Indiegogo campaign, and the many incredibly generous individual donors, who have made it possible for Movement Research to settle into our new home, where we continue to be a foundation for experimental and investigative dance and movement-based forms.

Thanks always to the clergy and staff of Judson Church, including Donna Schaper, Micah Bucey, André Daughtry, Jeanne Travis, and Zac Mosely. Judson continues to be a beacon for free spirits in the arts and politics and a leader among progressive faith communities in the city and nation for over 100 years. Enormous gratitude to Frances Alenikoff (1920–2012), founder of Eden’s Expressway, and to her daughter Francesca Rheannon and family, for their continuing belief in the mission of Movement Research and for keeping alive Frances’ spirited example of what lifelong artistry is. Special thanks to Center for Performance Research, Danspace Project, Gibney and Mount Tremper Arts for their ongoing partnerships.

SUBSCRIBE

Receive the *MRPJ* in the Mail!  
Distribute the *MRPJ* to your Community!

The *Movement Research Performance Journal* is available for domestic and international subscriptions for individuals as well as non-profit organizations and educational institutions. We also offer back issue orders and bulk orders.

Individual subscription rates:  
USA: 2-issue: \$20 / 4-issue: \$36  
Canada: 2-issue: \$26 / 4-issue: \$48  
Int’l: 2-issue: \$40 / 4-issue: \$78  
Institutional subscription rates:  
USA: 2-issue: \$55 / 4-issue: \$95  
Canada: 2-issue: \$62 / 4-issue: \$109  
Int’l: 2-issue: \$71 / 4-issue: \$126  
Back issue and bulk order pricing available upon request.

For more information or to subscribe online visit [www.movementresearch.org/performance\\_journal/subscriptions](http://www.movementresearch.org/performance_journal/subscriptions) or mail a check to: Movement Research, 150 First Ave, New York, NY 10009

CONTRIBUTE

Movement Research, Inc. is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization. Tax deductible donations are greatly appreciated and can be sent to Movement Research, 150 First Ave, New York, NY 10009 or donate online at [www.movementresearch.org](http://www.movementresearch.org)

The *Movement Research Performance Journal* is made possible through the generous support of *MRPJ* donors, advertisers and subscribers. To advertise in the *MRPJ*, email Kate Patchett at [katepatchett@movementresearch.org](mailto:katepatchett@movementresearch.org)

Upcoming Performance Journals seeking dance and performance-related topics and guest co-editors for future issues. Stay tuned for details, or contact: [editor@movementresearch.org](mailto:editor@movementresearch.org)

To contact Journal Contributors, please contact the Movement Research office or email [editor@movementresearch.org](mailto:editor@movementresearch.org)

COVER PHOTOGRAPHS

Cover photo (p.1/88): Whitney Museum of American Art. June 8, 2020.  
Photograph by Alan Ruiz.  
Cover photo (p.31/58): New York Theatre Workshop. June 18, 2020.  
Photograph by John Arthur Peetz.