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Affective Intentionalities: Practising Performance with Roland Barthes's *Camera Lucida*

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Abstract

This thesis forms the complementary writing for my practice-as-research project "Affective Intentionalities: Practising Performance with Roland Barthes's *Camera Lucida*". Working with Barthes's 1980 book about photography, the project goes beyond an application of Barthes's ideas to creatively respond to *Camera Lucida* through performance. The project approaches this through the following research questions: What strategies might be useful for responding to *Camera Lucida* through performance? What new insights does this contribute to theatre and performance studies? What methodological contributions does this project make to the ways that writing and performance can be thought together in a practice-as-research context?

This thesis, provides a critical context for the project by reviewing writing on Barthes from media theory, comparative literature, art history and theatre studies; it critically reflects on three performances made over the course of the PhD project: *Involuntary Memory* (2015), *Kairos* (2016), and *After Camera Lucida* (2017); and it re-presents photographic documentation and audience comments in a way that self-reflexively stages them in relation to the practical work. This complementary writing gestures towards the ways that the performances explored different inflections of performance time, the ways that the live body captured a tension between semiotic meaning and materiality and the relationships between the form of the performances and their ability to produce affect.

These findings contribute to the overarching argument that a process of iterative creative response to *Camera Lucida* has allowed an exploration of dramaturgies of the body, time, affect and theatricality that open up the possibility of critically affective and radically compassionate relations between performance works and their audiences.

As such, this project will be of interest to theatre and performance researchers, scholars of Barthes, and performance practitioners who are interested in the relationships between affect and meaning, temporality, performance and photography, practice and theory.

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For two women in my family

Joanna Mary Wilson and Poppy Joanna Wilson-Gore

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Abbreviations

CC – La chambre claire
CE – Critical Essays
CL – Camera Lucida
ES – Empire of Signs
IMT – Image Music Text
LD – A Lover's Discourse
M – Mythologies
MD – Mourning Diary
N – The Neutral
PN – The Preparation of the Novel
PT – The Pleasure of the Text
RB – Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes
RF – The Responsibility of Forms
SZ – S/Z

Introduction

Falling into Photography: Why Roland Barthes's Camera Lucida*?*

It was in 2012, while developing a trilogy of performances about falling, that I was first introduced to Roland Barthes's last book *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*.[1] What initially struck me about this little book about photography was Barthes's exploration of the emotional impact of images through the autobiographical reflections on the death of his mother and his search to recognise her 'essence' in a pile of old photographs. As I read the book for the first time, I felt like Barthes was articulating the pain I felt when looking at pictures of my own mother, who died when I was 14.

I was also interested in Barthes's concept of the *punctum*—the emotionally bruising, affective detail of a photograph that breaks through the field of signification to prick or wound the viewer. At the time I was making *Death Jump*, a devised solo performance mapping and responding to a series of dangerous jumps over the last hundred years, and I was interested in exploring the visceral qualities of the live performing body through exhaustive movement, staged acts of falling, and nudity.[2] Although initially I found Barthes's *punctum* useful for what it contributed to my thinking on photographic images of falling, there seemed to be a productive crossover in thinking of the ways that the concept of the *punctum* might also help to understand moments in performance where live bodies are affectively bruising.

Following *Death Jump* I was keen to engage more directly with Barthes's melancholic reflections in *Camera Lucida* and so as part of the same trilogy, I developed a performance lecture about images of falling bodies that I titled *The Punctum*, after Barthes concept. The performance weaved together an introduction to Barthes's photographic theory, a series of live staged falls, and a photograph of my mother to stand in for Barthes's absent Winter Garden Photograph (Figure 1).[3] I was pleased with the resulting piece of work but felt that the lecture performance format relied too

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[1] Barthes's book was first published in 1980 in the original French version as *La Chambre Claire: Note sur la photographie*.
[2] A trailer for the performance can be viewed at: https://vimeo.com/96322486
[3] A video version of this piece that I made with video artist Kim Beveridge can be viewed at: https://vimeo.com/99376365

heavily on explanations of theoretical concepts rather than attempts to embody or explore them through practical doing.

These initial encounters with Barthes also led to a more focused search for writing on his book in theatre and performance scholarship. Of course, *Camera Lucida* is referenced in performance books that deal specifically with photography such as Peggy Phelan's *Unmarked* (1994), Rebecca Schneider's *Performing Remains* (2011), Dominic Johnson's *Theatre & The Visual* (2012), and Joel Anderson's *Theatre & Photography* (2015). However, I was also interested in work that adopted Barthes's concept of the *punctum* as a strategy for analysing affect in the experience of watching live theatre and performance (such as Bottoms 1999 & 2007; Bleeker 2008; Duggan 2012). For these authors, the *punctum*'s effects in performance seem to occur when the 'reality' of live bodies draw attention to their material presence in a way that breaks the field of representation. I felt that there was sometimes something missing in the above examples, however—as if these acts of applying Barthes's term to performance lost something in the process of naming.

Despite the increasing interest in Barthes's book in the field of theatre and performance studies, I was also surprised at the lack of research in the field that explored *Camera Lucida* from a practitioner's perspective, working with Barthes from within the medium of performance.[4] Given that the theatrical event is often defined as an encounter between bodies—and a fascination with such encounters is something that continually recurs in Barthes's late work—it seemed appropriate to return to *Camera Lucida* through an embodied process of devising performance. Through foregrounding and reflecting on the performing body in my practice I have been able to explore a constellation of ideas that resonate between *Camera Lucida* and my performances and include considerations of presence and absence, sensuality, the ecstatic body, gesture, stillness and movement, vulnerability, the pose, neutrality, and pensiveness.

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[4] An interesting example of this in photography practice is Esther Teichmann's practice-based PhD "Falling into Photography: On Loss Desire and the Photographic" (2011), in which Teichmann's photographic works are deeply influenced by, and imbued with, the *punctum*'s affects. Also worthy of mention in relation to performance is Dickie Beau's response to *Camera Lucida* at the Barbican (see Beau 2014) and Berlin-based artist Lars Hering's work *Henriette Barthes: In Reference To* (2015)— for which Hering interviewed international Barthes experts asking them to describe their imagined version of the Winter Garden Photograph.

Figure 1 - The Punctum *(2013) GENERATORProjects, Dundee*.

If the live body seems an appropriate site to explore and extend these aspects of *Camera Lucida* then this is supported by a small section from Hans-Thies Lehmann's original German version of *Postdramatic Theatre* (that did not make it into the abridged English version). Lehmann applies the concept of Barthes's *punctum* to the body's physicality in performance, writing that "postdramatic theatre leads the audience towards the *punctum*: the opaque visibility of the body, its unconceptual, maybe trivial particularity that one cannot name, the idiosyncratic grace of someone's walk, gestures, the way they move their hands, the proportions of their body, the rhythm of their movements, their face" (Lehmann 1999, 368-369).[5] And yet, as Timothy Scheie argues in his excellent book on Barthes and theatre, there is an important distinction between the figurative and absent bodies in Barthes's writing on photography and the stubborn corporeality of the live performer's presence that "unsettles [Barthes's] thought" so much that he gives up writing about live performance (Scheie 2006, 64). Putting the body back into Barthes, then, through performance responses to *Camera Lucida*, is a most apt methodology to explore these ideas from within an embodied practice and to reflect on them in writing in relation to theatre and performance studies.

Dis-locating the punctum, *responding to Barthes*

Initially, I planned to approach Barthes's book by attempting to directly adapt the *punctum* as a compositional tool for exploring affectivity in performance. What became apparent during the research process, however, was the very impossibility of such an approach. While the *punctum*'s formal characteristics can be mapped to an extent in Barthes's work—through the poignant detail, the erotic charge, the temporal structures of the photograph—his descriptions of the *punctum* emphasise its unnameable and unlocatable qualities through a series of slippery definitions and contradictions. Any attempt to fix the *punctum*'s meanings by explicitly locating it in theatre and performance practices therefore appears at odds with Barthes's project in *Camera Lucida*: to retain the *punctum*'s affective force by resisting a scholarly desire to fix its meaning, instead focussing on aspects of its shifting nature, its latency, and its status outside the rational codes of language and culture. As Barthes writes in his reflections on the *punctum*, "what I can name cannot really prick me" (*CL*, 51).

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[5] Translation by Cara Berger.

What became a more productive approach over the course of my PhD project was an associative method of creative response to Barthes's book. As such, this project shifted from an attempt to explore the *punctum*, as a compositional tool and theoretical concept, to working with *Camera Lucida* as a potentially generative guide or implicit set of instructions for making performance. As a result, this thesis unavoidably offers readings of *Camera Lucida*, reflects on the *punctum*, on Barthes's writing and his thoughts on photography but only insofar as these reflections have been necessary in a critically engaged process of creative response. The main focus of this project has been *Camera Lucida* as a starting point for devising performance.

I have conceptualised this process as one of practising *with Camera Lucida*, where 'with' suggests more than merely applying Barthes's ideas to performance but a thinking and practising *in proximity to* Barthes that seeks to extend his ideas on bodies, on absence and presence, affect, time, loss and the performative and theatrical aspects of images from within a performance practice. Specifically, the project explores this inquiry through the following research questions: What strategies might be useful for responding to *Camera Lucida* through performance? What new insights does this contribute to theatre and performance studies (specifically regarding the thinking and practising of bodies, time, affect and theatricality)? What methodological contributions does this project make to the ways that writing and performance can be thought together in a practice-as-research context?

Why my body? Solo Performance, Autobiography and Affective Intentionalities

I would locate my performance practice somewhere between the forms of contemporary performance and live art and would place it in relation to a loose generation of artists whose work has emerged in the DIY live art and performance scene of the UK (at festivals such as Buzzcut, Forest Fringe, Fierce, SPILL festival and In Between Time with graduates from contemporary performance courses in university theatre departments and drama schools across the UK).[6]

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[6] As well as the Theatre Studies course at the University of Glasgow, of which I am a graduate, I am thinking of courses such as the Contemporary Performance Practice course at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, the Advanced Theatre Practice course at Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, courses such as the Performance course at Leeds Beckett University and the Contemporary Theatre

While wary of generalising this work, there are nevertheless recurring techniques and dramaturgical approaches which often involve the weaving of personal or autobiographical material, poetic and performative text, striking visual images, movement/choreography and durational task-based action—as well as the use of a variety of forms such as one-to-one, durational performance, performance installations, in addition to more conventional studio theatre performances. These elements can be found in (some but not all of) the work of artists such as Nic Green, Peter McMaster, Jo Bannon, Selina Thompson, Hannah Sullivan, Ira Brand, Rosana Cade, Jo Hellier. These artists sometimes perform solo and sometimes with other artists but they often perform in their own work—in other words they are both the 'authors' and performers of the work. While this is a slightly different strand of practice to the kind of autobiographical performance that Deirdre Heddon charts in her 2008 book—which places more emphasis on the autobiographical narrative(s) of the performer as story or testimony (in the work of Spalding Gray, Tim Miller, Bobby Baker, Lisa Kron, for example)—the artists cited above tend to blend autobiography and personal experience with more theatrical, expressive, metaphorical or live time-based encounters. In some ways, then, this work merges the kind of practices discussed by Heddon, with the montage like dramaturgical approaches of contemporary devising companies like Goat Island, Forced Entertainment and Lone Twin (where the performers are also often performing as versions of themselves).

Working with similar techniques and approaches, I arrived at this project having developed three solo performances as part of *The Death Jump Series*, mentioned at the start of this introduction. In the first of these three performances, *Death Jump*, I was interested in using my own performing body to destabilise some of the mythologies of success and mastery around the showman figure and the male artist. One key reference point for this piece was Yves Klein and his *Anthropometry* paintings from the early 1960s—in which he painted nude female models in his trademarked International Klein Blue and, under his direction, they imprinted their bodies onto canvases. In reference to these early action paintings Klein remarked:

> Personally, I would never attempt to smear paint over my own body and become a living brush; on the contrary, I would rather put on my tuxedo

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and Performance course at Manchester Metropolitan University, and graduates from Dartington College of Arts up until its incorporation into the University of Falmouth in 2010, among others.

and wear white gloves. I would not even think of dirtying my hands with paint. Detached and distant, the work of art must complete itself before my eyes and under my command. Thus, as soon as the work is realised, I stand there—present at the ceremony, immaculate, calm, relaxed, worthy of it and ready to receive it as it is born into the intangible world. (Klein in Jones 1994, 561)

In *Death Jump* I hoped to challenge this idea of the detached and distant artist through embodied acts such as re-enacted jumps, exhaustive movement sequences, downing cans of Red Bull, and a final *Anthropometry* painting of my own in which I covered my naked body in paint and made prints on the back wall of the performance space (Figure 2). This performance attempted to challenge Klein's approach to action painting by putting my own body at risk, by presenting it in an exposed or vulnerable state (i.e. not masked by a tuxedo and white gloves).[7]

At the start of my PhD project, then, I was interested in continuing this destabilising of male subjectivities through risk, exposure and the vulnerability of the body of the male artist—what Amelia Jones has identified as the "queer feminist gesture" of the performance practices of male artist Ulay (which, according to Jones, is activated in the work through a "vulnerability, generosity and reciprocity" that opens up "his body/image to the relationality of interpretation and identification" [Jones 2015, 1-2&16]). As I began to respond to Barthes's book in more depth and complexity, as both artist/author and performer, it became apparent that this approach was well suited to Barthes's personal method in *Camera Lucida,* one that he describes as approaching photography with an "affective intentionality"—a view of the photograph that is "steeped in desire, repulsion, nostalgia, euphoria" and an approach in which he would keep with him "like a treasure, my desire or my grief" (*CL*, 21). While Barthes uses "affective intentionality" to describe a mode of analysis, rather than a creative act, he also keeps his grief and his desire with him in his writing: Barthes puts himself at risk, in a sense, he makes himself vulnerable to the affective gaze of the reader and this is an aspect that continually recurs in my performances that could not have been explored

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[7] Interestingly Amelia Jones argues that Klein is actually sending up the kind of performed masculinity of artists like Jackson Pollock through exaggeration, display and theatricality (see Jones 1994 & 1998). Also Klein does arguably put his body at risk in his *Leap Into the Void* performance/photograph from 1960, which was another key reference point for *Death Jump*. However, there is still a problematic tension between the immaculately dressed Klein and his nude female models who become 'brushes', mere conduits for transmitting Klein's 'artistic genius'.

Figure 2 - Death Jump *(2013) Buzzcut, The Glue Factory, Glasgow.*

in the same way had I been directing other performers. Affective intentionality, then, at once describes my process of responding to Barthes's book, it captures how I have approached personal material such as family photographs and home movie footage and it suggests ways that the audience may have been encouraged to encounter my performances.

Of course, as Deirdre Heddon remarks "creative practices are always informed by who we are, as subjects embodied in time and space, with our own cultures and histories" and yet she charts examples in performance where "the 'author' and 'performer' collapse into each other as the performing 'I' is also the represented 'I'" (Heddon 2008, 8). However, this 'autobiographical pact' between performer and audience (that performer and author are the 'same person') is slightly more implicit in the works I have made for this PhD as my own experience of loss has often been a subtext to the performances which are framed on the surface as an exploration of Barthes's book. In this sense there is a kind of complex layering, or superimposition, of Barthes's autobiography onto my own and a subsequent weaving of subjectivities, bodies, autobiographies—a relationality that feels particularly fitting for exploring the way Barthes implicates the reader in the deeply personal, vulnerable autobiographical performances of family, love and loss in *Camera Lucida*. As Heddon writes, autobiographical performance often becomes "auto/biography" and "the 'I' that performs and is performed is often strategically complex and layered" (Heddon 2008, 8) and this is as true of my performances as it is of Barthes's writing.

There are some limitations and tensions involved in this approach of course. As the performer of my own work I could not experience the images I created for the audience, other than through video and photographic documentation of my rehearsal process and the resulting performances. This is one reason why photographs and audience response have been key methods of my critical reflection, an approach that I discuss in more detail in the **Methodology** section of this chapter. There has also been a tension, at times, in the process of devising material based on my own personal experiences of loss and then translating that to an encounter for the audience in which, in their subjective experience of the images and a/effects of the work, they may not identify with my experience. In other words, the location of the audience's individual *punctum* will inevitably differ from mine (this is one of Barthes's definitions of the

punctum and the reason why he does not show us the Winter Garden Photograph—"it exists only for me. For you, it would be nothing but an indifferent picture… in it, for you, no wound" [CL, 73]). Despite this, I have been encouraged by Stephen Bottoms's application of the *punctum* to the work of performance company Goat Island when he states that "though the particular point of 'wounding' may be different for each spectator, the experience occurs within a temporal landscape that has been carefully structured to facilitate such responses" (Bottoms and Goulish 2007, 58).

These are also tensions that Barthes himself explores in *Camera Lucida*. While he describes the three-way relationship between photographer (*operator*), the viewer (*spectator*) and photographed subject (*spectrum*), he is also attempting to communicate something of his personal experience of loss from author (or narrator) to reader. In writing the photograph Barthes is posing for the reader, he is putting himself on display and becoming both *spectrum* and *operator*—setting up an intersubjective relationship between himself (as author/subject) and the reader (spectator/audience member). Katja Haustein has made similar observations when she argues that Barthes uses the autobiographical form in *Camera Lucida* in order to explore pity as a form of *suffering with* and in an attempt to go beyond the self to open up a compassionate relation to the other (Haustein 2015). In developing my performances, I have similarly approached my own autobiography as a starting point to explore complex relationships between author/performer and audience.

Structure of the thesis

Following a short section that reflects in more detail on my practice-as-research methodology, **Chapter One: *Camera Lucida* in Context** locates Barthes's book in relation to critical writing on *Camera Lucida* from the disciplines of media theory, comparative literature, art history and theatre studies. This chapter scopes out a space from which the critical reflections of the subsequent chapters extend, while also supporting my rationale for exploring Barthes's text through performance practice. **Chapter One** approaches Barthes from many angles in order to situate *Camera Lucida* simultaneously *after* structuralism, *between* deconstruction, psychoanalysis and phenomenology, and *at the start* of the turn to affect. In doing so, I hope to locate Barthes's text as a crucial interlocutor in the development of ideas on theatre and performance theory and practice since the 1980s.

The three chapters that follow this initial context section critically reflect on my three performances: *Involuntary Memory* (2015); *Kairos* (2016); and *After Camera Lucida* (2017). The chapters weave together exegesis and reflections on the practice with theoretical writing and documentation of the performances (in the form of photographs and audience responses). Each critical reflection chapter aims to respond to and re-present aspects of the formal qualities of the performances: **Chapter Two: "absolutely, irrefutably present, and yet already deferred"**, works with the relation between index cards and photographs, that I used in *Involuntary Memory*, to present the performance documentation and audience responses as a partial re-performance of the piece; **Chapter Three: "the body in… the limb as it performs"**, employs a similar structuring device to *Kairos* by developing the reflections around a series of one-word figures; and **Chapter Four: "a denatured theatre"**, responds to the two-part structure of both *Camera Lucida* and my performance *After Camera Lucida* to underline the compositional aspects of Barthes's *studium* and *punctum* as, respectively, a telling and a showing of affect.

My use of photographic documentation in this thesis is in part pragmatically illustrative. Much like the informational detail of Barthes's *studium*, I hope to show the reader what the performance looked like at specific moments, what I was wearing, what pose I was in. To this end, the thesis is also accompanied by an online appendix that contains video documentation of each performance and can be found at https://practisingwithbarthes.wordpress.com/.

However, I have also thought carefully about how the selection and presentation of images in this thesis might playfully respond to the relationships between images and text found in *Camera Lucida*. Sometimes Barthes's photographs are illustrative, such as when he is demonstrating the co-presence of two elements in Koen Wessing's *Nicaragua* photograph (*CL*, 22-23). At other times he presents images with no comment, as in Daniel Boudinet's *Polaroïd* (1979) that appears at the start of the original French edition of the book. Perhaps most famously, Barthes's Winter Garden Photograph, of his mother as a child, is not shown at all. As a result, Barthes sets up an extremely playful and performative relationship that invites the reader to drift between text and image. I have attempted to be similarly playful in each critical reflection chapter in an attempt to approach aspects of Barthes's *punctum* through

form—a method that I discuss in more detail in my methodology section and which I subsequently highlight in each chapter that performance documentation appears.

As the three performances discussed in this writing were made in each year of my PhD project, they also evidence my research process—capturing the ways in which my practice/thinking progressed in each iteration of performance work. As such, there is a general movement in the performances, and in my subsequent writing, *towards* complexity and originality; the cumulative journey of making all three works evidences the findings presented in my conclusion. One drawback of this structure is that there is, arguably, an unavoidable linear chronology to the thesis that might sometimes appear at odds with the more radical temporalities discussed in the writing. However—echoing the nature of Barthes's palinodic structure in *Camera Lucida* (where the second part retracts or retreats from the ideas set up in the first)—rather than a linear chronology from a to b, I have thought of this thesis as an iterative turning around of ideas on time, absence and presence, materiality and semiotic meaning, thinking and feeling.

My iterative/cumulative method has allowed each performance to start from a re-reading of *Camera Lucida* as my ideas and strategies for making performance have developed. Therefore, the first performance, *Involuntary Memory*, focused on how to *perform* a *book* about *photography* by making performance in response to Barthes's encounter with the photograph of his mother and ideas of *photographic performance*. The performance allowed me to reflect on concepts of absence and presence, textual fragmentation, duration and the maternal. For my second-year performance, *Kairos*, I contextualised my readings of *Camera Lucida* in relation to Barthes's earlier work on meaning and I developed a devising process that adapted Barthes's use of figures in order to respond creatively to his book. This performance enabled me to think about the grain of the body in performance, the haiku, the qualitative time of *kairos* and pensiveness in performance. Finally, my third-year performance, *After Camera Lucida*, directly adopted the autobiographical methods and approaches of *Camera Lucida* by attempting to stage family movie footage of my mother holding me as a baby. The performance took place on the 19th century stage of the Citizens Theatre in Glasgow in an attempt to literally return Barthes to the theatre and to respond to *Camera Lucida*'s implicit theatricality. The piece also led to insights around the

relationship between form and feeling, the suspension of movement in the pose, the use of light and colour, and the idea of theatre space as mother.

The discussions that take place in the following chapters reflect on the key findings from this project: that through strategies of iterative creative response to *Camera Lucida* I have put dramaturgies of the body, time, affect and theatricality into practice in ways that have opened up the possibility of a critically affective and radically compassionate relationship between a work and its audience.

Methodology

A Practice-as-Research Methodology

A key aspect of my project has been about positioning practical performance making as a leading method of inquiry and situating the performances themselves as evidence of that inquiry. This methodological approach draws on definitions of practice-as-research in theatre and performance studies. In the following writing, I will outline my research process drawing on discussions of practice-as-research and focussing on my methods of *devising as creative response, critical reflection* and *the staging of documentation*.

My PhD project has been designed to facilitate an iterative process of doing and reflecting, an approach that is explored in much of the literature on practice-as-research methodologies (such as Trimingham 2002; Smith and Dean 2009; and Nelson 2013). Generally, this is a process that eschews the idea of research as a linear progression from question to answer and instead foregrounds the appropriateness of cyclical processes to artistic research. John Freeman, borrowing from Action Research methods, defines the use of the word iterative in relation to practical research as "a process of planning wherein key elements of practice are regularly reviewed by the student, often in moments of reflection in action. Any insights gained are subsequently used to shape the next step in the work" (Freeman 2010, 68). Similarly, Nelson calls for practice-as-research methodologies as an "iterative process of 'doing-reflecting-reading-articulating-doing'" (Nelson 2013, 32).

I have structured my process around three performance works, one in each year of the PhD. The first piece, *Involuntary Memory* was shown in May 2015; the second, *Kairos* in April 2016; and the third piece *After Camera Lucida* in May 2017. Each of these strands of practice was informed by initial stages of reading that preceded work in the studio and was followed by a period of critical reflection and written articulation. This written reflection sought to contextualise the practice and draw out tentative findings in order to feed in to the next strand of practical studio-based research. After each stage of practice, I returned to my research questions and adapted or refined them based on the preceding process of practice and reflection. These methods echo Melissa Trimingham's model of practice-as-research as a "hermeneutic-interpretative spiral"

where "progress is not linear but circular" and where the researcher constantly returns to their original entry point "but with renewed understanding" (Trimingham 2002, 56).

As with most creative processes, though, the neatly divided sections of reading, practice, reflection and articulation were not as easily separated as is suggested above. My reading directly prompted ideas for practice 'in the moment of reading' and I read and reflected while I was making work (I had a table of 'academic' books at the side of the rehearsal room and would refer to them often in the devising process). Similarly, the articulation of my developing ideas took place both in the critical reflections, written after the practice, but also in the ongoing process of notes and syntheses that I would write up and share with my supervisors. This kind of structure, prompted by researching through practice, is captured in John Freeman's definition of performance practice processes as "messy" and "unpredictable" (Freeman 2010, 81). This is also echoed in Trimingham's idea of the "disorderliness" of creative processes (Trimingham 2002, 56) and Robin Nelson's identification of the "playful, erratic" methods of practice-as-research (Nelson 2013, 30). Nelson acknowledges the "improvisatory" nature of much studio practice and, similarly to Trimingham, argues for a research process that can balance messy creative processes with the rigour of traditional research methods, "that an open and playful approach to creative process might be offset by aims, objective and a timeline" (45). Throughout my research project, I have paid careful attention to the balancing of what Hazel Smith and Roger Dean refer to as "goal-oriented" and "process-driven" research methods (Smith and Dean 2009, 23): defining research questions, setting milestones; but also, allowing the practice to lead the research and revising my inquiry based on the outcomes of the practical work.

Another iterative aspect of the project has been my annual re-reading of Barthes's book. At the start of each stage of practical devising work, I brought *Camera Lucida* into the studio and re-read it, considering its function as a devising stimulus (rather than as a theoretical text). Following Kate Briggs's work in creative writing, adopting this method allowed me to approach *Camera Lucida* as "an unstated instruction or set of instructions": to consider Barthes's book as a guide or an implicit set of instructions for making performance (Briggs 2015, 121). Ultimately, the tensions that have arisen from responding to Barthes's writing through performance have offered productive

implications for contemporary discussions within theatre and performance studies, while reflecting back on *Camera Lucida* in illuminating ways. In the following sections, I would like to expand on my encounter with Barthes's book by outlining three aspects of my process that opened up a space for the development of a *praxis*—in Nelson's terms, theory and practice "imbricated within each other" (Nelson 2013, 63)—these are, *devising as creative response*, *critical reflection* and *the staging of documentation*.

Practising with Barthes: devising as creative response

In Briggs's article "Practising with Roland Barthes" (2015) she reflects on the task of translating Barthes's lecture course *The Preparation of the Novel* and her subsequent use of these lectures in a creative writing class at Paris College of Art. Briggs argues for translation as a "productive practice" that "is its own way of doing research, of arriving at new knowledge of the work in question: knowledge that springs from the translator's speculative inquiry into the manner of its making". For Briggs, translation is a "loving distortion" that begins by "unmaking" a work in order to extend it (128-129). My research is, in a similar way to Briggs, an experiment in practising *with* Barthes in a process that productively unmakes and extends the work. However, unlike Briggs's task of *translating* Barthes into another language, my own speculative inquiry is not the attempt to directly translate *Camera Lucida* into performance, but (following from Goat Island co-founder and performer Matthew Goulish) a version of *creative response,* which "proliferates," "multiplies out" from "miraculous (exceptional, inspiring, unusual, transcendent, or otherwise engaging) moment[s]" that I encounter in Barthes's text (Bottoms and Goulish 2007, 211).

When I describe Barthes's book as an implicit set of instructions for making performance I also have in mind something akin to Lin Hixson's use of directives as director of Goat Island. The company have described their creative process as "a series of directives and responses" (Bottoms and Goulish 2007, 131). Hixson starts by producing a directive in the form of "a phrase or sentence, a question, a collage of images, a specific task". The performers then create performative responses, which they present back to the group and Hixson "responds to these responses" by either: producing more directives; combining and organising material into sequences; submitting her own performance material; or some combination of the above. The

performers then present new responses in response to the new material (Lewis 2005, 262-3). This approach can be thought of as a heightened version of Smith and Dean's "process-driven" research model: a method "directed towards emergence… the generation of ideas which were unforeseen at the beginning of the project" (Smith and Dean 2009, 23). I have allowed something of the process-driven methods of Goat Island to impact upon my approach by working with directives, by keeping my research question(s) as open as possible and by letting the practical outcomes lead the direction of the research.

As mentioned above, at the start of each stage of devising I re-read *Camera Lucida* in search of the instructions that it might give me as a performance maker. Influenced by Hixson's approach, I set myself a series of directives by extracting and developing ideas derived from Barthes's book. Some of these included the following:

> *create a list of unspeakable things*
> *do a corpse impression*
> *create a pensive image*
> *stage a missed encounter*
> *make a compilation of gestures about your mother*
> *assemble a choreography of poses*
> *make the image speak in silence*
> *create a mad image*
> *perform a sequence that lingers*
> *slow down time*

To develop a series of instructions from a text like this does not apply theoretical ideas to practice—and it does not produce rational knowledge or arguments—but it layers ideas in the production of something new. It supports John Freeman's definition of creative practice as something "problem-creating" (rather than the traditional "problem-solving" function of research) as it complicates the text, instead of attempting to explain or understand it (Freeman 2010, 81).

Sara Jane Bailes writes about how Goat Island's process—of making material by responding to directives—is about transforming an idea from the imaginative to the concrete realm. In discussing the company's impossible task exercise, Bailes evokes Nelson's concept of *praxis*. She writes that "through the simple act of translating an instruction from a written to a performed event, the distinction between the critical and the creative (between theory and practice) begins to dissolve, and, in effect, 'doing thinking' begins" (Bailes 2011, 111). However, the move of an idea in devising

processes, from imaginative to concrete, is not as straight-forward as Bailes suggests. Using the example of one of Hixson's directives to "create a shivering homage," Laura Cull argues that while the directives are instructive, they are also "articulated in a poetic form that leaves them open to multiple forms of response" (Cull 2013, 43). So, while the directive sets the "creative constraint" for resulting performance material, there is no fixed concept of what a 'shivering homage' might look like and therefore "the response creates the directive as much as the other way round" (43-44). In other words, this kind of process allows performance to do its own kind of thinking. To consider Barthes's book as a series of directives, then, is not about *demonstrating* Barthes's ideas or *applying* them to performance practice but, rather, about *producing* something new in response. To think and practise *with* Barthes from within the medium of performance.

I am wary, however, of setting up a binary between performance and writing here. There are of course more performative modes of writing in which creative 'doing thinking' might also create more problems than it solves.[11] The important point to emphasise is that performance's doing thinking perhaps more readily resists traditional modes of knowledge production. Elsewhere, in her definition of the emerging field of Performance Philosphy, Cull attempts to collapse some of these binaries by exploring whether we can "think in terms of performance as being its own kind of philosophy and indeed philosophy as a form of performance" (Cull 2014, 15). Cull argues for a mode of engagement which avoids "the tendency to merely apply extant philosophy to performance" and instead thinks about "how to practise a form of philosophising that reverses the direction of thought: increasing the tendency for concepts to *come from* performance" (15&23). Cull argues that Performance Philosophy should be attuned to the ways that "*performance itself thinks*, that performance itself philosophises" (25).

My own PhD project has often grappled with the various ways in which my performances might think, while at the same time acknowledging the challenges of attempting to apprehend this in words. Cull captures something of this tension when

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[11] Derrida's essay "The Deaths of Roland Barthes" is a good example of this mode of writing in relation to Barthes. Derrida's essay is a eulogy of sorts in which Derrida follows the metaphors of radiance in *Camera Lucida* in an attempt to keep Barthes with him by writing through him (Derrida 2001a).

she argues that "performance is at its most philosophical (in its own way) precisely at those points when it resists our attempts, not only to paraphrase it, but even to think it at all, at least according to an existing image of thought" (30). One way Cull proposes that we get around this is to practice "a certain kind of openness, or a felt 'knowledge of unknowing' in relation to performance" (33). My project has gestured towards an apprehension of these moments of unknowing in an attempt to pay attention to the ways that my performances think and how writing and photography might perform, by paying attention to what Cull terms the "resistant materiality of performance's thinking"—that which in performance resists our attempts to name it in words (2012, 12). However, processes of critical reflection have at least allowed me to generatively reflect on these ideas in writing—as I will discuss below.

Critical reflection

Robin Nelson identifies the activity of critical reflection on practice as an integral part of achieving rigour in practice-as-research processes. He writes that in order to develop "know-what" from "know-how" it is necessary to tease out "the methods by which 'what works' is achieved and the compositional principles involved" and that, in order to do this, the critically reflective activities of "pausing, standing back and thinking about what you are doing" are key (Nelson 2013, 44). Two forms of reflective practice that were built into the structure of my project were *audience response* (through work-in-progress performances, critical response feedback sessions and creative workshops) and *critical reflection through writing* about the performances.

Audience response

For each strand of practical devising, I organised a work-in-progress performance part-way through the process. These works-in-progress were shown to supervisors, friends and peers and allowed me to test developing ideas and receive feedback in a way that would impact upon the shape of the work. The responses from audiences often directly shaped the decision-making process, allowed me to refine specific details and helped to structure the performance material.

Audience feedback and responses on the culminating performances were also key for helping me reflect on the practice as it related to the wider research inquiry. An important method for structuring these responses was Liz Lerman's Critical Response

Process. Lerman's process—developed with her dance company Dance Exchange near Washington DC—is a system for gathering constructive feedback on creative work and was a useful tool in my process as it places a focus on the audience's emotional, intellectual and associative interpretations of the work. Stage One of the process asks the responders to make a series of "statements of meaning" framed around things that the audience saw, things that they felt, "shiny moments" (things that they liked or were particularly interested in), whether the performance reminded them of anything, "what was stimulating, surprising, evocative, memorable, touching… challenging?" (Lerman and Borstel 2003, 19). Stage Two invites the artist to ask responders questions that they may have about specific aspects of the work. Stage Three allows the audience to ask 'neutral' questions to the artist and it is not until Stage Four that responders can offer an opinion. As a result of this framing, the process avoids many pitfalls, common in my experience of feedback sessions on artistic work; such as, unhelpfully negative critiques, suggestions for ways to 'fix' the performance or the artist becoming defensive and explaining what the audience *should* have 'got' from the work. Specifically, starting with audience statements of meaning places importance on how and what the work was communicating in a way that I found extremely useful as a reflective tool. As well as 'live' post-performance feedback sessions based on this process—facilitated by theatre practitioner and trained CRP facilitator Tashi Gore—I also developed a comments sheet based on Lerman's process. These written feedback mechanisms were useful for my reflection on the work as they provided comments in another medium (writing as opposed to speech) that often captured more evocative or poetic responses to the work.[12]

Another approach I used for gathering audience responses was influenced by Matthew Reason's work on audience research in dance. In his article "Watching Dance, Drawing the Experience and Visual Knowledge" (2010) Reason outlines a workshop he and visual artist Brian Hartley conducted with dance audiences that explored a series of tasks, asking the audience to draw their experience of the production. Reason discusses how the workshops attempted to capture something of how non-verbal art forms communicate tacit and embodied knowledge and the possibilities of visual arts

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[12] A template of the feedback sheet I used to gather responses and the collated audience comments from all three performances can be found in the **Online Appendix** which can be accessed at https://practisingwithbarthes.wordpress.com/.

workshops to explore "different ways of knowing in the context of audiences' experience of dance" (Reason 2010, 392-3). Reason has also explored audience experiences through creative writing workshops, which explored "the potential for crafted, creative writing to give audience members the opportunity to articulate embodied, kinesthetic and experiential responses to dance that are often considered beyond discourse and ineffable" (Reason 2012). For my second-year piece, *Kairos*, I conducted workshops with audience members where I adapted some of Reason's techniques: asking participants to draw moments of the performance from memory, to engage in free writing exercises and to use the results of these tasks as points of discussion about the performance. These approaches captured some of the audience's affective experiences of the performance and stimulated feedback on the work that explored different modes of language and alternative forms of communication.[13]

The audience response methods discussed above were crucial in allowing me to critically reflect on the practice, as they provided insight into some of the many possible ways in which the work was experienced. It is important to note, however, that while I drew on some of the methods of audience research I do not consider these activities as research into the audiences of my performance; but rather, as a reflective tool that I used as part of my devising methods and as a way of introducing other perspectives on the work, beyond my intentions and experiences of it. These methods have encouraged me to consider the work's impact and to reflect on how my intentions aligned (or not) with the audience experience. Perhaps, above all, these audience responses have captured something of the ineffible experience of watching live performance and have prompted my critical reflection through writing—a stage of the process that I will discuss below.

Critical reflection through writing

In between each stage of practice, I wrote up critically reflective pieces that became starting points for the three main chapters in this thesis. This allowed me to reflect on my making processes, work with the audience responses and documentation, and to

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[13] In line with the University of Glasgow's ethical policy, audience participants that contributed comments or took part in the CRP sessions and workshops gave informed consent for their contributions to be used in the knowledge that they would remain anonymous. This project has received ethical approval from the University of Glasgow ethics committee and supporting documentation can be found in the **Online Appendix**.

relate the practice to the critical concepts I had been working with. The writing allowed me to develop tentative findings from the work in a way that could feed into the next stage of reading and practice. This iterative model also allowed me to explore appropriate forms of writing for the thesis, to think about possible ways to shape the material that might echo the dramaturgical structures of the performances, and to develop modes of writing that might act as a formal link between my performances and Barthes's *Camera Lucida*.

Embedded in this approach is a consideration of critical writing as a productive practice in its own right. Following Nelson's definition of practice-as-research, I argue throughout this thesis for Barthes's approach in *Camera Lucida* to be considered as a *praxis* of writing. However, Nelson also proposes that in order to evidence the research inquiry of a practice-as-research project, the complementary writing that is submitted alongside the practice should move from tacit to explicit knowledge in order to evidence "what works," "what methods," "what principles of composition," "what impacts" (Nelson 2013, 37). While I value Nelson's approach—and agree with the function of the complementary writing to assist in the "articulation and evidencing the research inquiry" (36)—Nelson's call for critical writing on practice-as-research to *always* move from the tacit to the explicit is problematic in this case as it denies the tacit and performative 'knowings' of critical writing itself. Throughout this thesis, I have considered the ways that my writing and use of images might capture and hold some of the tensions at play in Barthes's work (and in performative practices more generally). In this sense, parts of this thesis attempt to explore Della Pollock's definition of "performative writing" as "the interplay of reader and writer in the joint production of meaning," writing that collapses the distinctions between the creative and the critical "allying itself with a logics of possibility rather than of validity or causality" (Pollock 1998, 80-81). Related to an exploration of writing's performative modes, I have also explored the performativity of photographs through the staging of documentation.

Staging documentation

In this thesis, I have attempted to present the photographic documentation and audience responses in a reflexive way. This has involved approaching the documentation dramaturgically, deliberately staging the images and text in

configurations that might communicate a "residual atmosphere" of the performances (Piccini and Rye 2009, 42-43). This approach draws on discussions of the performativity of photography, what Laura Levin terms "the 'doing' aspects of photography… how images exceed their frames and directly affect their viewers" (Levin 2009, 329). In an essay from 2006, Philip Auslander troubles the link between performance events and their documentation—noting that the idea of the photograph as a record of an event and evidence that it has occurred is "ideological" (Auslander 2006, 1). Auslander disrupts the *documentary* function of performance photography by exploring what he terms *theatrical* documentation, or "performed photographs," such as Cindy Sherman's *Untitled Film Stills* series (1977-80) or Yves Klein's staged *Leap into the Void* (1960): performances that are staged solely for the camera. Auslander uses these examples to explore the ways that documentation "produces an event as performance" and concludes that the crucial relationship to explore is not between the document and the performance, but in the performance document's "relationship to its beholder"; that the "pleasure's" of a performance are "available from the documentation and therefore do not depend on whether an audience witnessed the original event" (5&9).

Auslander's thinking has informed my creative approaches to staging documentation. While most of the photographs in this thesis were taken at performance events in front of a 'live' audience (mostly by Glasgow-based photographer Julia Bauer), my aim is that their placement, captioning, and relation to text—both in the form of the written thesis and the audience responses—foreground the theatrical quality of performance documentation above their documentary function, drawing attention to the intersubjective relationships between the photograph and the viewer. [14] While the photographs might *illustrate* specific moments of the performance (at the informational level of the *studium*), I hope that they also explore what Levin, after Austin, terms the "performative force" of photographs, "the capacity to produce what they name, to directly affect their audience" (Levin 2009, 329).

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[14] The photographs that were not taken at live events were the photographs of *Involuntary Memory* in **Chapter Two** which were taken by me when I re-staged the performance specifically for camera in 2017, two years after the event. As a result, these most closely resemble Auslander's definition of "performed photographs".

I am also interested in the ways that my presentation of photographs might explore ideas of the deferral of self often discussed by body art critic Amelia Jones. These images of me performing are presented alongside first person writing (sometimes in a more formal academic style and sometimes more autobiographical), as well as audience comments written in response to me performing. Jones suggests that neither live performance nor photographic documentation gives us access to the immediate self of the artist and "neither has a privileged relationship to the historical 'truth' of the performance" (Jones 1997, 11). Instead, body art performances and their documents enact the "dispersed, multiplied, specific subjectivities of the late capitalist, postcolonial, postmodern era" (12). Jones argues that, given the tendency of reading photographic documentation as a "supplement" to the "actual" body of the artist, photographic documentation of performance could in fact "expose the body itself as supplementary, as both the visible 'proof' of the self and its endless deferral" (14). In this thesis, my subjectivity is scattered across different modes of writing, photographs, and first-hand accounts of events from audiences.

A key reference point for my exploration of photography as performance has been the collaborative photographs that Manuel Vason has made with live artists (see Vason 2002 and 2015). Rebecca Scnheider argues that Vason's photographs are "both photography and performance, asking us to engage a photograph not only as the record of a performance, but as the performance itself" (Schnieder 2007, 35). In her essay from a 2007 book on Vason's work, Schneider argues for a consideration of the photograph as event, "as a performance of duration—taking place 'live' in an ongoing scene of circulation, re-circulation, encounter, re-encounter, and collaborative exchange with viewers" (34). Schneider challenges the dominant discussions of Live Art documentation as "strange proof that you, viewer, were not there… you will have missed this" (35-36). Instead, Schneider focusses on the photograph's theatricality that "demands a simultaneity of temporal registers—the always at least 'double' aspect of the theatrical" (35-36).

Following Auslander, Jones and Schneider, then, the staging of documentation in this thesis attempts to: foreground the relationship between the image and the reader in the moment of encounter; it presents a dispersal and deferral of self; and it attempts to

expose the inherent theatricality of photography by drawing attention to the multiple non-linear temporalities at play in the documentation of performance.

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The writing that follows problematises Robin Nelson's view of the practice-as-research thesis as "complementary writing" that should evidence the research inquiry and be "as clear as possible" (Nelson 2013, 10). Instead, the balance being struck here is somewhere between a critical exegesis of the practice and its playful re-performance. As a result, it is somewhere between the performances, the audience responses, the critical writing and the photographic documentation that the findings of the project can be located. It is my hope that this thesis makes these less tangible findings evident without losing a sense of their performative force and performance's unique modes of thinking.

Chapter One: *Camera Lucida* in context

Camera Lucida's reflections on photography

Before I go on to reflect on the performances I have made over the course of this project, it is important to outline Barthes's conception of photography in *Camera Lucida* and review critical writing on the book since its publication in 1980/1. This section, ***Camera Lucida*'s reflections on photography,** and the following one, **After *Camera Lucida***, therefore, contextualise Barthes's book, review scholarship in comparative literature, art history and visual studies since 1980 and explore Barthes's influence on theatre studies, charting the ways that his ideas have been taken up and explored in the field.

Form and method

Barthes's reflections on photography take place across 48 short sections, split equally into two parts, over 119 pages (in the English translation). The text is 'illustrated' by 24 captioned black and white photographs, which, apart from one photograph from the "author's collection", are all drawn from a familiar repertoire of photographic images stretching from Niépce's 1823 dinner table (mistakenly captioned "the first photograph"), through Kertész and Nadar, to photographic portraits from the 1970s by Robert Mapplethorpe and Richard Avedon and the documentary photographs of Koen Wessing from Nicaragua in 1979. [15] According to Geoffrey Batchen, despite the subjective approach Barthes takes in the book, he still "manages to offer his readers a full survey of photography", including examples from most decades from the 1820s to the 1970s (Batchen 2011, 262).

Despite the breadth of Barthes's examples, *Camera Lucida* leaves behind something of the rigour of his earlier structuralist approaches to photography.[16] Instead, Barthes is interested in exploring his personal attraction to specific photographs, "the ones I was sure existed *for me...* to take myself as mediator for all Photography" (*CL*, 8).

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[15] The French edition also includes a colour polaroid by Daniel Boudinet from 1979, but it is not reproduced in the English translation. There have been a number of discussions of the omission of Boudinet's *Polaroïd* and its importance to Barthes's book. See for example, Knight (1997), Mavor (2012), Schlossman (1997), Batchen (2011) and Brinkema (2014).

[16] See "The Photographic Message" (1961); "The Rhetoric of the Image" (1964); "The Third Meaning" (1970) all collected in Barthes's *Image Music Text*.

This is a method that he labels a "vague, casual, even cynical phenomenology" that avoids the formal path of logic and instead allows Barthes to keep with him "like a treasure, my desire or my grief" (*CL*, 20-21). As discussed in the **Introduction**, in *Camera Lucida*, Barthes wants to retain photography's emotional power and approaches it with an "affective intentionality, a view of the object which was immediately steeped in desire, repulsion, nostalgia, euphoria" (*CL*, 21).

The form of Barthes's text, in particular, is located by Nancy Shawcross somewhere between theoretical text and autobiographical novel—a difficult "third form," derived from Proust, that attempts to be both "expressive and analytical" (Shawcross 1997, 67). Shawcross argues that Barthes's text "develops or unfolds like a mystery novel told from an autobiographical point of view" (71). Or, as Gary Shapiro has termed it, "the narrative of an ontological quest" (Shapiro in Brinkema 2014, 78). Eugenie Brinkema has argued that *Camera Lucida*'s 'thought experiment' presents Barthes as the "illuminated twin to Descartes's dark-enshrined doubter in the *Meditations*" (Brinkema 2014, 78). This is a link that is also made by Katja Haustein when she places Barthes's thinking in opposition to the *cogito*: "Barthes suspends Descartes's clear-cut distinction between mind and body when he suggests that the self is not grounded in *ratio* but in affect… according to Barthes the self is not because he thinks but because he feels" (Haustein 2012, 159).

In his influential essay the "The Death of the Author" from 1968 Barthes indirectly references J.L. Austin's "Oxford philosophy" to call for a "performative" mode of writing, one in which "every text is eternally written *here and now*", writing that emphasises the encounter between the reader and a text (*IMT,* 145). Barthes's writing in the 1970s experiments with this challenge to make language present, from the fragmented forms of *The Pleasure of the Text* and *A Lover's Discourse* to the play between text and image that occurs in *Empire of Signs* and *Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes.* These texts, according to Geoffrey Batchen, offer versions of Barthes's "birth of the reader", inviting her to "induce something from Barthes's texts that exceeds the intentions of its author" (Batchen 2011, 8). Referencing Barthes's definition of the *writerly* text, Batchen also argues that Barthes's writings are "never simply transparent to meaning" but "produce their full effects only in the process of being read" (11-12). These experiments in performative writing culminate in *Camera Lucida*, in a praxis of

writing the *punctum*. James Elkins makes this point most clearly when he writes that in *Camera Lucida* "the text pricks you, and then softens the hurt with prose: it mimics the *punctum* and its sterile salve… *studium*" (Elkins 2011, x)—two terms that I will now unpack in more detail.

Studium/Punctum

In part one of *Camera Lucida* Barthes develops a theory of photography based on the terms *studium* and *punctum*. The *studium* describes the 'coded field' of the photograph as it relates to cultural and political knowledge. Barthes defines the *studium* as a "classical body of information" that provokes "a kind of general interest" in the photograph (*CL*, 25-26). The *studium* is an "education" in signs and their meanings: the knowledge and activation of culture in the viewing of photographs (*CL*, 28). As Barthes argues in his definition of *studium*, "it is culturally... that I participate in the figures, the faces, the gestures, the settings, the actions" (*CL*, 26-7). The *punctum* on the other hand, describes a detail that "rises from the scene, shoots out of it like an arrow and pierces me" (*CL*, 26). The *punctum* is an element that "will break or punctuate" the coded field of the *studium* and "wound" or "prick" the viewer (*CL*, 26). Barthes locates this "off-centre detail" in a number of photographs: from a woman's shoes in James Van Der Zee's *Family Portrait* (1926); to the bad teeth of a child in William Klein's *Little Italy* photograph (1954); and the "little boy's huge Danton collar" and "the girl's finger bandage" in Lewis Hine's image of two physically deformed children from 1924 (*CL*, 50-51).

According to Barthes, though, the *punctum* is unnamable and unlocatable (*CL*, 51): it exists outside of the rational, cultured, system of codes that make up the *studium*. Barthes's attempts to speak the *punctum,* therefore, adopt a series of slippery definitions and contradictions: the *punctum* is a detail but, at the same time, it "fills the whole picture" (*CL*, 42-45). It is "what I add to the photograph and what is nonetheless already there" (*CL*, 55). The *punctum* is both the wounded *image* (photographs "punctuated… speckled with these sensitive points") and the *viewer's* wound (that which "pricks me [but also bruises me…]) (*CL*, 26-27). As Geoffrey Batchen observes, the *punctum* is at once the instrument of injury (an arrow) and the injury itself (a wound, a little hole) (Batchen 2011, 267). In attempting to locate the wounding detail in Robert Mapplethorpe's image of Robert Wilson and Philip Glass, Barthes lists the *punctum's*

effects as "certain but unlocatable… it is sharp and yet lands in a vague zone of myself; it is acute yet muffled, it cries out in silence. Odd contradiction: a floating flash" (*CL*, 51-3).

The *punctum* is also tightly bound to the viewer's desire. In his example of a Robert Mapplethorpe self-portrait, Barthes situates the *punctum*'s wounding affects in the wakening of his desire, noting a kind of "blissful eroticism" in the photograph (*CL*, 59). The *punctum* "endows the photograph with a blind-field", it functions like the erotic photograph that "launche[s] desire beyond what it permits us to see" (*CL*, 57-59). The *punctum* has a latency: sometimes it may only become apparent "after the fact," when the viewer is no longer looking at the photograph, "as if direct vision oriented its language wrongly, engaging it in an effort of description which will always miss its point of effect" (*CL*, 53). This latency is demonstrated in Barthes's return to Van Der Zee's image 'later on' when he realises "that the real *punctum* was the necklace she was wearing," as it reminded him of a necklace that his lonely Aunt used to wear.[18]

The *punctum* is also an accident, the *non-intentional* detail that is captured by the photographer: "it says only that the photographer was there… that he could not *not* photograph the partial object at the same time as the total object" (*CL*, 47). Barthes's focus on the non-intentional detail here resonates with Walter Benjamin's discussion of the "optical unconscious" in his 1931 essay "A Short History of Photography"— that level of detail that the photograph reveals that it is not possible for the human eye to consciously consider, or perhaps, the "spark of chance", that cannot be silenced: "that imperceptible point at which, in the immediacy of that long-past moment, the future so persuasively inserts itself that, looking back, we may rediscover it" (Benjamin 1972, 7).[19]

Barthes notes that the relation between the *studium* and the *punctum* is that of a "co-presence" and that it is "not possible to posit a rule of connection" between them (*CL*, 42). However, Barthes's introduction of these terms invites an initial reading of their

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[18] Margaret Olin discusses Barthes's "mistaken identification" of this necklace in her essay "Touching Photographs" from 2002 (also collected in Batchen 2011).

[19] Many have drawn out this relationship between *Camera Lucida* and Benjamin's ideas on photography see for example Iversen (1994), Dant and Gilloch (2002), Olin (2002), Batchen (2011), Yocavone (2014).

oppositional status: coded/non-coded; rational/emotional; speakable/unspeakable. A close reading of Barthes's book suggests a more complex relationship, where the two concepts exist in a relational to-and-fro through which they inform each other reciprocally: as Derek Attridge writes, "the experience of the wholly private significance would not be possible without the functioning of public meaning" (Attridge 1997, 87). Despite Barthes's desire to "dismiss all knowledge" in his encounter with the *punctum* (*CL*, 51), his examples serve to nuance the co-presence of the informational *studium* with the wounding detail. This is captured in Jacques Rancière's reading of *studium* and *punctum* in which he argues that the *punctum* that Barthes locates in the boy's Danton collar (in Lewis Hine's photograph) evokes the name of George Jacques Danton, a key figure in the French Revolution who was guillotined (Rancière 2011, 111-112).[20] Thus, the disproportionately small head of the boy (which Barthes attributes to the *studium*) coincides with a connoted historical decapitation in the disproportionately large collar. Similarly, in Carol Mavor's reading of James Van Der Zee's image, she stumbles over Barthes's "patronising racism" (Mavor 2012, 29) in his labelling of the Aunt in the photograph as a "solacing Mammy" (*CL*, 43). Mavor argues, through deconstructions of the "Mammy" stereotype in the work of artists Kara Walker and Betye Saar, that it is when "[the *punctum*] is coupled with some hard-hitting *studium* (like the fact of blackness, like the racing of photography…), [that] it is affectively bruising" (Mavor 2012, 42).

The complexities of this relationship are introduced through Barthes's description of the *punctum* as a "supplement" or "addition" (*CL*, 47&55)—two terms that have been translated from the original French *supplément* (*CC*, 80&89). This is a term that Attridge relates to Jacques Derrida's idea of the supplement as "a little ingredient beyond the mass of culturally coded material… the one thing that the work could not do without" (Attridge 1997, 84). Geoffrey Batchen also picks up on Barthes's use of this term and argues that it undoes the apparent binary of *studium*/*punctum* with a deconstructive logic: "to displace it from certainty, to put it in motion, to turn it in on itself" (Batchen 2011, 268). Derrida's own readings of the *studium*/*punctum* relationship add further nuance to these arguments: Derrida writes that the relationship between the two terms is "neither tautological nor oppositional, neither dialectical nor

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[20] Rancière's reading is actually a critique of Barthes's oppositional situation of *studium* and *punctum* but this reading misses the ways that Barthes himself undoes their opposition.

in any sense symmetrical; it is supplementary and musical (contrapuntal)" (Derrida 2001a, 58). Expanding on this musical relation of counterpoint Derrida explores how the two terms "compose together", arguing that:

> the "subtle beyond" of the *punctum*, the uncoded beyond, composes with the "always coded" of the *studium*. It belongs to it without belonging to it and is unlocatable within it; it is never inscribed in the homogenous objectivity of the framed space but instead inhabits or, rather, haunts it…
> we are prey to the ghostly power of the supplement. (41)

These readings, and specifically Derrida's description of the relationship as a haunting, align Barthes's reflections on photography with a deconstructive logic that attempts to empty out the meanings of his own terms in order to explore the performative possibilities of Barthes's book: the *punctum* of his writing.[21]

Indexicality

According to Barthes, the photograph's power lies in its unbroken link to the referent, which he argues is different to the referent of other systems of representation: it is a "certificate of presence", "not the *optionally* real thing to which an image or a sign refers but the *necessarily* real thing which has been placed before the lens". As a result of this status, Barthes can "never deny that *the thing has been there"* (*CL*, 87&76).

Barthes's ideas here correspond to theories of the photograph's indexicality that draw on Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic distinction between signs as either icon, index or symbol (see Peirce 1955). While the photograph is an icon (in that it resembles the thing photographed), 20th century theories of photography have focused on the power of the photograph as an index: the photograph as a trace of the thing that appeared in front of the lens, it points to the real subject that existed in the past moment of the photograph being taken. As Gregory Batchen writes, the photograph gives us a sense that "objects have reached out and touched the surface, leaving their own trace, as faithful to the contour of the original object as a death mask is to the face of the newly departed" (Batchen 2001, 139). Or, as Marianne Hirsch writes, the photographic index

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[21] Jean-Michel Rabaté has argued that Derrida's deconstructive approach to writing had an important influence on Barthes's writing after 1967 (Rabaté 1997, 4-5). Similarly, Victor Burgin acknowledges the influence of Derrida on Barthes's move from the *work* (of an author) to the *text*, where *text* is "seen not as an 'object' but rather a 'space' between the object and the reader/viewer – a space made up of endlessly proliferating meanings which have no stable point of origin, nor of closure" (Burgin 2011, 32).

is "based on a relationship of contiguity, of cause and effect, like a trace or a footprint" (Hirsch 1997, 6). These ideas build on earlier theories of photography such as Walter Benjamin's optical unconscious, quoted above, Sigfried Kracauer—who in 1927 defined the photograph as a "spatial continuum" which "must be essentially associated with the moment in time at which it came into existence" (Kracauer 1993, 428)—or André Bazin's "The Ontology of the Photographic Image" from 1958, in which Bazin argued that the photograph bears a "quality of credibility" similar to a fingerprint or a relic (Bazin 1960, 8).[22]

In Barthes's earlier writing on photography he appears more wary of the photograph's claims to truth than in *Camera Lucida*. In "The Rhetoric of the Image", from 1964 Barthes identifies this indexicality in the "natural *being-there*" of tomatoes and peppers in a photograph advertising Panzani pasta sauce. Barthes argues that the connoted message of the advert, that of Italianicity and freshness, is made more persuasive by the denotative power of the photograph. Drawing attention to the "myth of the photographic 'naturalness'" Barthes argues that the photograph's "pseudo-truth" or a kind of *"being-there* of objects" naturalises the connoted meanings and allows to be read as given what is actually constructed (*IMT*, 45).

This thinking corresponds to Bertolt Brecht's distrust of the photograph, in that it conceals historical and social relations. Referring to photographs of factories that do not tell us anything about the institutions they depict, Brecht writes that "the simple 'reproduction of reality' says less than ever about that reality" (Brecht 2000, 164). This is a critique that resonates with Kracauer's views on photography when he argues that photographs conceal history through "likeness", arguing that in the age of the illustrated magazine and weekly newsreels "never before has a period known so little about itself" (Kracauer 1993, 432).

The photograph's indexical ontology has been challenged by more recent writing on photography such as Margaret Olin who argues for a "performative index" or an "index of identification" that emphasises the relationship between the photograph and its beholder, rather than the photograph and its referent (Olin 2002, 114-115).[23]

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[22] Colin MacCabe draws out the links between Barthes and Bazin in his essay "Barthes and Bazin: The Ontology of the Image" (in Rabaté 1997).

[23] This has been built upon by Marianne Hirsch's work on postmemory (see Hirsch 2008).

Similarly, more recent writing has emphasised the mediation processes of photography that disrupt the indexical link between reality and image—and which challenge the neat separation between the analogue processes Barthes describes and more recent digital technologies. For instance, Tom Gunning argues that indexicality conceals "the mediation of lens, film stock, exposure rate, type of shutter, processes of developing and of printing" (Gunning 2004, 40). Similarly, Greg Hainge argues that the photograph is more icon than index "because the photograph's visible image is produced not in the analogue process that forms the latent image as light frees atoms of metallic silver from silver halides but, rather, in the far more arbitrary stages of development and fixing" (Hainge 2008, 720). Hainge encourages us to "unfix" the photograph from its indexical ontology, and instead focus on the processual and performative ontology of the dark room (724-6).[24] From another perspective, Martin Lister challenges the indexical reliance on presence/absence in our contemporary "age of information" to argue for a reading of contemporary photography in which "pattern/randomness" are the ontological principles (Lister 2007, 265).

Nevertheless, despite the emergence of poststructuralist critiques of presence and an increasing distrust in the unbroken indexical link, as Lister points out, we still largely "value and use photographs according to [an indexical] logic" (ibid.) Or as Gunning remarks, echoing Bazin, photographs "are a means for putting us into the presence of something" (Gunning 2004, 46). And for Marianne Hirsch, in the context of the transmission of memory to second-generation Holocaust survivors, "it is the technology of photography, and the belief in reference it engenders, that connects the Holocaust generation to the generation after… [making] it a uniquely powerful medium for the transmission of events that remain unimaginable" (Hirsch 2008, 107-108).

Time as Punctum

This "faith", to use Bazin's word, in what the photograph brings into being is played out in part two of *Camera Lucida*. In the second part of the book, Barthes adopts a different approach to naming the wounding effects of photography than his focus on

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[24] The idea of the photograph as truth has also been challenged by Philip Auslander in his discussion of photographic documentation of performance art. Of particular relevance here is his compelling argument for how Yves Klein's *Leap Into the Void* photograph disrupts Barthes's photographic ontology (Auslander 2006).

the *punctum* as a detail. He describes this shift as a palinode, a retraction of part one. In this retraction, Barthes moves from discussing a series of public photographs to mostly discussing one very personal photograph. Part Two starts with a description of Barthes's search for a photograph of his recently deceased mother, one that would "summon" up her features in their "totality," in order to find "the truth of the face I had loved" (*CL*, 63, 67). This search for his mother's "unique being" is finally found in an image of her as a child, standing with her brother in a glass conservatory. He names this image the Winter Garden Photograph and claims that, in it "I see the kindness which had formed her being immediately and forever" (*CL*, 69). Barthes realises that he has discovered his mother "essentially" and that the photograph "achieved for me, utopically, *the impossible science of the unique being*" (*CL*, 71). Interestingly, Barthes does not reproduce this photograph in the book, arguing that "it exists only for me"; for another viewer it would be "nothing but an indifferent picture", it would be interesting only on the level of the *studium,* in terms of "period, clothes, photogeny," but there would be no wound (*CL*, 73).

During Barthes's discussion of the Winter Garden Photograph he shifts (or retracts) the earlier definition of the *punctum* as a detail and re-works it around the structures of time in the photograph. Barthes locates this second order of the *punctum* in the past presence of the referent and in the photograph's temporal structure of *that-has-been*. However, the 'real' presence of the referent is deferred by the time lag in the photographic process that shifts the reality that the *thing is there* to the past, as that-has-been (*CL*, 79).

The example Barthes gives to elucidate this idea is Alexander Gardner's portrait of Lewis Payne (1865), which was taken moments before Payne's execution. In this portrait, rather than emanating from a specific detail, the *punctum* is related to time: "the lacerating emphasis of… *'that-has-been'…* its pure representation" (*CL*, 96). Barthes writes that Gardner's image is haunted by the future perfect tense: "I read at the same time: *This will be* and *this has been*; I observe with horror an anterior future of which death is at stake" (*CL*, 96). Barthes's photograph of his mother sharpens this horror, in front of it "I tell myself: she is going to die: I shudder… *over a catastrophe which has already occurred*" (*CL*, 96). In another deconstructive move—although the referent of the photograph is a "certificate of presence" for Barthes—the image's

temporal structure suggests that the thing photographed is always "alive, as corpse... the living image of a dead thing": it is always "already dead" (*CL*, 79). Like Bazin's remarks on family albums, they are "phantomlike… the disturbing presence of lives halted at a set moment in their duration" (Bazin 1960, 8). In the Winter Garden Photograph Barthes rediscovers the "truth" of his mother's face, but in the wounding temporal catastrophe of the photograph his mother is lost twice-over.

After *Camera Lucida*

I have been weaving the critical commentary on Barthes throughout the previous section of this chapter; but, in order to support a rationale for this project's return to Barthes's book in the 21st century, it is important to briefly outline some key readings that have emerged since 1980. The second part of this chapter, on critical writing after *Camera Lucida*, also considers the ways that Barthes's ideas have been taken up and responded to in the field of theatre studies.

Turning back and away

Camera Lucida's abandonment of Barthes's earlier approaches to photography and its seemingly Romantic adoption of the self-present subject (in his use of the autobiographical 'I'), caused some critics to discount *Camera Lucida* in favour of Barthes's earlier works. Jonathan Culler, exasperated by a seeming return to earlier ideas about photography and subjecthood, asked in 1983 "How did Roland Barthes, the critic of bourgeois myth, reach this point?... Defying all the most convincing work on meaning, he affirms the powerful myth, he taught us to resist" (Culler, 1983, 116&122). Similarly, Michel Starenko, reviewing *Camera Lucida* on the release of the English translation, denigrated what he termed the "heresy of sentiment" in Barthes's book (Starenko 1981, 6-7).

A contemporaneous defence of the book came from J. Gerald Kennedy who in 1981, while still diminishing its current importance, reads *Camera Lucida* as "ahead of its time" and argues that "the book may some day mark a general turn away from structuralist and non-structuralist abstraction toward a more pragmatic and humane discourse" (Kennedy 1981, 397). As Jay Prosser notes, the interesting thing about Kennedy's reading is "the notion that *Camera Lucida* would be seen as precursory only retrospectively" (Prosser 2005, 21). This retrospective defence is also captured in Victor Burgin's 1982 review of the book, which he titles a "re-reading," situating *Camera Lucida* within a "psychoanalytical/intertextual approach" (Burgin 2011). Such psychoanalytical readings of Barthes are also present in Margaret Iversen's 1994 essay "What is a Photograph?", in which she views *Camera Lucida* through Lacan's concepts of the gaze, trauma and the death drive from *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis* (Iversen 1994). Iversen defines Barthes's approach to photography

as "psychoanalytical through and through" (450) and relates Barthes's concept of the *punctum* to Lacan's *tuché*, a painful encounter with the Real (450-452).[29]

During the 1990s, some of the most important work on Barthes's book for Anglophone readers was being conducted in the field of comparative literature (a field that Barthes would have liked). Jean-Michel Rabaté's 1997 edited collection of essays, *Writing the Image After Roland Barthes*, developed from a conference at the University of Pennsylvania in 1994 and functions as both a memorial to Barthes and also as a kind of recuperation of his last book. Essays in the collection tease out links between *Camera Lucida* and poststructuralism, and contextualise Barthes's reflections on photography in relation to his earlier works.

Seemingly, 1997 was a good year for Barthes studies, with Diana Knight and Nancy Shawcross (who both had essays in Rabaté's collection) each producing monographs on Barthes. Knight's *Barthes and Utopia: Space, Travel, Writing* (1997) includes an influential chapter on *Camera Lucida* that discusses an implicit homosexuality in Barthes's references to Proust and explores the Winter Garden Photograph in relation to metaphors of illumination in the book. Knight makes a provocative suggestion that Barthes invents the photograph of his mother in order to provide him with "the symbolism of light and revelation appropriate to a recognition scene" (Knight 1997, 266). Shawcross's book *Roland Barthes on Photography: The Critical Tradition in Perspective* (1997) offers a survey of Barthes's writings on photography in order to contextualise *Camera Lucida* alongside his shifts in method. In the book, Shawcross makes a convincing argument for Barthes's exploration of a "third form" of writing between essay and novel that requires Barthes to revert back to modernist and nineteenth-century forms of writing (Shawcross 1997, 67-85).

Jay Prosser's 2005 book *Light in the Dark Room: Photography and Loss* situates *Camera Lucida* within a tradition of autobiographical works on photography and loss that Prosser terms "ph/autography". This term attempts to capture the ways that photography in writing "can interrupt the narrative and re-turn the extreme moments of autobiography" (Prosser 2005, 10). Prosser's reading of *Camera Lucida* draws on Proust and Orpheus to draw out the palinodic quality of the book: the way it looks

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[29] I engage with Iversen's psychoanalytical reading in more detail in my reflection on *Involuntary Memory* in **Chapter Two**.

back on his previous work, functioning as a retraction. Prosser also argues for the untimeliness of Barthes's book, writing that "we have come into sympathy with *Camera Lucida* and its notion of photography as autobiographical loss" (21). In 2009, art historian Geoffrey Batchen edited an anthology of essays on Barthes's book, *Photography Degree Zero: Reflections on Roland Barthes's Camera Lucida*. The book collects 13 essays originally published between 1982 and 2009 and attempts to provide a survey of Anglo-American critical writing on Barthes's book from within the field of art history and photography studies (Batchen 2011).

Margaret Olin and Carol Mavor's articles in this collection both focus on some problematic aspects of race in *Camera Lucida*. Discussing James Van Der Zee's photograph of a black Harlem family from the 1920s, Olin critiques Barthes's classification of the family's touching naivety in their "efforts of social advancement in order to assume the White Man's attributes" (*CL*, 43). Olin reads between the lines of Barthes's condescending tone to suggest that what he terms "white attributes"— "respectability, family life, conformism, Sunday best"—are by implication out of reach for the black family of 1920s America (Olin 2011, 77-79). Olin's reading of Barthes prompts her to ask: "To what image of blacks in Harlem should Van Der Zee's sitters have conformed? Why does Barthes call their identity into question?" (78). A reply of sorts to these questions comes in the form of Carol Mavor's essay "Black and Blue", which reads the blackness of the bodies in *Camera Lucida* in relation to the blueness of Barthes's mother's eyes. Mavor writes that she has "never *not* noticed" the four photographs of black subjects in Barthes's book, arguing that the "fact of blackness is as stubborn as the photograph's link to the referent" (Mavor 2011, 214). Mavor similarly identifies Barthes's "racist tendencies" in his description of the Van Der Zee image but scrutinises this reading to eventually argue for the ways that "both mother and blackness nourish *Camera Lucida*" (212-214). Mavor argues that, in situating black subjects as a counterpoint to the white luminosity of his mother's face, Barthes "unveils desire as raced" (227).

Recent monographs such as Mavor's *Reading Boyishly* (2007), her 2012 book *Black and Blue* (a development of the essay above)*,* and Eugenie Brinkema's *The Forms of the Affects* (2014) have come from the disciplines of Art History, Visual Culture and Film Studies in an attempt to adopt Barthes's "affective intentionality" as a method

with which to read art works. These books are formally creative and attempt to approach theoretical writing in its performative mode (Mavor calls herself an "artist-historian"). James Elkins's 2011 book *What Photography Is* could also be classified in this mode. Elkins adopts the form, structure, and even type-setting, of *Camera Lucida* to "write about photography by writing into or through Barthes's book… writing at first from inside it, in order to be finally outside it (Elkins 2011, x-xi). In justifying his approach, Elkins argues that academic writing has failed to account for the way that Barthes imbues his writing with hurt, desire and affect—what Elkins terms the "glasshouse atmosphere" of the book—suggesting instead that "the only way to reply to a book as strange as Barthes's is to write another one even stranger" (8&14).

These more recent readings have situated Barthes's method at the start of a renewed interest in affect in the light of the critical turn away from emotions in the 1960s and 70s. Elkins (echoing Kennedy and Prosser) writes that *Camera Lucida* is:

> at the beginning of a flourishing interest in affect, feeling, trauma… before the art world was caught up in affect and identity, Barthes's book was an anomaly, which needed to be rectified to be used. Now it seems much closer, and its warmth and weirdness feel just about right. (Elkins 2011, xi)

In an exploration of compassion in Barthes's work Katja Haustein has argued that the critical turn to affect since the 1980s can be understood as "a post-structuralist response to certain (well known) shortcomings of structuralism" (Haustein 2015, 131). Haustein argues that *Camera Lucida* is Barthes's attempt to "overcome the conceptual impasse into which the structuralist theory of the subject had manoeuvred itself" and he does this by opening up the self to the other (Haustein 2012, 149). For Haustein, rather than attempting to "rehabilitate… [the] 'outmoded' notion of the autobiographical subject" (as some have claimed), *Camera Lucida*'s affective gaze attempts to "overcome the confines of the self… to recognise the other" (Haustein 2015, 137-138). In other words, Barthes's "affective intentionality," in his reading of the photograph, encourages a compassionate mode of identification with the other through pity as a form of "suffering with" (140). Eugenie Brinkema also reads *Camera Lucida* in light of the "turn to affect" arguing that Barthes's book rejects Frederic Jameson's infamous claim of a "waning of affect" in postmodernity and instead presents the "very form of the peculiar unending pain of loss" (Brinkema 2014, xi&76). Brinkema argues that Barthes not only explores affect as method in *Camera*

Lucida, but that he recognises the structure of affect in the photograph and utilises *affect as form* in his writing. This again challenges the idea of affect as the psychological experience of a unified subject and instead, "the presencing of grief through the photograph suggests a theory of affect as a force that takes form in texts" (92). I will return to both Haustein's discussion of pity and Brinkema's concept of affect as form in later chapters.

2015 saw the 100-year anniversary of Barthes's birth and with it the publication of a special issue of *L'Esprit de Créateur* focussing on Roland Barthes and his influence. The essays in this issue arose from a series of seminars held between 2013-2014 at the Centre for Modern European Literature at the University of Kent. Of specific interest to this project are Katja Haustein's essay "Barthes on Pity", discussed above, and Kate Briggs's reflections on the task of translating Barthes's lecture course *The Preparation of the Novel*, where she discusses how these lectures can be read as a pedagogy of writing (Briggs 2015). Although an interest in Barthes's work has been fairly sustained since his death (and certainly since Rabaté's collection), a re-turn to Barthes's late work is necessary due to the relatively recent publication of his lectures at the *Collège de France* from 1976-1979. *The Neutral* was first published in English in 2005, *The Preparation of the Novel* in 2011 and *How to Live Together* in 2013. These lectures provide a new context from which to read *Camera Lucida* and there are recent and emerging studies in English that have responded to the new availability of these lectures such as Lucy O'Meara's *Roland Barthes at the Collège de France* (2012) and Sunil Manghani's forthcoming monograph on *Neutral Life*.

As well as following the development of critical writing on Barthes since *Camera Lucida*, it is important in contextualizing the text to chart the ways that Barthes's writing has been taken up and responded to in the field of theatre studies. The remainder of this chapter, therefore, locates *Camera Lucida*'s reflections on photography, and their influence, in relation to the shifting interests in the theory and analysis of theatre and performance events.

Theatre Studies and Roland Barthes

Semiotics and textuality

Most commonly, Barthes's work has been taken up in the field of theatre and performance studies for its contribution to the methods and approaches of theatre semiotics. This is notable in two key texts: Keir Elam's *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama* (1980) and Elaine Aston and George Savona's *Theatre as Sign-System* (1991). Elam cites Barthes's 1964 work *Elements of Semiology* as key further reading and also refers to Barthes's *Tel Quel* interview from 1963, where he defines theatre as a "real informational polyphony, which is what theatricality is: a density of signs" (*CE*, 261-262). Elam mentions Barthes's classification of theatre as a "density of signs" a number of times in the book but does not engage with the more tricky concept of theatricality (see Elam 2002, 17-18, 34, 40, 106).[30] Similarly, Aston and Savona draw on the same interview from 1963, where Barthes identifies some provocative questions for the use of semiotics in the analysis of theatre (provocations that were subsequently taken up by theatre semioticians such as Tadeusz Kowzan and Patrice Pavis) (Aston and Savona 1991, 9). Aston and Savona do more than Elam, though, to explore the possibilities of theatrical analysis beyond the limits of semiotics. Referring to Barthes's *The Pleasure of the Text* during a discussion of plays that "disrupt textual expectations and discomfort or unsettle the reader", Aston and Savona cite Kenneth Tynan's comments on the first production of *Waiting for Godot* (1955), which according to Tynan, forced a re-examination of the rules of drama. Aston and Savona identify in this example, "a process of engagement whereby what is known becomes 'unknown', i.e. the disruptive pleasure of *jouissance*, and which, in consequence, invites a rethinking of the world as it exists" (33).

Other essays by Barthes, such as 1968's "The Death of the Author" or "From Work to Text" (1971), have had an important impact on the ways that, so-called, postmodern theatre practitioners of the 80s and 90s have been discussed within theatre studies. An exemplary example of this can be seen in discussions of The Wooster Group's work and, in particular, their production of *L.S.D. (…Just the High Points…)* (1984). *L.S.D.,* which literally placed a series of texts on stage, presented an embodiment of Barthes's configuration of the text as a "tissue of quotations… that blend and clash" (*IMT*, 146):

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[30] I discuss Barthes's conception of theatricality in **Chapter Four**.

from the random readings of beat generation books in part one, to the sped-up and re-written version of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* in part two. Barthes's influential claim that meaning is located in the reader, not the author, of texts was taken up by scholars seeking to contextualise The Wooster Group's practice within critical theory.[31] In Gerald Rabkin's essay "Is There a Text on this Stage?" (1985), he draws on Barthes to unpack the Group's use of *The Crucible,* which led to legal challenges and finally a "cease and desist" order from Arthur Miller. Rabkin identifies in their work a conscious rejection of authorial intent "in order to force its audiences' active participation" (Rabkin 1985, 145). Similarly, though much later, Philip Auslander analyses *L.S.D* within the framework of "postmodern political theatre" drawing on Barthes to classify their use of *The Crucible* as assuming a "poststructuralist idea of textuality" (Auslander 1997, 70-71).

Punctum/pathos

Keir Elam's book on theatre semiotics from 1980 does not account for the same affective experience of *jouissance,* described by Aston and Savona in the example above. However, in a later essay from 1983, Elam directly draws on *Camera Lucida* when calling for theatre semiotics to take into account the "*punctum,* or *pathos* or if you like audience passion, that compulsion which… motivates the receiver's active participation in the artistic practice" (Elam 1983, 269). Elam argues that Barthes's *punctum* recalls Aristotle's theory of *pathos* as "suffering, the injury" and that much of theatrical semiotics (at this point in its history) is concerned with the "temperate zone of the *studium,*" "the purely cognitive decoding," "a professional 'application to' or 'being interested in'" (269). Elam charges Brecht's theatre as the instigator of the expulsion of *pathos* in his rejection of Aristotelian dramatic theatre: a comment that rings true with Barthes's celebration of Brechtian signification in his essays on Brecht from the 1950s.[32] However, this opposition between the *punctum*'s passion and Brechtian aesthetics is one that I go on to challenge in **Chapters Three** and **Four** through the concept of affective *gestus*. Elam argues that the expulsion of *pathos* within semiotics is an "ideological choice" and that it must be possible to return feeling to the study of theatre through "a semiotic conception of the *punctum"* (269-270).

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[31] see the *TDR* special issue on *L.S.D.* for example (1985).
[32] See in particular "The Brechtian Revolution", "The Diseases of Costume" and "The Task of Brechtian Criticism" collected in *Critical Essays* (1972).

While Elam fails to acknowledge the *punctum*'s resistance to the semiotic enterprise, his essay nevertheless offers a crucial provocation for the field of theatre studies: that of a semiotics of feeling.

Herbert Blau's 1987 book *The Eye of Prey* attempts such a recuperation of *pathos* from its denigration in the "history of the modern" (Blau 1987, 84). Blau approaches this through a comparison of the sentimentality of Beckett and Barthes, two figures that Blau argues have a "heart in [their] head" (ibid.). Blau draws on the associations of the *punctum*'s prick as a "deadly stigmatum in the brain" to argue for the ways that *Camera Lucida* brings Barthes in relation to Beckett through the "ecstatic burden of the tragic pathos, its madness, abject, stupid, the nearly forgotten, discredited, old-fashioned emotion" (88). Blau, crucially, also links the violence of the *punctum* to Artaud's "essential drama," "a jetstream of bleeding image in the cruel service of the violence of thought" (90); and, the transcendent "alchemical theatre," a "complete, sonorous, streaming, naked realisation" (Artaud 1958, 52). It is interesting that Blau uses Artaud to refer to the violence of the *punctum*. Barthes's *studium*/*punctum* could arguably be read in theatre in the relation between Brecht and Artaud's theatre respectively—where *studium* refers to the clearly visible signs that reveal our social relations, and *punctum* is a kind of burning actor signalling through the flames. Although, again, this opposition is one that can be undone, an idea that is explored by Elena del Río who argues, in her analysis of Rainer Werner Fassbinder's films, for a kind of viscerally affective *gestus* somewhere between Brecht and Artaud (del Río 2008).

Articulating affect

As we have seen increasingly in publications over the last 10-15 years, theatre studies has (re)turned to Barthes's conception of *studium* and *punctum* to articulate affective experiences in theatre and performance—moments in which there is a break down in codes of communication, when there is a conflation of sign and referent or a traumatic encounter with the reality of representation. In these instances, the *punctum*'s a/effects in performance often seem to occur when the 'reality' of live bodies draw attention to themselves in a way that destabilises the spectator's capacity to interpret the performance semiotically.

A very brief, but key, reference to Barthes's *punctum* comes in Stephen Bottoms's analysis of the dramaturgy of Goat Island. Borrowing from Hal Foster's conception of "traumatic realism" in Andy Warhol (1996), Bottoms argues that the company's affective/affectless dramaturgies—of insistent repetition and the de-hierarchisation of source materials—open up a space for the audience to "confront and process deeply personal questions and 'traumatic realities'" (Bottoms, 1998, 444-5). Referring to a specific repetitive movement sequence from the company's 1996 performance *How Dear To Me the Hour When Daylight Dies*, Bottoms argues that:

> the longer the repetition continues, the less adequate… rationalizing interpretations seem, even as (for me at least) the sequence becomes increasingly unsettling. It is as if the initial, comfortable interpretation of what this gesture might represent gradually gives way to a gut recognition of what it might therefore "mean" on a more personal level. (427-8)

In a later version of this writing that appears in *Small Acts of Repair* (2007), Bottoms defines the *punctum* in this work at the level of technique (composition/dramaturgy) rather than as the "accident which pricks me" (*CL*, 31). Bottoms argues that although the point of wounding may vary from one audience member to the next, "the experience occurs within a temporal landscape that has been carefully structured to facilitate such responses" (Bottoms and Goulish 2007, 58). According to Bottoms, the company achieve this through the "deftly paced juxtaposition of speeds and slownesses, repetition and difference, and its gradual building up of a performative vocabulary which seems both emptied of and pregnant with meaning" (ibid.).

In *Visuality in the Theatre* (2008) Maaike Bleeker provides a more detailed elaboration of the analytical uses of Barthes's *punctum* in a consideration of looking in the theatre. Bleeker applies Barthes's term to moments in performance when there is an apparent conflation of sign and referent. Bleeker describes the *punctum* as the moment where we "see what we know to be always already representation… as 'just there to be seen'" (Bleeker 2008, 94-5). Bleeker argues that although we are always aware that what we are seeing is representation, "the theatre nevertheless presents us with momentary experiences of presence, of immediateness, that seem to escape the realm of the always already constructed" (95).

In applying the *punctum* to theatre, Bleeker describes the performance *Bas and Elze Dance* (1996), in which Cas Enklaar and Els Ingeborg Smits play two fictitious actors

rehearsing for a production of *Electra* in a retirement home for elderly artists. Bleeker argues that there is a moment in the production where it seems as if the actors accidentally repeat a whole scene. In this moment, the conflation of sign and referent breaks the representational frame, resulting in a reality effect similar to the *punctum*. Bleeker argues that in this unexpected repetition, there is a perceptual instability that "causes a short circuit between actors and characters, thereby multiplying the frames" (87). Complicating the relation between *studium* and *punctum*, Bleeker asks:

> What actually do we see here, the actor or the character? This critical move undermines the opposition of framed versus non-framed, of symbolic representation versus real presence. It undermines the idea that breaking up the frame will result in a non-framed situation, opening onto some real, previously obscured presence. Instead, it leaves the audience in uncertainty about how to look, how to understand what is presented. It makes the audience aware of its own visual habits as they are involved in seeing theatre performance. (ibid.)

For Bleeker, as well as the conflation of sign and referent leading us back to the reality of the thing itself, the *punctum* in performance has the potential to produce a troubling uncertainty in the spectator which exposes the "visual habits" of seeing in the theatre.

Where Bleeker locates the *punctum* in the "instability" of framed versus non-framed, Patrick Duggan, in his 2012 book *Trauma Tragedy*, focusses on a "mimetic shimmering" between reality and representation (Duggan 2012, 9). In this book, Duggan follows Raymond Williams's *structures of feeling* to argue for a contemporary moment of *trauma-tragedy*. Duggan argues that much contemporary performance is uniquely concerned with "trying to embody and bear witness to trauma in an immediate way", by evoking "a sense of being there in an attempt to generate an effect of 'real' presence" (42-43). In support of this argument, Duggan examines a series of theatre moments—from the work of Sarah Kane and Romeo Castelluci, to the performance art of Franko B and Kira O'Reilly. Duggan's most interesting case studies, for me, draw directly on Barthes to identify moments of "performative *puncta*" in a series of theatre and live-art works. The performative *punctum,* according to Duggan, occurs when there is either an irruption of the real into the mimetic order (of theatre) or an irruption of mimesis into the perceived "real presence" (of performance art). Duggan argues that in these moments "the spectator is kept in a constant state of flux, never deciding on the images as reality or mimesis… the images refuse resolution

and definition" and in this process the audience experience can echo the symptoms of trauma (73&75).

Unspeakable affects

Duggan's transposition of the *punctum* to theatre and performance is compelling and detailed in its analysis of specific performance moments. However, to map the *punctum* directly onto the language of trauma surely misses some of the radical pleasure, the *jouissance,* that is also captured in the term. Duggan's use of Barthes highlights the fact that there is often something missing in these existing applications of Barthes's *punctum* to theatre and performance. There is a general problem in the above examples that in reducing Barthes's terms to a theoretical approach to analysing performance, the terms themselves have to become tied down somewhat, their meanings fixed. As such, something of the complexities, the contradictions and the unwieldy performative nature of Barthes's writing is lost in the process. Instead, this project has responded to the *punctum*'s unnameable and unlocatable qualities not by focussing on a translation or application of the *punctum*, but by reflecting on a process of creative response that puts Barthes's concepts in motion. By devising performance in response to *Camera Lucida*, the unspeakable, messy, bodily resonances of the *punctum* can be held in tension in all their slippery complexity. The following chapters turn to my three performances, *Involuntary Memory*, *Kairos* and *After Camera Lucida*, in order to tease out these resonances for the reader.

Chapter Two: "absolutely, irrefutably present, and yet already deferred"

Involuntary Memory (2015)

Introduction

The first stage of practical studio work I undertook as part of my PhD took place between February and May 2015. Following an initial period of reading in the fields between performance and photography, I developed a series of devising prompts based around phrases gleaned from the reading that related to explorations of Barthes's *punctum* in performance (*a messing up of time*, *a missed encounter*, *deferred action*, *cross-temporal slippage*, *corpse impression* etc.). These prompts acted as mnemonic devices that attempted to distil ideas from the theoretical texts in order for me to adapt them into directives for making performance (such as: create a performance that messes up time; stage a missed encounter; make a dance that defers action [see **Methodology** section]). This approach generated a series of fragmentary, but associatively connected, sections of material that I assembled into a 30-minute work-in-progress. The piece was shown to a small invited audience of friends and colleagues on 15 March 2015 and was followed by a Critical Response Process feedback session facilitated by Tashi Gore.

Following feedback and reflection on this performance, I developed ideas from the March sharing into the piece *Involuntary Memory,* which was performed on 1 and 13 May 2015 at the University of Glasgow. This performance distilled and refined some elements from the March sharing and presented them as a performance installation for one audience member at a time. [34] The reflections in this chapter focus on the performances in May as a culmination of the practical work in year one of the PhD. Some of the material from the March work-in-progress also re-surfaced in my second and third-year performances and I discuss this, where relevant, in the following chapters. In this chapter, though, I describe how I arrived at the format for the May performances, analyse elements of the performance in relation to the theoretical ideas that have informed my process, and re-present some of the audience comments that I gathered in response to the work.

The main sections of this chapter, structured around thematic sub-headings, take up and reflect on a number of ideas that the piece explored. The writing in these sections

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[34] The performance on 13 May differed from this format, with the piece spanning an hour in which multiple audience members could share the space. I discuss these differences in more detail in the **Duration** section below.

gestures towards the outcomes of the research practice (whilst also aware of the unassimilable detail of the performance) in a consideration of how and what the performance thought. I have woven the audience responses gathered from two performances on 1 May and 13 May throughout this chapter in the form of hand-written index cards. These cards aim to re-perform one aspect of the performance's aesthetic presentation, while also providing alternative perspectives on the work that are in dialogue with my own descriptions and analysis. By re-presenting these comments here, in my own handwriting, I hope to frame the texts performatively, in a way that acknowledges their partial and contingent status as documents of the audience experience. The photographic documentation attempts to illustrate aspects of the performance; but also, to demonstrate some of the ideas explored in the writing around the fragmentation of body and text, absence and presence, and duration. The photographs and audience comments are placed in the text in a way that aims to disrupt the linearity of the reading experience, to create a sort of drift between text and images (similar to my experience of reading *Camera Lucida*) and to emulate the kind of viewing experience I was encouraging through the form of *Involuntary Memory*.

How do you *Perform* a *Book* about *Photography*?

In between the March performance and my second strand of studio work, at the end of April 2015, I attended the Performance Philosophy conference in Chicago. Alongside the conference programme was a work-in-progress performance from Every House Has a Door (the new company of ex-Goat Island members Matthew Goulish and Lin Hixson). Their performance of *3 Matadors* attempted to stage a micro-play which exists within Jay Wright's book-length poem *The Presentable Art of Reading Absence* (2008). The company's reflections on the inter-medial issues which arose from staging a micro-play within a poem were presented in Goulish and Hixson's keynote paper at the conference "From One Meaning to Another". In the talk, they discussed the different modes of communication between a written text, spoken text and movement. They were interested in exploring the polysemous meaning of the play by presenting a choreography of bullfighting manoeuvres alongside their textual description in Wright's poem, to explore "the words first as feeling and language like a close second, an echo" (Goulish and Hixson 2015b).

Attending Goulish and Hixson's talk prompted me to return to my own practical work and think about the inter-medial nature of *Camera Lucida* (and my interactions with it), but also to think about how Barthes's book tries to practice the ideas he is discussing through the inter-relation of writing and photographs. As the previous chapter discusses, Barthes attempts to evoke the effects of the *punctum* by describing his experiences of it in a series of photographs—to "animate" these photographs for the viewer through his commentary on them (*CL*, 20). However, Barthes also attempts to practice a form of writing that acknowledges the impossibility of reducing the unassimiliable detail of these images to the codified meanings of language. To return to Derek Attridge's reading of the book, discussed earlier, Barthes's challenge in *Camera Lucida* lies in "respecting… singularity while generalising it… making the *punctum studium* without it ceasing to be *punctum*" (Attridge 1997, 87-88). In other words, Barthes attempts to communicate something of what, in photography, moves him while retaining the unspeakable affects of the *punctum*: "the unspeakable which wants to be spoken" (*CL*, 19).

While considering how Barthes might be practising photography's affect through writing, and how an image or a movement may hold unassimilable meaning, I started to think about how I might approach similar ideas through performance. I formulated the question: How do you *perform* a *book* about *photography*? A question that may appear very simple, yet holds something of the complexities of the inter-medial study that I hoped to conduct. In response to this question, I re-read *Camera Lucida* thinking about how I might respond to Barthes's *book* about *photography* through the form of *performance*. The theatrical aspects of the text that stood out on this re-reading related to Barthes's evocative descriptions of his encounter with the Winter Garden Photograph, which he discovers "alone… under the lamp" (*CL*, 67). Later in the book, Barthes writes about his ideal situation for viewing a photograph, noting that "I need to be alone with the photographs I am looking at" and that "if I like a photograph, if it disturbs me, I linger over it… I look at it, I scrutinize it" (*CL*, 97&99). This re-reading prompted the following additional questions: What mode of performance might best explore this individual encounter that Barthes describes? How might the duration of the performance be set up to encourage the audience to linger over the images and ideas in it? In what ways might performance resist this kind of photographic scrutiny? To address these questions, I started to experiment with a mode of performance, for

one audience member at a time, that in some way resembled the act of viewing a photograph (as described by Barthes). The aim was to create a performance that worked with *Camera Lucida* to stage *an encounter with* an image in time and space.

Photographic Performance

As well as thinking about this performance as a staging of Barthes's encounter with the photograph of his mother, I followed my initial research impulse of using Barthes's book to explore the relationships between performance and photography. Two performances were key influences for thinking about how I might develop a form for this work that borrowed some of the structures of photography: Jo Bannon's *Exposure* (2013) and Cassils's *Becoming an Image* (2012). Both pieces reflexively stage the act of looking and involve references to, or practices of, photography. The two performances also echo the structures of the photographic encounter but explore this in a specifically live moment, leading to provocative tensions between the two mediums.

Bannon's piece is a 10-minute one-to-one encounter between the artist and one audience member in which, over a pre-recorded text on headphones, Bannon discusses her albinism and reflects on ideas of looking and being looked at. The performance takes place in a dark room in which the darkness is interrupted intermittently by Bannon, who shines a torch in her eyes to show her pigment-less retinas; and in another moment, uses a light-box to display a close up transparency of her eye. In *Becoming and Image* by trans-artist Cassils, the audience gather around a four-foot obelisk of clay, which, over 20-minutes, is punched, kicked and pounded into a distorted and misshapen mass.[35] Cassils's act is performed in pitch-black darkness but is illuminated in split second bursts by the flash of collaborator Eric Charles's camera.

Both Bannon's and Cassils's pieces utilise pitch-dark spaces and play with light as a way to reveal images to the audience in a much more fragmented way than most theatre performances. These pieces radically reverse the theatrical device of the blackout that frames what the audience sees. In these works, instead of the blackout marking the

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[35] Cassils defines themself on their website as a "gender non-conforming trans masculine visual artist" and uses gender-neutral pronouns and a single name to identify themselves (Cassils 2015). I therefore refer to Cassils here and in **Chapter Three** using either 'Cassils', or the pronouns 'they,' 'them,' 'their'.

division between images, or 'scenes', it is the images that mark the space in between moments of darkness. In *Involuntary Memory*, I was similarly interested in adopting and exploring strategies for darkness and light to structure the audience's experience of the performance.

In both *Exposure* and *Becoming an Image* there is also an exploration of withheld or refracted bodily presence. This has to do with the play of light and dark discussed above; but also, in Bannon's piece, the splitting of her live body and her text (in this case through a pre-recorded voice over). In Cassils's piece, the body was withheld by limiting the visible information to the split second of the photographer's flash. These strategies for refracting the performer's presence were also explored in my staging of *Involuntary Memory,* as I will discuss in more detail in the **Absenting the live body** section below. Thinking about how performances might be considered photographic directly informed my thinking and practice for *Involuntary Memory* (in the development of a 'performance installation' and my attempt to 'stage an image'). This approach has led me to reflect productively between the mediums of performance and photography. Before I discuss my performance in more detail, in relation to a series of thematic sub-headings, I offer some context for the piece's title.

Involuntary Memory

The title of the piece refers to Marcel Proust's concept of involuntary memory—as explored in his novel *À la recherche du temps perdu* (1913-1927)—where things sensed in the present call up associative memories of the past. Barthes links involuntary memory to the photograph in one of his many brief references to Proust in *Camera Lucida* where he writes—on witnessing the photograph of his mother as a child—that photography "gave me a sentiment as certain as remembrance… an involuntary and complete memory" (*CL*, 70). However, elsewhere in the book Barthes rejects that the photograph is Proustian, arguing that it cannot recall the past or "aid" memory, but instead, "blocks memory, quickly becomes a counter-memory" (*CL*, 82&91). This recalls Kracauer's discussion of the "memory-image", which he contrasts with the photograph as a spatial and temporal continuum noting that memories "retain what is given only insofar as it has significance" and that "memory does not pay attention to dates; it skips years or stretches temporal distance" (Kracauer 1993, 3).

Jay Prosser notes that Proust also saw nothing 'Proustian' in the photograph, referencing the narrator of *À la recherche du temps perdu*'s horror at the photograph of Albertine after her death that "forms an analogy for… the horrible livedness of her death" (Prosser 2005, 39). Instead, for Proust, the past is brought back into the present through other senses: the scent and taste of a madeleine dipped in tea. Perhaps, then, involuntary memory is more appropriately explored through the medium of performance, an artform that emphatically engages the whole sensorium. This point is underlined by Erika Fischer-Lichte who draws on Proust to describe the way performance might trigger associative memories. Fischer-Lichte terms this "an instance of emergence," when meanings occur "without being called for or sought out" (Fischer-Lichte 2008, 143).

While he denies that the photograph is Proustian, Barthes does link this type of associative memory to the *punctum*, describing the power of the *punctum* to involuntarily recall embodied feelings and memories. On referencing a photograph by André Kertész, of a blind violinist in Hungary (1921), Barthes writes that in the texture of the dirt road, "I recognize, with my whole body, the straggling villages I passed through on my long ago travels in Hungary and Rumania [sic]" (*CL*, 45). In responding to *Camera Lucida*, then, this piece attempted to foreground and explore the ways that performance, in an act of remembrance, might trigger memories and involuntary associations for the audience.

Diary entry from November 10, 1977 (translation appears on page 42).

*Figure 3 - Roland Barthes's mourning diary entries (*MD, *118-119).*

Description of a performance

I greet one audience member at a time at the door, outside of the performance space. The audience member is informed that there is a table and chair in the space and that they are welcome to sit at the table upon entering the room. They are informed that there are some photographs and text on the table and they are invited to look at these documents. They are informed that the room is very dark and that there will be flashing lights and nudity. They are informed that they have a 30-minute slot but that they can stay for as little or as long of that slot as they wish. Finally, they are asked to wait for two minutes before entering the space to allow time for me to get ready.

The room is very dark and the space is set up with the following elements: a table with an empty chair, on the table is a slide projector, an angle poise lamp with a red gel over the bulb, eleven index cards with hand-written text on them, four black and white photographs of my mother as a child, surrounding one colour photograph of her when she is older (these photographs are placed under a sheet of glass), and a glass of milk. The slide projector is focussed onto a sheet of A4 paper, which is sitting on a music stand to the left of the table (about one foot from the projector). There are three empty slots on the carousel for each slide. The slides are made up of text and black and white images of me assuming a series of poses. The projector is constantly rotating, which only allows each slot/slide to flash on and off. The remote control for the projector (attached by a wire) leads into a darker space on the opposite side of the table to the chair (about six feet away). In this dark space, I am lying naked in a pool of milk with my eyes closed and the remote control of the projector clenched in my teeth. Next to me is an empty, upside down glass. Behind me (from the audience perspective) is a row of four glasses lit by a low-level theatre lamp. Each glass is filled about three-quarters full with milk. The three glasses on the left are evenly spread out, but there is a space before the fourth glass on the right. The nature of the lighting in the space means that, while the table is continuously lit by a dark red hue, I am only ever lit when the projector slides flash on.

Absences/Presences

Martin Lister writes that thinking of the photograph as an index or a trace "exemplifies the play of presence and absence" that relies on "the presence of a material signifier which stands in for an absence: that which is signified" (Lister 2007, 265). In *Camera Lucida,* too, Barthes's configuration of photographic presence relies on the absence of the referent in the moment of the beholder's encounter. He notes that the photographed subject "has been absolutely, irrefutably present, and yet already deferred" by the time-lag between taking a photograph and viewing it (*CL*, 77). This deferral of the present body lends photography something of the traumatic missed encounter. In Lacanian terms, the photograph is an encounter with the Real that through deferred action is always missed (a link that Margaret Iversen explores in her reading of Barthes [see Iversen 1994]).

A key element to the affective deferral of presence in Barthes's definition of the photographic can be explored further through the idea of *presence effects*. In her article "How to define presence effects" Josette Féral uses the term to describe "the feeling of a body's (or an object's) presence—that these bodies or objects create the impression of really being there, even if the audience rationally knows that they are not" (Féral 2012, 29). To discuss presence effects, Féral notes, is "to think right away about absence" (29). Féral outlines a kind of *feeling of presence* that can be brought about even when a person or an object is absent. Presence effects describe the *perception* of bodies or objects as "really there within the same space and timeframe that the spectators find themselves in" (31). Féral also discusses the idea of presence as an intermittent state, where it is the "alternating moments of presence and absence that create the state of presence", and even that presence might, paradoxically, be more strongly felt when there is an *absence of presence*; "when there is a rupture, a straying away or a failing of presence… a '*défaut de présence*'" (32).

Féral's observations are remarkably resonant with Barthes's concepts of absence and presence as they relate to the *punctum* of the photograph. While Barthes argues that the photograph is a "certificate of presence" and that he "perceive[s] the referent… no longer a sign but the thing itself" (*CL*, 87&45), the temporal shift of that presence to the past (in photography's *that-has-been*) marks the absence of the referent in the moment of reception. Therefore, we might term the deferred presence of the *punctum*

as a kind of presence effect: a *feeling of presence* that can be brought about even when a person or an object is absent. The affective power of deferred presence and presence effects in the live encounter were aspects of Barthes's photographic presence that I was keen to explore in *Involuntary Memory*. As mentioned in relation to the photographic performances discussed above, the piece approached this by attempting to withhold or fragment the presence of the body and juxtapose this with a series of physiologically affective presences, such as the smell of the milk and the violent flashes of light.

> 1st May
>
> the flickering light would only allow me to see fragments of body ... I imagined that the projector was showing us fractured moments of your dreams.
>
> T4

> 13th May
>
> I kept 'losing' the image - as soon as I visually grasped the image, it was gone and I felt the need to stay for some time.
>
> A5

> 1st May.
>
> I can't remember hands or feet.
>
> A2

> 13th May
>
> I moved around the space trying to grasp the image you had created but it kept slipping away and I found it challenging to build a memory of it.
>
> A8

Absenting the live body

I termed the single pose, or action, that I performed in *Involuntary Memory* a *corpse impression* and it developed from a section of material from the March work-in-progress performance. The pose involved me lying naked on the floor in a pool of milk with the slide projector remote clenched in my teeth. I took a deep breath and released this breath in a slow and controlled rhythm. Once as much of the air had left my lungs as possible, I held that breath for as long as I could. Holding this exhaled breath made my body look thin and exposed the contours of my ribs.

This pose was partly influenced by Esther Teichmann's series of photographs *Stillend Gespiegelt* [Silently Mirrored] (2007), which is comprised of a number of fragmented close-up portraits of the bodies of her black husband and her white mother. However, the initial idea to develop a corpse impression pose in response to *Camera Lucida* came from Barthes's elision of the simultaneously living and dead characteristics of the photographed subject (*CL*, 78-79). Barthes suggests that the reality of the referent having been there "suggests that it is already dead"; and inversely, that photographs horribly certify that "the corpse is alive, as *corpse*… the living image of a dead thing" (*CL*, 79). In developing a pose that might explore the unsettling presences of the simultaneously living and dead, I employed some of the exercises developed by performance collective La Pocha Nostra in their use of performative "Tableaux Vivants" and "Human Altars". In their book *Exercises for Rebel Artists* (2011), Guillermo Gómez-Peña and Roberto Sifuentes describe the process of constructing "living and dying dioramas" while paying attention to "the choice, placement, and syntax of the individual objects in relation to the body, and everything in relation to the total installation" (Gómez-Peña and Sifuentes 2011, 116-118). While La Pocha Nostra's exercises are written for a community of artists to construct around a single body as "subject matter," I considered the arrangement of objects, the placement of myself in the space and my controlled breathing as a kind of living and dying image.

From a performance studies perspective, this tension between the embodiment of the living and the dead is explored by Rebecca Schneider in her description of Civil War re-enactor Robert Lee Hodge—who is able to puff his belly up to resemble a bloated corpse. Schneider discusses the problematic nature of Hodge's "bogus" and "indiscreet" corpse as an unreliable material document of the Civil War; and yet, also cites the testimonies of living history enthusiasts, who claim that Hodge's act is "evidence of something that can *touch* the more distant historical record" (Schneider 2011, 101). In her discussion of Hodge's corpse impression, Schneider writes that:

> Hodge's bloat is a kind of affective remain—itself, in its performative repetition, a queer kind of evidence. If the living corpse is a remain of history, it is certainly revisited across a body that cannot pass as the corpse it re-calls. (101)

In my own corpse impression I was attempting to resemble a corpse; but also, through the inability to hold my breath for longer than a few seconds, to draw attention to the

failure of representation in this instance and thus to foreground my body's presence in its attempt at becoming 'absent'. I was interested in using my live body to reference something no longer alive and these associations were certainly picked up by the audience. Even though I was performing a slow and deliberate breathing technique, the majority of audience members did not detect any movement. One response was that there was an "unsettling" stillness in my body, and that this, combined with the stark light of the projector, gave my body a "waxy corpse like look" (see card A7). Other audience responses focussed on a reading of this pose as "a crime scene," where "milk was your blood," or of "coming across a dead body in the woods" (A1&A4). However, these attempts to make sense of my body's various connotative meanings were often troubled by the inability to see or take in the full image.

In other words, the performance fragmented the signifying capabilities of my body. Due to the flashing projector being the only light source that illuminated the space where I was lying, my body was only ever partially glimpsed. A number of audience members commented that they found it difficult to see my body or that they could only take in fragments (A5, A8, A2&T4). This could also be discussed in terms of a fragmentation of my bodily presence. Similar to my experience of witnessing Cassils' *Becoming an Image,* the photographic flashes of the projector, fragmented and dispersed my body to the extent that its full presence was called into question. This enacts something like Josette Féral's dissolution of the subject in the performing body: "a body in pieces, fragmented and yet one" (Féral 1982, 171).

While often the performing body's presence in theatre is discussed with reference to the tension between the *actor's* body and the *character's* body,[36] Peggy Phelan applies this to all forms of representation when she writes that "in the plenitude of [the body's] apparent visibility and availability, the performer actually disappears and represents something else—dance, movement, sound, character, 'art'" (Phelan 1993, 150). Even in a performance like *Involuntary Memory* (where at no point did I attempt to adopt a fictional character), there is a sense in which—through the representation of a pose—I disappeared in the moment of my body's visibility. Similarly, Barthes describes the act of posing for a photograph where "I instantaneously make another body for myself, I transform myself in advance into an image" (*CL*, 10). This relates to Hans-Thies

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[36] See Power (2008) and Fischer-Lichte (2008) for useful discussions of this tension.

Lehmann's comments on the body in theatre that "turns into an image" for the gaze of the spectator. Lehmann writes that the performer is constantly in the process of arriving, producing an "air of (productive) disappointment" as we cannot fully access the live body (Lehmann 2006, 171-2). In the process of posing, then, the body-as-subject transforms itself into the body-as-image and, as a result, the present body never fully arrives.

Involuntary Memory, therefore, explored a tension between the presence of my live body and its absence in the act of perception—staging a missed encounter. This is a dynamic that reverses Barthes's conception of the presence effects of the deferred photographic body: instead of a feeling of presence produced by something absent, this piece explored the present body itself as an absence. As such, the performance created a similarly unsettling affective experience in the viewer.

13th May

The light from the projector gave the body a waxy corpse like look and the stillness of the body was unsettling.

A7

1st May

A thick white line of milk gathered around where your body made contact with the floor.

A3

1st May

Lying in milk, abjected, operating perhaps the slide projector. I wanted to get closer to it, to examine it – it looked like a crime scene, and that milk was your blood.

A1

13th May

I couldn't mistake your naked body. In the veil of darkness (with only staccato reveals) I felt like I was being obtrusive, like watching a dead body - no, coming across a dead body in the woods.
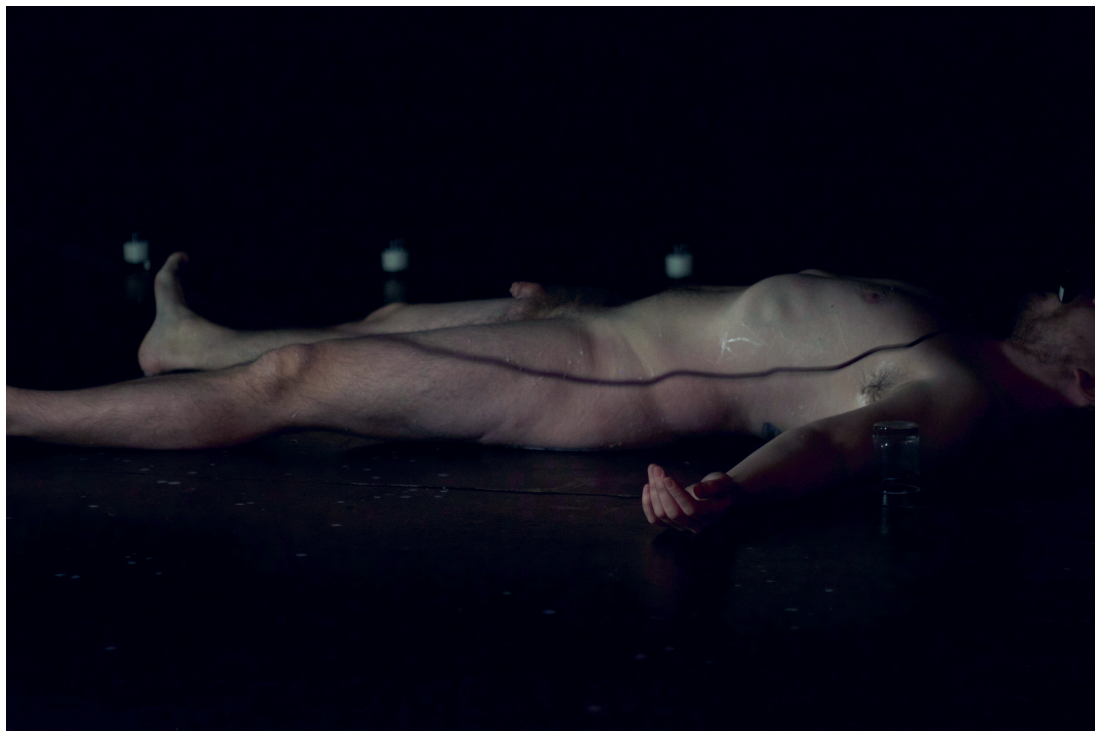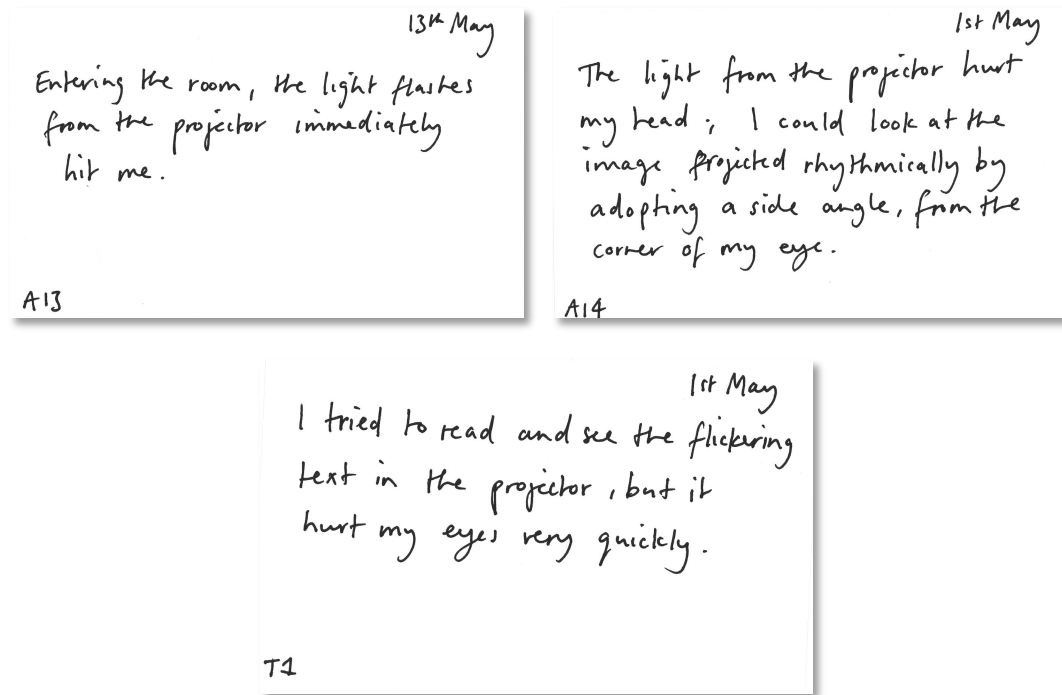
A4

Figure 4 - corpse impression.

Figure 5 - holding this exhaled breath made my body look thin and exposed the contours of my ribs.

13th May

Entering the room, the light flashes from the projector immediately hit me.

A13

1st May

The light from the projector hurt my head; I could look at the image projected rhythmically by adopting a side angle, from the corner of my eye.

A14

1st May

I tried to read and see the flickering text in the projector, but it hurt my eyes very quickly.

T1

Physiological effects

The withheld presence and stillness of my body was juxtaposed with elements of the performance that had strong physiological effects on the audience. The light of the slide projector created a violently bright flashing effect that interrupted the darkness of the rest of the room. The brightness of this flashing had consequences for the 'readability' of the elements in the space. In the literal sense, the text on the slides was difficult to decipher; but also, the flashing light in the darkness made my body and its actions less legible for the audience too. The projection was also purposefully angled to project the text to the side of the table, away from the other elements in the space. The disruptively blinding light and oblique placement of the projected text explored Barthes's claim that "in order to see a photograph well, it is best to look away or close your eyes… as if direct vision oriented its language wrongly" (*CL*, 53). This was evident in one audience member's response where they realised that they were able to look at the projected slides "by adopting a side angle, from the corner of my eye" (A14). This has interesting resonances with Margaret Iversen's Lacanian reading of Barthes, where she classifies the *punctum* as the blind spot in perception. Iversen emphasises the concept of anamorphosis as the stain or spot that disrupts the field of signification that "must be approached indirectly, viewed awry, glancingly, without conscious deliberation" (Iversen 1994, 457). The flashing light of the projector foregrounded a tension between the projected text as words to be read and as

physiologically affective flashes of light that disrupt the signifying processes of the text.

In addition to the blinding effects of the light, the pool of milk that I was lying in had been sitting there for a long time, meaning that the smell of souring milk pervaded the room. If my body evaded the audience's acts of perception, then the milk smell was a perpetual (and perceptual) presence. In her book *The Transformative Power of Performance* (2008) Erika Fischer-Lichte discusses the affective power of odours and their ability to "enter the body and break down its limits" (Fischer-Lichte 2008, 119). Fischer-Lichte argues that while smells themselves may initally provoke strong physiological "feelings of desire or disgust" in the audience, they also "recall contexts or situations or trigger memories that carry strong emotional connotations for the perceiving subject" (118-120). Through the immersive smell of the milk, I hoped to provoke associations in the embodied responses of the audience and this was evident in one audience member who commented that the smell was "deeply mnemonic" (A9). The evocative power of the smell of milk also recalls Proust's reaction to the taste of the Madeleine dipped in tea, filling him with the "precious essence" of childhood memories (Proust 1922, 106). This is a link that Fischer-Lichte makes in relation to the "sensual impressions" of theatre audiences. Fischer-Lichte argues that these sense impressions lead to the "associative generation of meaning," where smell directly provokes memories that "appear in the perceiving subject's consciousness… without the intention and effort of the concerned subjects and sometimes even against their wills" (Fischer-Lichte 2008, 142-3).

In this process, the milk moves from *material* to *semiotic* when the odour is linked to our memories and when we begin to fashion meanings based on our past experiences. As Fischer-Lichte notes on the relation between the phenomenal and the semiotic:

> While the phenomenon is initially perceived in its phenomenal being, it begins to become perceived as a signifier as soon as the focus strays away from the perceived object and into the realm of association. It thus becomes interlinked with ideas, memories, sensations, and emotions as signifieds. (142)

In other words, the moment that the phenomenal qualities of the milk (as sour smell) triggered associative memories, it moved from being perceived phenomenally to semiotically and therefore, following Phelan, the *thing in itself* became absent: it

turned from milk into blood or from cow's milk into breast milk, only to return in the lingering smell. Patrick Duggan describes this as the "shimmering undecidability between reality and representation that causes the audience to stumble in their reading of [a] performance" (Duggan 2012, 84). Duggan labels this a kind of performative *punctum* (in reference to Barthes) highlighting the ways in which Barthes's term describes a moment of undecidability in the movement between presence and absence.

The use of milk in the performance therefore foregrounded the tension between its material presence (as white liquid texture and immersive smell) and its associative connotations (of mother's milk, childhood, blood, candles, nourishment and poison [see **Maternal** section below])—exploring a tension between, what Fischer-Lichte terms, *materiality* and *semioticity* (2008, 17).

1st May

The room was dark... and quiet... and felt utterly enclosed. It was warm and the smell of souring, warming milk verged on the over whelming.

M10

1st May

The milk smell was deeply mremonic- I felt a little lost in it, going back to a time immemorial.

A9

1st May

I felt immersed in the smell of the milk; it absorbed me in a sense, and made me feel a little nauseous.
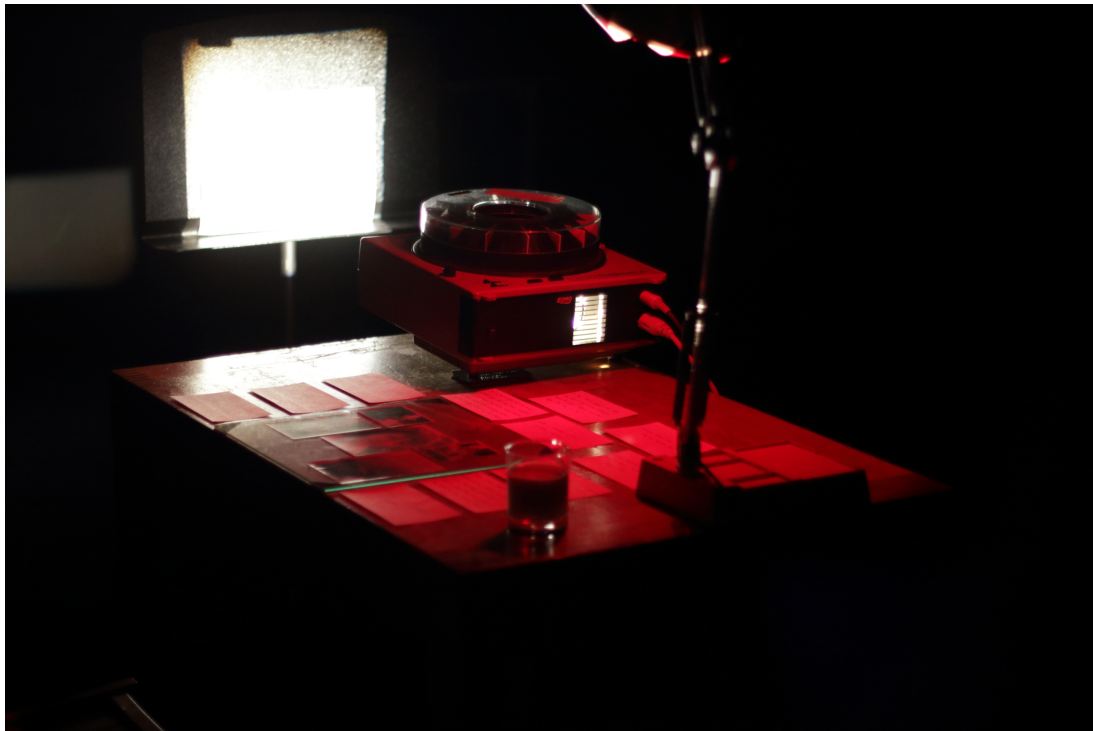
A10

Figure 6 - The light of the slide projector created a violently bright flashing effect that interrupted the darkness of the rest of the room.

Figure 7 - the pool of milk that I was lying in had been sitting there for a long time.

Textual Fragments

My use of text on index cards and slides was an attempt to explore the performative nature of language and the idea of the fragment. In his unconventional autobiography *Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes*, Barthes reflects on his fascination with fragments as a structuring device for his texts—noting that since his first published essay on the journal of André Gide "he has never stopped writing in brief bursts" (*RB*, 93). Barthes notes that a text of fragments circles round an unknowable centre in a way that disrupts meaning. Relating the fragment to the *intermezzo* (music between acts) he asks: "what is the meaning of a pure series of interruptions?" (*RB*, 94). In *The Neutral*, Barthes celebrates the productive uses of the fragment to place meaning "in a state of continuous flux" (*N*, 10). And, in justifying his use of "fragments of discourse" in *A Lover's Discourse* Barthes explains how "the lover speaks in bundles of sentences but does not integrate these sentences on a higher level, into a work" (*LD*, 7).

Although in these examples Barthes is writing his own fragments, rather than using "found texts", his description of the fragment resisting integration into a work recalls David Graver's definition of the collage in avant-garde art. Graver writes that in collage works "the fragments of reality are not fully integrated into the representational scheme of the work of art. Unsubjugated elements of their external life shine through and disrupt the internal organisation of the piece" (Graver 1995, 31). Graver's definition of collage also resembles Barthes's notion of intertextuality, where the text is considered "as a tissue of quotations" (*IMT*, 146). The collaging of textual fragments is a practice that has often been explored by postdramatic theatre and performance practitioners from the Wooster Group's "anthology" of "pieces" (Marranca 2003, 4), to the "synthetic fragments" of Heiner Müller's plays, where "a new text body [is] reborn out of the fragments of foreign texts—out of the dismembered text corpus of Western culture" (Fischer-Lichte 2002, 350).

Similarly, Deirdre Heddon and Jane Milling have recognised a recurring concern among postmodern devising companies to explore "a layered, fragmented, and non-linear 'text'" (Heddon and Milling 2006, 192). The idea of a text of fragments has been developed with particular enthusiasm by Tim Etchells of Forced Entertainment, who has celebrated the fragment as an "ideal compositional unit": "disconnected from its 'original' place, lacking context, lacking 'beginning' or 'end', lacking place in an

argument lacking 'reason'" (Etchells 2004, 281). Echoing Barthes's idea of intertextuality, and of the way the fragment circles around an empty centre, Etchells advocates performance writing as embracing a text of fragments "composed of scraps and layers, fragments, quotations. No editorial, or at least no centre" (Etchells 1999, 99).

While the intertextual relations of fragments of texts to their whole is always implicitly present, to conceive of the fragment as a disconnected unit "cut off from its neighbours" (*RB*, 93) is to start to think of the way that the use of fragments of text might structure time as a series of discreet moments. The textual fragment as a kind of snapshot of language that causes meaning to falter in the interval between. The following section explores textual fragments, and their relation to the ideas discussed above, through my use of slides and index cards in the performance.[37]

> 1st May
> Some of the text, including the projection, was immediately legible: I did not 'read' but took the meaning in at once.
>
> T2

> 1st May
> I was partially blinded (not literally) by the brightness of the projector … Found it almost impossible to read / de-code the words on the slide.
>
> A12

> 13th May
> The speed of the slides allowed for a slippage to and a sense of rever being able to fully understand the whole picture.
>
> T3

---

[37] Scanned copies of the slides and index cards used in the performance can be found in the **Online Appendix**

Slides

For the work in progress performance in March I developed the following text:

> *here it is / you're seeing it / right now / it's happening / this is it / I'm telling you / blink and you'll miss it / right here / do you see it? / do you feel it? / you can tell your friends / can you see it? / can you feel it? / regarde-moi / look at me / look at this / you are in this scenario*

This text originated in response to Barthes's discussion of the photograph as an *antiphon*, a response to the call of a child pointing their finger at a photograph and exclaiming "Look," "See," "Here it is" (*CL,* 5). Barthes argues that the photograph cannot escape the deictic gesture of this pointing finger and, in a similar way, I was interested in presenting a text that highlighted its own indexicality: it might call out to the audience ("you", "your"); reference the performance encounter either spatially ("here"), temporally ("now"), or materially ("this", "it"); and reference a self ("I", "me"). Rebecca Schneider's arguments for how photographs act as call and response also influenced the development of this text. Drawing on Althusser's conception of interpellation, Schneider describes the process by which subjectivities become defined through different modes of address. In her discussion of the performative nature of the Abu Ghraib torture images, Schneider argues that they "interpellate" those looking at them through the pointing fingers of the soldiers which call out to the viewer saying, "look at this *here,* I'm talking to you. So turn around: you are in this scenario" (Schneider 2011, 140&223). The text in these slides, presented alongside my body-as-image, was attempting to make explicit the implicit call of the image, to resemble the performative nature of photographs in their call to a *present* reader/viewer/audience, and to position that audience as witnesses in relation to the performance's images.

For the May performances, I transferred the text onto 35mm transparencies and projected them using an old carousel slide projector. The projector was constantly advancing due to the fact that I was biting down on the remote and, as a result, the text and images on the slides were hard to decipher as they flashed on and off very quickly. In another exploration of the staging of a missed encounter, I was hoping that, as a result of this mode of presentation, there might be a sense of glimpsing something, or of something witnessed, but ultimately missed. As noted above, I also became aware of how the flash of the projector lit the rest of the space; like a slow strobe light, it violently interrupted the darkness of the room. The bright glowing quality of the light

on the paper foregrounded the textures and shapes of the words projected over their linguistic meaning. The use of text on slides in *Involuntary Memory* emphasised the idea of the textual fragment as a snapshot of language by literally turning a series of phrases into photographs (in the form of 35mm slides). The focus here was on presenting text in its fragmentary, indexical and performative mode. However, my other use of text, the index cards on the table, developed as a more conventional approach to staging *Camera Lucida*'s text.

1st May

I was splicing things together in a kind of autonomous montage.

T6

1st May

the lighting made it hard to discern the whole room, the pacing of the slides made it difficult to read/interpret the text on the slides, the text on the small cards was conceptually and narratively difficult.   T9

Figure 8 - I was interested in presenting a text that highlighted its own indexicality.

Figure 9 - a sense of glimpsing something, or of something witnessed, but ultimately missed.

Index cards

The handwritten text presented on 11 index cards was mostly from *Camera Lucida* (apart from two references to milk taken from *A Lover's Discourse* and *Mythologies*). I selected these texts after re-reading the book and all of the *Camera Lucida* excerpts came from the section where Barthes describes looking through photographs of his mother. Barthes's writing in this section is painfully personal and scenographic. He evocatively describes the *mise-en-scène* of his encounter with the Winter Garden Photograph—setting the scene of the November evening, describing the apartment, the lamplight, the detail of the photograph (*CL*, 67-71).

Through the selection and presentation of excerpts from this intensely personal section of *Camera Lucida*, I was inviting the audience to read these texts as the fragmented thoughts of a narrator character that could be Barthes or could be me. I decided to hand write the text on index cards, as if noted down in a moment of contemplation. Barthes purportedly wrote *Camera Lucida* by collecting his thoughts for the 48 sections on a series of notes written on index cards and paper slips.[38] This mode of presentation also echoes the posthumous publication of Barthes's *Mourning Diary*, in which he wrote short diary entries on slips of paper following the death of his mother (Figure 3). In *Mourning Diary*, the reader is presented with fragments of thoughts all associatively linked by their status as reflections on death and mourning.

The index cards in my performance framed the way that the audience might interpret the other elements of the space (in particular the photographs of my mother that are surrounded by the cards). I was interested in their elliptical status and how this might invite the viewer to read between the cards and the other elements of the performance to look for meaning. There are also recurring ideas in the selected texts around the fragmentation of the body, which resonate with the discussions of my refracted presence above. In one of the cards Barthes writes, "sometimes I recognised a region of her face, a certain relation of nose and forehead, the movement of her arms, her hands. I never recognised her except in fragments"; and in another, "I often dream about her (I dream only about her), but it is never quite my mother: sometimes in the dream, there is something misplaced, something excessive" (*CL*, 65&66). I was

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[38] See Batchen (2011). For a discussion of Barthes's practice of using of index cards see Hollier (2005).

interested in how the order of reading the cards might shape their meaning in different ways, which is reflected in the response of one audience member who commented that they felt like they were "splicing things together in a kind of autonomous montage" (T6).

Although I was interested in providing text to be read that framed the elements of the performance through Barthes's thinking, this way of presenting the text was perhaps a rather unsophisticated way of engaging with Barthes's book in performance. Here, the text was *literally* staged, rather than *translated, adapted* or *responded to* using forms specific to performance. In this sense, it merely re-presented the modes of thought that the text already enacts in *Camera Lucida,* rather than responding to the book to explore the ways that theatre and performance might think through similar concerns. Reflecting on the status of the text in this performance prompted me to interrogate what a more performative response to *Camera Lucida* might look like. As I went on to explore in the performance I made in year two (*Kairos*), my strategy for devising from *Camera Lucida* became less about a presentation of Barthes's writing and much more about an act of creative response and translation across media.

1st May

as time went on, I became more conscious of the shape and composition of the handwriting on the cards in front of me – I looked and saw w/o reading.

T7

1st May

I noticed hidden questions and paradoxes in the text:
- "...just for myself..." when you had written them to be displayed
- "I behave like a well-weaned subject" – Why not "I am"?
I didn't try to answer these questions or paradoxes.

T8

1st May

The writer of the cards seemed outside of himself, looking in at his emotions and trying to understand them rather than fully engaging with them: the typical 'intellectual'.
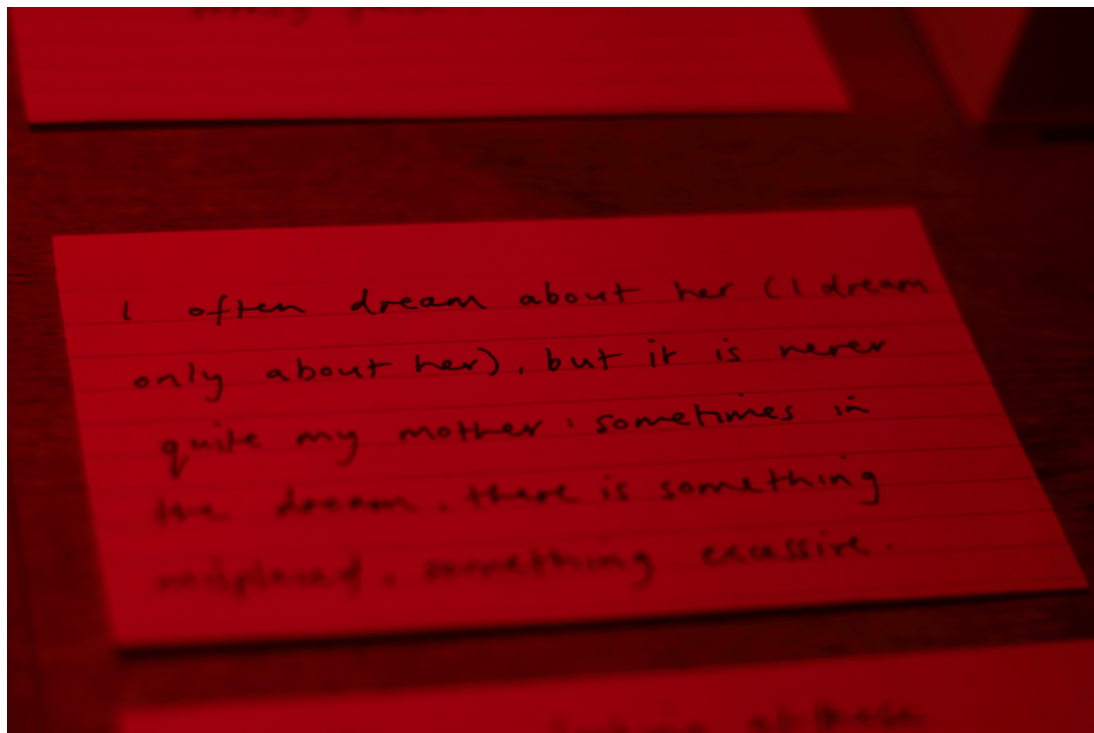
T5
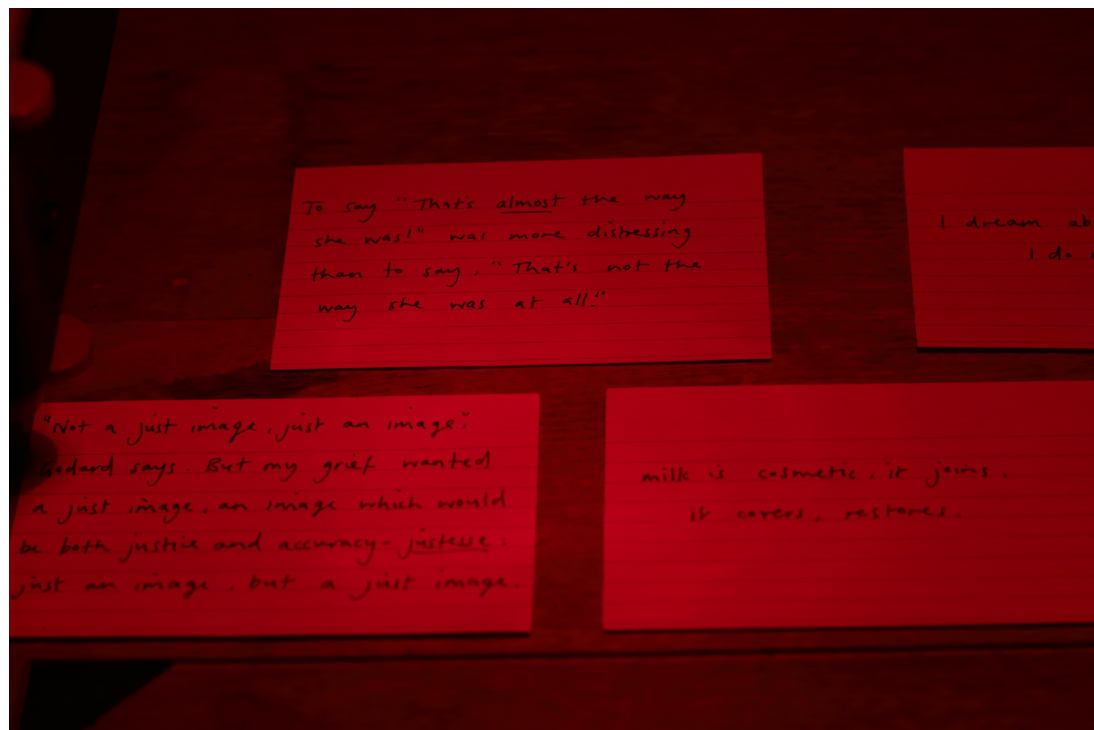
Figure 10 - as if noted down in a moment of contemplation.

Figure 11 - the fragmented thoughts of a narrator character.

Duration

In developing *Involuntary Memory*, I was keen to explore Barthes's conception of photographic time as it relates to performance. As discussed in the previous context section, Barthes classes the photograph as *that-has-been*—a "real" moment in the past that irrupts in the live moment of viewing and a temporal "catastrophe" in which the past and future become elided in the present (*CL*, 96). The process of making *Involuntary Memory* explored strategies for examining these temporal structures through performance. Following recent conceptions of performance time from Boris Groys to Adrian Heathfield—and work that draws on Henri Bergson's notion of *la durée*, or pure duration—what also became apparent were the ways that *Involuntary Memory* might resist Barthes's photographic time through explorations of *being in time* and *pure duration*. The following section teases out these competing temporalities in relation to my performance and considers two versions of the work that structured time in different ways for the audience.

> 13th May
> it was fascinating being in that moment, that instant (again and again) where it was like a camera taking a photo, with the quick flash - normally that moment is fixed - but here it was completely ephemeral.
>
> D2

> 13th May
> There was a strange relationship to time, with the constant click of the projector trying to bring the past (the images) to be inserted in the present.
>
> D4

> 1st May.
> I marked time by noticing when the carousel of slides looped.
>
> D3

Photographic time

Margaret Iversen argues that *Camera Lucida* explores photographic time as a traumatic missed encounter with the real, writing that the photograph "has an

inherently 'traumatic' structure: I witness something in the past by 'deferred action'" (Iversen 1994, 455). This traumatic temporality is one where an event is not fully experienced in the moment of encounter but continually returns to haunt the sufferer after the fact, (what Freud termed the "latency" of the traumatic event [Freud 1939, 109-110], or Lacan a missed encounter with the Real [Lacan 1981, 53-55]). Iversen also links the photograph's mechanical reproducibility to the traumatic repetition compulsion discussed by Freud, where the traumatic event "insistently repeats" as it cannot be worked through, assimilated and subdued (453). *Involuntary Memory* adopted the temporal aspects of *deferred action* and *repetition* as key strategies for exploring the traumatic time of photography in performance.

One way that the performance explored deferred action was through the photographs of my body that were presented in the slide projector. These black and white photographs were taken during the development of the March work-in-progress performance and involved me re-enacting a series of poses from photographic works that had entered the research process by James Van der Zee, Robert Mapplethorpe and Cindy Sherman, among others. The use of these photographs in the performance highlighted what Rebecca Schneider terms the "temporal lag" of reenactment (Schneider 2011, 14), by juxtaposing my past poses in the photographs with the presence of my live body in the space (although as discussed above, the present moment of encounter with my body was a less literal kind of deferral: it was slippery, fragmented and therefore impossible to fully grasp). In a similar way to the text slides discussed above, the split-second flash of the images made them hard for the audience to 'read,' creating a missed encounter with the subject of the photographs that also corresponds to the deferral of action in photographic time. These re-enactments also displace the 'original' poses that they cite as my body becomes the new referent in the photographs.

The use of split-second images of my body and the repetitive flashes of light, that illuminated the space as a series of instants, resonates with Timothy Scheie's observations on the click of the camera shutter. In *Performance Degree Zero* (2006) Scheie writes that "the camera's click represents less an interval in which one can pleasurably linger than a fold in time, and the 'present' moment is reduced to a split second so short one cannot grasp it" (Scheie 2006, 175). As a result, Scheie argues,

the utopian becoming of a live body is robbed of life by the tragic closure of the shutter, that "freezes" the subject into an image (ibid.). These flashes structured the performance as a series of instants, rather than the usual continual flow of time in performance—an idea that was emphasised by the rhythmic, mechanical clicks of the slide projector. The audience comments on the temporal aspects of the piece reflect this idea of an elusive series of repetitive instants: one viewer commented that "it was fascinating being in that moment, that instant (again and again) where it was like a camera taking a photo… normally that moment is fixed but here it was completely ephemeral" (D2). For this audience member, there was an aspect of the deferred action of photographic presence; however, the deferral did not take place in the time lag of the photographic process, but in performance's inability to fix an image in time: in its disappearance. This disappearance is durational, though, the cumulative effect of a series of missed instants, piling up on each other like grains of sand.

While Iversen might define trauma's structures of repetition and deferral as specific to photographic practices, Barthes anticipates my conception of photographic performance by linking time's immobilisation in the photograph to the excessive live practices of the theatrical *tableau vivant* and of *Sleeping Beauty* (a durational performance of sorts). In his example, he writes that the time of the photograph takes on an "excessive, monstrous mode" where "time is engorged": i.e. fed to excess (*CL*, 91).[39] Similarly, Adrian Heathfield and Patrick Duggan have discussed the traumatic nature of performance, not in relation to repetitive instants, but in terms of its excessivity. Heathfield classes the traumatic nature of performance as "a witnessing of an event that is constituted by the very fact that it exceeds you" (Heathfield 2000, 84). Heathfield argues that in performance, "the event is too full and seems too quick for you to know or contain it, which makes you feel like you were never fully there" (ibid.). Recalling the *punctum*'s latency, in Duggan's discussion of Franko B's performance *Still Life* (2003), he argues that the performance is "excessive in that it is beyond (full/complete) comprehension in the first moment of its witnessing… the understanding of the performance is only available to the spectator after the event has passed and in relation to other experiences" (Duggan 2012, 82).

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[39] A claim that is reminiscent of Bazin's discussion of photography's "mummy-complex" where it "embalms time" (Bazin 1960, 8).

As I will go on to discuss, the traumatic, photographic time explored in my performance was, on the whole, resisted by elements of the performance that *did* encourage audience members to "pleasurably linger" in the present moment of the performance. If anything, these moments of resistance gesture towards the apprehension of temporal structures specific to performance, what I will discuss below as *performance time*.

13ᵗʰ May

almost like no time at all
- maybe because of the
  constant clicking

04

1st May

what seemed to be most insistent about
the passing of time were the waves of
awareness of the smell... at times one
could all but ignore it but then it
came back in waves and that pulled
me back into the embodied-ness of
the experience.
A11

Figure 12 - re-enacting a series of poses.

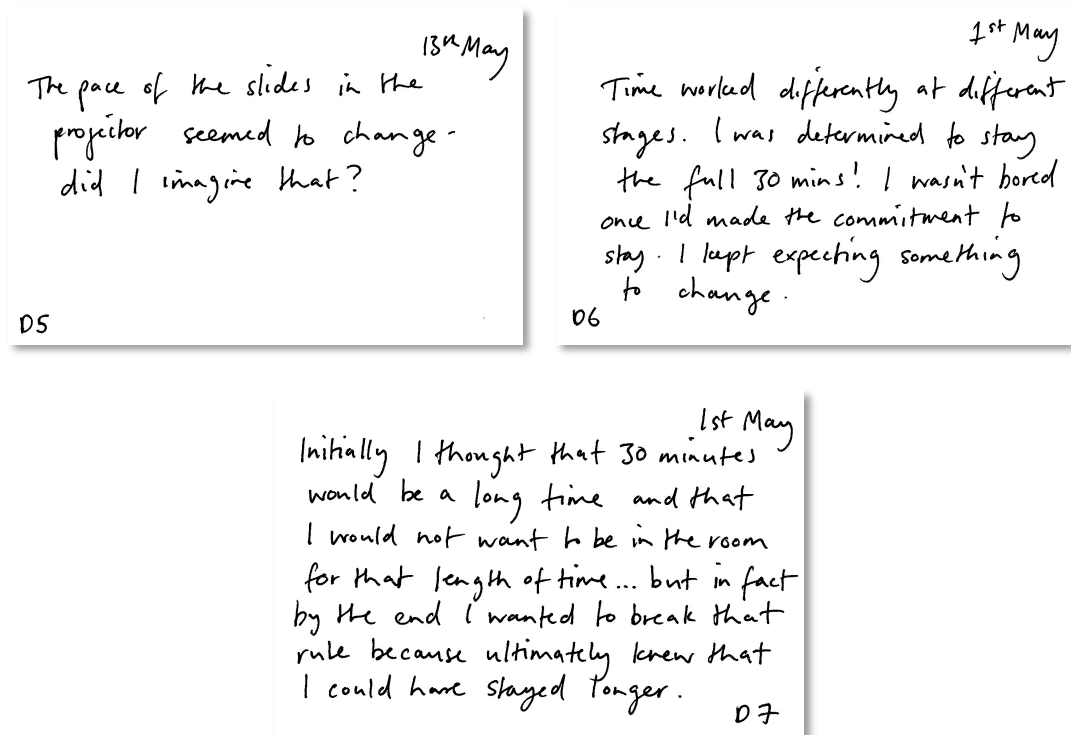*Figure 13 - the "temporal lag" of reenactment.*

Performance Time

Performance's excess can be related to what Boris Groys terms its "pure being-in-time" (Groys 2009, 4). Groys argues that instead of attempting to fix the past for eternal preservation, as the museum or the art gallery might do, performance (or more widely time-based art) exists in a complex present that "thematises the non-productive, wasted, non-historical, excessive time" as "suspended time" (6). Groys suggests that time-based art foregrounds a being *with* time rather than *in* time, that it enacts a collaboration with time "helping time when it has problems, when it has difficulties" (ibid.). Groys's ideas are reflected in another essay by Heathfield in response to Goat Island's 2001 performance *It's an Earthquake in My Heart* in which the latter argues that the company's dramaturgy "holds you inside the duration of these experiences... Each performance quietly requires you to phase-shift your perceptions, and move into a state of *being with* the work" (Heathfield 2001, 16).

The foregrounding of duration in Heathfield's discussion of Goat Island recalls Henri Bergson's notion of real duration as the subjective experience of time. In *Time and Free Will* (1889) Bergson makes a distinction between the quantitative mathematical time that can be measured out in space and the qualitative flow of duration that is experienced in *pure duration* (*la durée*). Bergson defines pure duration as "the form which the succession of our conscious states assumes when our ego lets itself *live*, when it refrains from separating its present state from its former states" (Bergson 2001, 100). In other words, Bergson's pure duration is a conscious state where past and present are not separated. The example Bergson gives is of experiencing musical notes in a tune, arguing that we do not experience the notes as discrete units of time, but instead, they *endure*: "melt… into one another… even if these notes succeed one another… we perceive them in one another" (100). Thus, pure duration is conceived by Bergson as "succession without distinction… [an] organisation of elements, each one of which represents the whole, and cannot be distinguished or isolated from it except by abstract thought" (101).

As Edward Scheer notes in his editorial for the *Performance Research* special issue "On Duration" (2012), the development of thinking on duration in contemporary art and performance disciplines "owes an enormous debt" to Bergson's ideas (Scheer 2012, 2). Scheer outlines the concerns of "durational art" to disrupt linear time and to

emphasise "the flux of temporal experience, the quality of time experienced in the doing of an action rather than simply the quantity of chronological time that a task might consume" (1-2). In the remainder of this section, I would like to discuss the tensions in the performance between what Bergson might define as quantitative and qualitative time and discuss the different experiences of time in relation to two versions of the performance—the 30-minute one-to-one and the one-hour durational version.

13ᵗʰ May

The pace of the slides in the projector seemed to change - did I imagine that?

D5

1st May

Time worked differently at different stages. I was determined to stay the full 30 mins! I wasn't bored once I'd made the commitment to stay. I kept expecting something to change.

D6

1st May

Initially I thought that 30 minutes would be a long time and that I would not want to be in the room for that length of time... but in fact by the end I wanted to break that rule because ultimately knew that I could have stayed longer.

D7

One-to-one/durational

In both versions of the performance, there was a juxtaposition between the clock-like mechanical clicks and flashes of the slide projector—which measured out time in a series of "discreet units"—and the free-flowing *durée* of the audience's experience of the performance. [40] While structuring time as instants, the flashing light made it difficult for the audience to take in all of the elements in the space—a factor that encouraged some to stay with the performance to slowly make a kind of 'sense' of what they were experiencing (D7&D11).

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[40] The rhythmic clicks of the slide projector bring to mind Barthes's comparison of the camera to the mechanical precision of "bells, clocks, watches". Barthes suggests that in the early days of photography cameras could be thought of as "clocks for seeing" (*CL*, 15).

For the first version of the performance on 1 May, I allocated 30-minute slots to one audience member at a time. I greeted each audience member outside of the space at the start of their allotted time slot to talk them through instructions for viewing the piece. I instructed them to sit at the table in the space, warned them of flashing lights and nudity and informed them that their slot was 30-minutes but that they could stay for as little or as long of that as they wanted to. My intention for this structure was that the audience would relax into their experience of the performance, without feeling worried about how long they were expected to stay. Quite deliberately nothing 'happened' in the traditional sense of a theatre event, but at the same time, the space was full of details if they wished to stay. I was interested in allowing time for the audience to read the space carefully, perhaps returning to elements more than once as their experience of the performance shifted. In other words, and in contrast to Scheie's conception of the camera shutter, I did want the audience to "pleasurably linger" in the time of the performance.

> 1st May
> I didn't want to leave ... and made around three attempts to do so, always worried that I had missed something .
>
> D11

> 1st May.
> to linger longer would have unfairly broken our agreement as performer and audience
>
> D8

> 1st May
> I also liked the shift from Harry outside to Harry inside. There was something quite profound in there .
>
> D10

> 1st May
> The framing of the piece - both your emails and initial welcome outside the studio - were careful and respectful and welcoming ... certainly they were totally considerate of the viewer .
>
> D9

Due to the second performance on 13 May being part of a larger symposium event, I decided to allow for more people to see the work and to try out the piece in a slightly different format. The performance lasted for one hour and the audience could come and go at any time during that slot—a format more directly influenced by the durational performances discussed by Scheer (albeit over a less expansive time-scale).

This structure meant that there were occasions when a number of people were in the space at the same time.

The subsequent differences in the audience experience of these two performances can be tracked to an extent in the audience responses. In the first piece, there were comments about how the 30-minute time slot structured the audience's experience of how long they would stay in the performance: one audience member commented that they were "determined to stay for the full 30 mins" and that they stayed in anticipation of something changing (D6). Another audience member wanted to "linger longer" than the allocated 30-minute slot but noted that to stay longer would have "unfairly broken our agreement as performer and audience" (D7&D8). Another important element of this version was the different registers of presence that were experienced between my greeting of the audience outside of the space and my inside presence, with one audience member noticing that "there was something quite profound" in "the shift from Harry outside to Harry inside" (D10).

In the second piece, the encounter was not an individual one, and therefore there was some silent negotiation about who occupied the desk and the audience had a more acute awareness of the duration of my task over time (D12&D13). One responder who saw the second performance initially attempted to navigate the space by 'reading' the reactions of other audience members in the expressions on their faces (D14). Another audience member emphasised the sense of my task as endurance and "a strange feeling between keeping the performance in the present and the knowledge of the performance over a long duration" (D13). My own experience of time in the second version shifted profoundly, I was unaware of how much clock-time had passed and I had my eyes closed so I was much more focused on the sounds of audience moving around the space and the door opening and closing—at times not knowing whether there was anyone else in the room or not. When I guessed that no-one had been in the space with me for a significant amount of time, I opened my eyes to find the room empty and that about 90 minutes had passed.

The most successful articulation of this performance, for me, was the one-to-one 30-minute version as it placed more emphasis on the individual process of searching for meaning and associations that I had hoped to explore by responding to Barthes's solitary search for the image of his mother. This first iteration of the performance also

foregrounded the responsibility between performer and audience as an act of care—my careful framing of the piece for the audience and their commitment to stay in the performance (D9). However, while the one-hour version of this piece was perhaps under developed, it nevertheless explored some interesting aspects in relation to the audience's experience of time. The different inflection of how time was experienced in the second version—namely the audience's awareness that I continued to perform before and after they were present—led to my second-year piece *Kairos* adopting and exploring the durational format further.

The durational aspects of the piece suggest some ways in which *performance time,* by considering the flow of time as duration, resist the traumatic conception of a past instant being inserted into the present in a way that helps to re-think dominant theories of photographic time. The flow of movement in duration contradicts the immobilisation of time that Barthes discusses in front of the Winter Garden Photograph, where he "suffer[s], motionless" and "cannot let [his] gaze drift" (*CL*, 90). Attempting to perform photographic time, as I did in *Involuntary Memory*, therefore resists traumatic conceptions of photographic time by emphasising the flow-like drift of an encounter with an image.

13th May
there was a real experience from the viewer that this was endurance...
there was a strange feeling between keeping the performance in the present and the knowledge of the performance over a long duration.
D13

13th May
I didn't move to the 'occupied' desk space - I felt the person needed 'personal' space to study the information without others hovering nearby
D12

13th May
I was initially struck by the reflections of the other audience members, ghost like and fleeting. I kept trying to fix my attention on their faces in an attempt to 'read' reaction.
D14

The Maternal

It is difficult to respond to Barthes's book about photography without attending to his grief over the death of his mother. There were a number of aspects of *Involuntary Memory* that responded to the ideas of maternal loss and absence that Barthes explores in *Camera Lucida*. The following section looks at autobiographical, psychoanalytical and spatial articulations of the maternal as they were explored in the performance.

1st May

the photographs on the table were unexpected and moving, the smell was totally pervasive.

M2

13th May

I have similar pictures of my mum. It was nice to notice that similarity.

M1

1st May.

my mother died around two years ago - regotiating how/who I felt as I looked at the photos. It took me a year to hang any in my own home.

M3

1st May

As time went on I really noticed that one of the photographs had that rather crinkled edge that I associated with pictures of the past... I think there are one or two of me as a tiny baby on that same type of photographic paper.

M4

Autobiographical

The photographs on display on the table, under the glass, were of my mother. My mother died when I was 14. The audience were not necessarily aware of this autobiographical information, although the fragments of text on the table implicitly refer to the death of Barthes's mother. Whether the audience thought that this piece was about the loss of *my* mother did not matter, but the autobiographical synergy with the subject of Barthes's book is one reason why I am drawn to it and my own personal experience of loss certainly informed my process of response.

I selected the four black and white images of my mother as a child based on their resemblance to Barthes's descriptions of the Winter Garden photograph. In *Camera Lucida* Barthes writes:
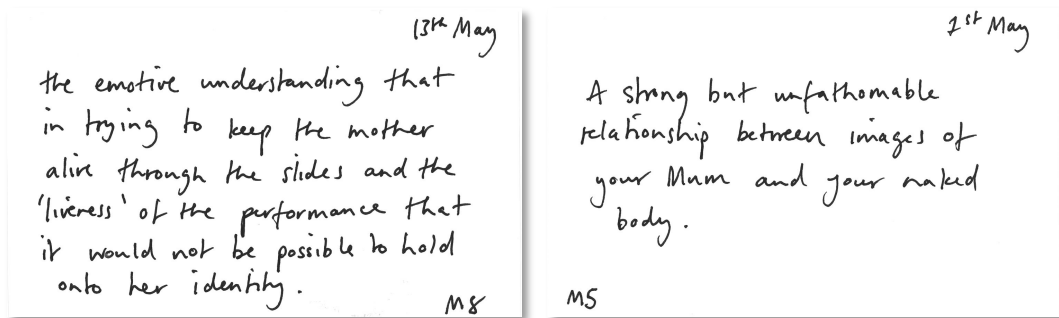
the photograph was very old… the picture just managed to show two children standing together… My mother was five at the time… her brother seven… she was holding one finger in the other hand, as children often do, in an awkward gesture… In this little girl's image I saw the kindness which had formed her being immediately and forever. (*CL*, 67-69)

In the black and white images of *my* mother, there are two of her and her brother, my uncle, sitting in a wooden wheel barrow. In one of these an older woman (possibly their grandmother) is sitting behind them. In this photograph, my mother appears to be holding one finger in her hand (like Barthes describes above). A third photograph, seemingly taken at the same location, is of my mother looking straight at the camera, a grand garden path is in the background, to the left of frame. The unassuming pose that my mother takes up recalls Barthes's mother's "naïve attitude" and "sovereign innocence": "the place she had docilely taken without either showing or hiding herself" (*CL*, 69). In the fourth photograph my mother and uncle are further away from the camera and standing in the sea, an image that echoes the setting of some of Barthes's family photographs in *Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes* (taken at the beach in Biscarosse, Landes) (*RB*, 26-28). These four images of childhood surrounded a colour photograph of my mother taken some time in the 1980s when she was in her 30s.

I was interested in the slippage across time and space that might occur by presenting images of my mother alongside the descriptions by Barthes of the Winter Garden Photograph. There is also a sense of staging, what Magaret Olin terms, "the moment of identification" with Barthes's suffering by 'super-imposing' my mother onto his (Olin 2002, 99). Some of the audience members commented on the emotional quality of these images, that they were "unexpected and moving" or even "moving and at times disturbing" (M2&A6). These comments correspond with Bazin's view of the "disturbing presence of lives halted" in the family album (Bazin 1990, 8). Certainly, I wanted to communicate something of the perpetually present absence and unspeakable feeling of loss that I felt when looking at these images. Even avoiding this hugely personal response to *Camera Lucida* (which is often impossible), I was interested in how the quality and texture of these old-fashioned family photographs may be read by the audience in relation to their own memories and associations of childhood and family photographs. For example, one audience member drew attention to the crinkled edge of one of the photographs "that I associated with pictures of the past" (M4). While, for other audience members, they thought specifically about photographs of

their own mothers (M3&M1). This is resonant with Marianne Hirsch's discussions of *affiliative postmemory* in which, through the artistic use of family photographs and narratives in particular, one might identify with the traumatic experiences of others. Writing in the context of Holocaust studies, Hirsch writes that "*familial* structures of mediation and representation facilitate the *affiliative* acts of the postgeneration… easing identification and projection across distance and difference" (Hirsch 2008, 115). However, Hirsch also warns of the photograph's power to authenticate existing tropes of the family through the "pervasiveness of the familial gaze" and "the forms of mutual recognition that define family images and narratives" (Hirsch 2008, 113).[41]

While my use of photographs did play into existing cultural ideas of maternal absence and mother-son relationship—similar to the "maternal abandonment" and the "fantasy of maternal recognition" that Hirsch identifies in much Holocaust remembrance (and that Barthes also participates in) (Hirsch 2008, 108)—perhaps there was also a blurring of authenticity and subjectivities through the superimposition of my loss onto Barthes's: what Hirsch, following Olin, terms the "performative index" (Hirsch 2008, 124).

13th May
the emotive understanding that
in trying to keep the mother
alive through the slides and the
'liveness' of the performance that
it would not be possible to hold
onto her identity.
                                M8

1st May
A strong but unfathomable
relationship between images of
your Mum and your naked
body.
M5

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[41] In her book *Family Frames* (1997), Hirsch defines the familial gaze as a "screen" between camera and subject that "situates human subjects in the ideology, the mythology, of the family as institution" (11). She contrasts this with the "familial look", a more local and specific "mutually constitutive" relationship between subjects, defined by desire, the look between Barthes and his mother— "mediated by the familial gaze, but exceeding it through its subjective contingency" (Hirsch 1997, 11).

Figure 14 - I was interested in how the quality and texture of these old-fashioned family photographs may be read by the audience.

Figure 15 - "super-imposing" my mother onto his.

13th May

it appeared to be plugged into the projector as if it was feeding the machine or the power from the projector feeding the body.
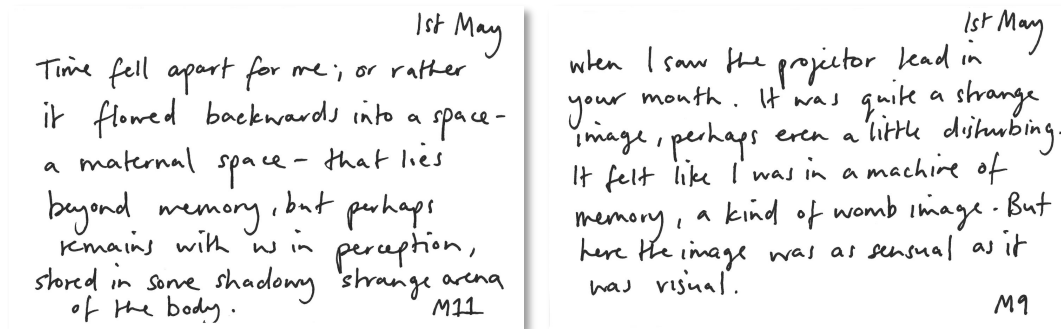
M7

1st May

The cable between your body and the table / projector gave it a hospital feel – a drip, nil by mouth, a canula.

M6

Psychoanalytical

Reinforcing the familial tropes of motherly separation that Hirsch observes, and as I explored in the previous context section, psychoanalytical readings of *Camera Lucida* have emphasised Barthes's foregrounding of the Winter Garden Photograph to position his theory of photography as a repeated separation from the mother. This maternal connection is reflected in one audience comment that likened the performance to a "kind of womb image" (M9). This response resonates with Barthes's discussion of the connection between the photographed subject and the viewer, where he notes that "a sort of umbilical cord links the body of the photographed thing to my gaze" (*CL*, 81). Much like the projector lead linking my body to the flashing images, the umbilical connotations prompted some audience members to reflect on whether the projector was feeding off me, showing fractured memories, or whether the power of the projector was keeping me alive (T4&M7). As Carol Mavor writes in an exhibition catalogue for Esther Teichmann's photographic series *Stillend Gespiegelt*, "in Barthes's hands… every Photograph is a child severed from the Referent as mother. Photography for Barthes… is a medium of love and loss" (Mavor 2007a). These maternal connections were reflected in another audience response which stated that this individual's "emotive understanding" of the piece was one of "trying to keep the mother alive… with the constant click of the projector trying to bring the past (the images) to be inserted in the present" (M8). Again, this comment echoes Mavor's description of Teichmann's work as "the coming and going of a moment lost, held and returned; a mother lost, held and returned" (Mavor 2007a). These comments also shed light on Barthes's project in *Camera Lucida*, writing the photograph as a way of keeping the mother alive in the present, so that "printed, her memory will last at least the time of my own notoriety" (*CL*, 63). At play in both *Camera Lucida* and *Involuntary Memory* is a tension between an *act* of remembrance, and its futility in the face of the repeated loss of the mother.

My decision to use milk in the performance emphasised some of these connections of the figure of the Mother to memory and loss. I was interested in the milk's associative meaning, that might link the images in the performance to both maternal nourishment and childhood. In order to draw out some of these links, I included references to milk in the text fragments that appeared on the flashcards. In *A Lover's Discourse* Barthes writes that "sometimes I have no difficulty enduring absence" and that he "behave[s] as a well-weaned subject" (*LD*, 14). Here the milk of the maternal breast comes to stand in for Barthes's desire, but is oppressed by his assumption of "the training which I was very early accustomed to"—that of the separation from the mother (*LD*, 14). In an early essay from *Mythologies* Barthes compares the properties of Wine and Milk stating that "milk is cosmetic, it joins, covers, restores" (*M*, 69). I was hoping to evoke this restorative quality of milk, along with the associations the audience might have with milk of a maternal nourishment. Katja Haustein has argued that milk "appears in the form of a photographic motif" in *Camera Lucida* (Haustein 2015, 141). She argues that—from the *nourishing* "mammy" of James Van Der Zee's *Family Portrait*, to the reference to Edgerton's split-second drops—milk "leaks across the photographs he contemplates" (141). Barthes's comment that photographic signs do not "*take*" but "*turn*, as milk does" (*CL*, 6) prompts Haustein to read Barthes's conception of the photograph as "clotted milk, as coagulated residues of the photographed body" (141).

As Carol Mavor points out, milk can be seen "as paralyzing as it is nourishing" (Mavor 2012, 37). She cites Alfred Hitchcock's *Suspicion* (1941), in which Cary Grant delivers a lethal glass of milk to Joan Fontaine, and quotes Luce Irigaray's cutting description of the stifling effects of mother-daughter relationship and of the difficulties that are passed down between generations of women within a patriarchal society (see Irigaray 1981). Some of the violence of milk that Mavor highlights was present in the image of my body—like the relics that Bazin compares to photography, I am paralysed or even embalmed by the milk. The souring milk in *Involuntary Memory* coated my body with the connotative residues of restoration, nourishment, coagulation and paralysis.

> *1st May*
> Time fell apart for me; or rather it flowed backwards into a space – a maternal space – that lies beyond memory, but perhaps remains with us in perception, stored in some shadowy strange arena of the body.   M11

> *1st May*
> when I saw the projector lead in your mouth. It was quite a strange image, perhaps even a little disturbing. It felt like I was in a machine of memory, a kind of womb image. But here the image was as sensual as it was visual.   M9

Maternal space

One audience member discussed how they felt lost in the smell of the milk and that the piece absorbed them into a "maternal space… beyond memory" (M11). This has clear resonances with Barthes's discussion of the landscape of the maternal body, which he evokes through Freud who states that "there is no other place of which one can say with so much certainty that one has already been there" (Freud in *CL*, 40). This maternal landscape is linked by Carol Mavor to a utopian time, "a utopia that is driven by an unselfconscious nostalgia of womb memories" (Mavor 2007a). There was certainly something womb-like about the space that made it feel "utterly enclosed" (M10) and that may have drawn out these connections—the immersive darkness, the red glow, a naked body attached by a cord and rhythmic sounds—what Mavor might term "amniotic semiotics" (Mavor 2007a).

Challenging the maternal tropes that Hirsch identifies, also at play in this performance was a kind of dance of meaning that recalls Julia Kristeva's notion of the *chora*. In psychoanalytical terms, the *chora* refers to the pre-symbolic space of early childhood, "the pre-Oedipal semiotic functions and energy discharges that connect and orient the body to the mother" (Kristeva 1984, 27). According to Kristeva it is the mother's body that "becomes the ordering principle of the semiotic *chora*" (ibid.) a principle that, as Maaike Bleeker argues, "manifests itself in the lusty disturbance of meaning, position and identity of subject and object as given in the symbolic structures" (Bleeker 2008, 207n6). The *chora* is "analogous only to vocal and kinetic rhythm," it is "indifferent to language, enigmatic and feminine… irreducible to an intelligible verbal translation; musical, anterior to judgement" (Kristeva, 1984, 26&29). Kristeva's semiotic vibrates at the edges of the symbolic and is exposed in poetic forms that introduce movement to processes of signification. In other words, the chora unfixes the index of

photography, bodies, meaning in a performative and potentially radical way. The vibrating energies of the chora are also present in Kristeva's notion of *signifiance* and I explore these resonances in more detail in relation to Barthes's concept of the grain of the voice in the next chapter. Similarly, the idea of performance space (and specifically the theatre) as a maternal space is an idea that I was keen to explore in more detail in my performance in year three. I therefore develop these initial ideas in the chapter on *After Camera Lucida* (**Chapter Four**).

Figure 16 - the immersive darkness, the red glow.

From pain to pleasure

In these first-year experiments, I approached the making of performance in response to *Camera Lucida* through the question: How do you *perform* a *book* about *photography*? By responding to critical writing between the fields of performance and photography, by literally staging elements of Barthes's book, and by translating some of the affective force of his writing into a sensualised performance image, the performance of *Involuntary Memory* explored the following: principally, the displacement of the live body's presence; aspects of textual fragmentation; photographic and performance time; and the maternal.

A recurring idea in my reflections on the performance has been the way that the piece staged the play between presence and absence, in the tension between my live body and its absence in the moment of perception. Thought of as a diffraction or dispersal of the performer's presence, the piece underlines the fragmented presence of all performance (as discussed by Féral 1982). Similarly, the performance emphasised the tension between a series of material presences (such as blinding light, the pervasive smell of milk) and their associative connotations (the light as a camera flash and the milk bringing up memories of childhood). This tension, between the affective materiality of performance and its ability to produce meaning, is taken up and explored further in the next chapter through Barthes's concept of the grain of the voice, and in relation to my second-year performance *Kairos*.

Using 35mm transparencies, the performance worked with text as snapshots of language—making them deliberately hard to read in order to foreground their shapes and textures as flashing light first, and as words second. The attempts to fragment the narrative of *Camera Lucida* on the index cards were less successful as a performance response to the book, as they merely re-presented the written modes of *Camera Lucida* (literally staging the text), rather than exploring the ways that I might translate, adapt, or respond to Barthes's book *through* performance. In the following chapter, I explore how *Kairos* emerged through a more associative encounter with Barthes's practice of writing.

Another key idea that resulted from this performance is the way in which performance might resist the photographic time that Barthes explores in *Camera Lucida*. Although

attempts were made to explore photographic temporal structures—of the instant, the discreet moment, the deferred encounter—it is clear from the audience response that the performance could not avoid the flow-like drift of real duration. This performance time encouraged the audience to painfully and pleasurably linger in the time and space of the performance (in Adrian Heathfield's words to "move into a state of being with the work" [2001, 16]). The two different versions of *Involuntary Memory* explored slightly different inflections of this, where the 30-minute one-to-one performance allowed a more reflective engagement with the time of the work—whether anything would 'happen' and when to stay or leave the space. The longer durational version was less successful in this respect, but allowed for some interesting reflections from the audience on my task as endurance and the knowledge of the performance continuing when that audience member is no longer there. These experiments in the framing of the piece informed my decisions to further explore durational modes in my second-year performance and to explore performance time as *kairos*: the right moment, a qualitative ripening of time.

Involuntary Memory started to explore the ways that ideas of the maternal pervade Barthes's book on photography. Through super-imposing my own loss onto Barthes's grief over the death of his mother, the piece explored affiliative memory, the affective remains of maternal absence and the sensual aspects of a womb-inflected dramaturgy. Ideas of the mother as theatre, and theatre as mother, return in my third-year performance, which followed Barthes's intensely personal method of taking "Emotion as Departure" (*CL*, viii) and "Mother-as-Guide" (Knight 1997, 254). These developments of the ideas on the maternal, that surfaced in this first-year performance, move towards a consideration of the ways that theatre and performance might re-examine, and ultimately challenge, psychoanalytical readings of Barthes (an argument that I develop further in **Chapter Four**).

Similarly, the aspects of performance time—that resisted the photographic structures of deferred action and the missed encounter—suggest ways that performance might resist classification as traumatic. Patrick Duggan's claim, of the traumatic as a prominent "contemporary structure of feeling," and his application of Barthes's *punctum* to contemporary performance, does not leave space for the profound desire, pleasure and *jouissance* that Barthes experiences in his encounter with the photograph

(*CL*, 116). In my year-two performance, I started from this position—of exploring the blissful pleasures of the *punctum* by contextualising it through Barthes's concepts of the *grain of the voice* and the *pleasure of the text*. The *punctum,* for Barthes, is always this double articulation of pleasure and pain that he desires in artworks. This process led to the exploration of concepts of pensiveness, the haiku, the grain of the body, and the time of *kairos*: a series of concepts where, in the space between meaning and affect, there might be an encounter with the *punctum*. A space where the a/effects of an artwork can be both wounding and ecstatic.

Chapter Three: "the body in… the limb as it performs"

Kairos (2016)

Introduction: a dictionary of twinklings

As discussed briefly at the end of the previous chapter*,* in moving from the performance I made in year one of my PhD*,* to my second-year practical work, I identified a need to broaden psychoanalytical readings of the *punctum* by contextualising *Camera Lucida* within Barthes's wider body of work. Derek Attridge situates Barthes's last book as the culmination of a career-long obsession with theorising meaning at the edges of signification. He cites *jouissance*, the haiku and *satori*, *signifiance*, the *obtuse meaning*, and of course, the *punctum* as a long list of terms that "attempt to capture a moment of breakdown in the codes of signification" (Attridge 1997, 78). I therefore returned to *Camera Lucida*—through *Empire of Signs*, *The Pleasure of the Text, Image Music Text, The Neutral* and *The Preparation of the Novel*—in order to nuance my reading of Barthes's affective encounter with the photograph in relation to his discussions elsewhere of a kind of materiality at the threshold of semiotic meaning. Reading the *punctum* in relation to the concepts expressed in these other works provided a crucial critical context from which to explore the complexities of affect as they relate to *Camera Lucida*, a context that informed my devising experiments in year two.

I was simultaneously reading Barthes's work for formal strategies that I might be able to adapt into devising methods in order to respond creatively to *Camera Lucida* (rather than merely translating his ideas into performance). It was at this point that I became interested in Barthes's use of, what he terms, *figures* in his writing. In Barthes's use of figures, he writes under a series of one word titles and arranges these (often in a random order) to offer multiple and sometimes competing "scenes of language". As a development of the previous chapter's discussion of fragmentation, the figure places more emphasis on the gestural quality of gathered thoughts. In *A Lover's Discourse* Barthes describes the figure as "the body's gesture caught in action… what in the straining body can be immobilised" (*LD*, 4). This "gymnastic or choreographic" quality of the figural fragment explores the ways that writing, structured as figures, might capture the impression of a series of thoughts in motion (*LD*, 3). Here, Barthes uses the etymological root of the word *Dis-cursus* (a running to and fro) to underline how writing in figures might explore the comings and goings of discourse. At the start of *A Lover's Discourse* Barthes comments on the movement of thought in the text:

> No logic links the figures, determines their contiguity: the figures are non-syntagmatic, non-narrative… they stir, collide, subside, return, vanish with no more order than the flight of mosquitoes. Amorous *dis-cursus* is not dialectical; it turns like a perpetual calendar, an encyclopedia of affective culture. (*LD*, 4&7)

This is a structure that allows Barthes to practice his ideas of the fragmentary, non-narrative nature of writing, while simultaneously allowing him to leave conclusions in suspense. In *The Neutral* Barthes expands on his use of figures, arguing that their random organisation puts the subject (in this case the Neutral) "in a state of continuous flux (instead of articulating it with a view to a final meaning)" (*N*, 10). Rather than creating a dictionary of definitions, the figures allow Barthes to explore what he terms a "dictionary… of twinklings" or an "inventory of shimmers" (*N*, 10&77), a way of gathering thoughts about a topic that is led by his desire—to respond to a word "insofar as its referent inside me is a stubborn affect" (*N*, 8). In their introduction to *The Affect Theory Reader* (2010) Melissa Gregg and Gregory Seigworth read Barthes's proposition in *The Neutral* as a call for a form of analysis that takes into account "the progressive accentuation… of intensities, their incremental shimmer: the stretching of process underway, not position taken" (Gregg and Seigworth 2010, 11). The use of figures might be one way to attend to these twinklings and shimmers: a kind of composition as affective-becoming that challenges conceptions of the photographic pose as a freezing or stilling of the subject.

I borrowed from Barthes's affective methods in order to prioritise the associative process of response, rather than literally staging Barthes's book as a performance. As a result, my approach to devising this second-year performance was to develop a series of one word figures that came from my re-reading of *Camera Lucida* and to make material in response to my own associations with these words. For my performance of *Kairos* (2016), I developed 12 figures of performance material that were titled: absence; air; desire; ecstasy; fragment; grain; haiku; intractable; kairos; mother; pose; unspeakable.[42]

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[42] Initially, the number of figures was arbitrary. My initial list was made up of 18 figures. As I started to develop performance material, some of these merged with others. Once I had decided that the piece would be durational, over a number of hours, the logic of 4 cycles x 12 figures (fitting into the 48 sections of *Camera Lucida*) seemed a particularly appropriate structure.

Through feedback on a work-in-progress performance that I shared in March 2016—
which presented the figures once through in alphabetical order—I realised that one
way to offer a less linear experience, and to increase the potential for the suspension
of final meaning, would be to perform the piece over a number of hours and invite the
audience to enter the space at any time and leave at any time. This encouraged a mode
of spectatorship that did not respect the whole—where viewing from start to finish was
unlikely. In order to further emphasise the performance as a series of moments, I
decided to repeat the figures three more times after the first sequence. Each of these
sequences was performed in a random order dictated by the shuffling of 35mm slides
in an old slide projector, which projected the titles of the figures onto a blank
notebook.[43] This structure created the possibility of viewing the figures more than
once, each time in a different context, with my body in increasing states of undress
and exhaustion. As such, each 'repetition' of the sequence aimed to be a variation due
to the changing sequence of the material, the effects of tiredness on my body and the
shifting make-up of the audience in the space. This notion of repetition as variation is
highlighted in Stephen Bottoms's reflections on Goat Island, where in their
performances the material is repeated "as if being turned over and over to see what
new understandings [it] might render up if sufficient attention is paid" (Bottoms and
Goulish 2007, 17).

The material I developed in response to the figures ranged from choreographed
movement, to text and task-based actions. At times I attempted to create material based
on my existing understanding of the words (so "grain" became an exploration of the
material textures of the voice, or "air" explored the specific aura of a face); at other
times, there was a more literal response to the word in the title (so "pose" was a series
of staged poses, for "haiku" I read a series of haiku poems, and for "unspeakable" I sat
in silence for a moment). I hoped, however, that the surface-level literalness of some
of the figures was complicated by the shifting order and context in which they were
performed, as well as by the non-narrative, task-based nature of the piece.

The resulting performances took place at Buzzcut Festival at the Pearce Institute in
Govan, Outskirts Festival at Platform in Easterhouse (both in April 2016), and at Live
Art Bistro in Leeds (June 2016). There were two weeks between the first two

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[43] I discuss the ordering of the slides in more detail in the ***kairos*** section below.

performances where I made some slight alterations to the piece. I will draw the reader's attention to these changes, where relevant, as I move through this chapter. My presentation of photographic documentation in this chapter takes inspiration from Carol Mavor's approach in her book *Black and Blue* (2012). Mavor does not explicitly analyse the photographs presented in her book, but rather, weaves them throughout her evocative critical prose. The captions of the images are derived from sections in the main body of her text that are styled in a different colour font. The result invites productive speculation from the reader as to the precise relation between the images and the text in a way that opens up the images to the affects that Mavor describes. I have experimented with a similar approach in this chapter.

With Barthes's figural approach, and the structure of *Kairos,* in mind, I have traced a series of theoretical figures as they have emerged through my reflections on the performance. I avoid describing the whole performance in detail but instead focus on specific moments as they relate to my discussion. These theoretical 'moments' are interspersed with more poetic reflections on the performance from audience members that attended a creative workshop I led two weeks after the performance (methods of gathering audience responses that are detailed in my **Methodology** section and documented more fully in the **Online Appendix**).

In an exploration of the terms *grain*, *haiku, kairos* and *pensive* I examine the ways in which the piece was in dialogue with Barthes and with recent theories of theatre and performance and reflect on the possibilities for performance made in response to *Camera Lucida*.

I saw you move into the space to dance music, stretching and moving slower than the beat. I saw you put a microphone down your trousers and throw yourself at a recording device. I saw you fix your shirt and your trousers. I saw you change a slide in a still moment. I saw you pose on a chair like an animal. I saw you pose like a politician. I saw you running, I saw you sitting still, I saw you throwing your limbs away from your body. I saw you turn your back against me. I saw you shake, shake, shake with an orange in your mouth. I saw you spit out an orange.

I thought about if you were cold because it was cold. I thought about vulnerability, about exposing bodies and about exposing identities. I thought about animalistic nature. I thought about not everything being set in stone. I thought about technology and trying to capture a moment in time. I thought a lot about time and memory, life and death. I thought about giving memories value through capturing moments in time. I thought about when I would forget this and how many details I could hold on to and remember.

I felt very calm and relaxed, almost in a meditative state. I didn't feel any urge to leave. I felt uncomfortable when you were shaking with the orange. I felt nervous when you were trying to make the recording device work. I felt uncertain about what it would be like in the end, until I realised it went in a full circle. I felt mesmerised and completely 'in it'. I felt worried since I didn't read the writing on the door outside. I felt curious about the slides falling into a different order each time. I felt cold when I came into the room but warm as I stayed there.

Figure 17 – "objects, things, and (we might add) bodies, can be thought of in terms of the ways they go forth from themselves", (University of Glasgow, May 2018).

grain

In his essay "The Grain of the Voice" from 1972, Barthes turns to music (and specifically singing) to explore the "individual thrill" of "the encounter between a language and a voice" (*IMT*, 181). He terms this encounter the *grain of the voice*, "when the [voice] is in a dual posture, a dual production—of language and of music" (*IMT*, 181).

Barthes equates the grain of the voice with Kristeva's notion of *signifiance*, "the materiality of the body" (*IMT*, 182), the pre-symbolic timbre, rhythm and gesture at the edges of signification. In elaborating on this term Barthes draws on Kristeva's concepts of pheno-text and geno-text (which she develops from Émile Benveniste [1969]). Transposed to singing, Barthes terms the *pheno-song* as "everything in the performance which is in the service of communication, representation, expression" (*IMT*, 182); whereas, the *geno-song* is the voluminous energy of the voice, "the space where significations germinate 'from within language and in its very materiality'; it forms a signifying play having nothing to do with communication, representation (of feelings), expression" (*IMT*, 182). According to Barthes, it is in the *geno-song* that *signifiance* can be encountered, in the "voluptuousness of [the] sound-signifiers" (*IMT*, 182).

In these remarks, it is interesting to highlight Barthes's erotic configuration of the body's materiality and the effects that this has on signification and on his "individual thrill". In his argument, the expressive qualities of breath in singing—the vocal technique that supports the "myth of respiration" (*IMT*, 183)—is situated in opposition to the throat and a grainy corporeality that produces a radical pleasure: *jouissance*.[44] Barthes writes that the grain "is the body in the voice as it sings, the hand as it writes, the limb as it performs" and that this sets up an erotic relation between the performing

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[44] In *The Pleasure of the Text* Barthes distinguishes between the terms pleasure [*plaisir*] and bliss [*jouissance*] in reading, where pleasure is an enjoyment based on a confirmation of the subject's (reader's) identity and in relation to their cultural values, "the text that contents, fills, grants euphoria; the text that comes from culture and does not break with it, is linked to a *comfortable* practice of reading" (*PT*, 14). In contrast to this (although importantly not simply in opposition) Barthes explores the text of *jouissance* as "the text that imposes a state of loss, the text that discomforts… unsettles the reader's historical, cultural, psychological assumptions, the consistency of his tastes, values, memories, brings to a crisis his relation with language" (*PT*, 14). In the cultural/non-cultural structure of these two terms we can recognise some of the characteristics of Barthes's later terminology of *studium/punctum*: a point that is highlighted by Colin MacCabe, who calls the *studium/punctum* dynamic a "reworking" of *plaisir/jouissance* (MacCabe 1997, 74).

body and the listener/reader/spectator (*IMT*, 188). However, in contrast to Barthes's conception of pleasure as that which confirms the subject's identity, the "climactic pleasure" hoped for in an encounter with the grain of the voice is not going to reinforce the psychological subject but "lose it" (*IMT*, 188).

Elsewhere, in *The Pleasure of the Text,* Barthes defines *significance* as "meaning insofar as it is sensually produced" (*PT*, 61). Barthes's location of the sensual meaning of the grain in the performing body resonates with Hans-Thies Lehmann's descriptions of physicality in performance. Lehmann argues that in post-dramatic performance "sensuality undermines sense" (Lehmann 2006, 162) and that "the aura of physical presence remains the point of theatre where the disappearance, the fading of all signification occurs" (95). This section adopts Barthes's concept of the grain of the voice to explore the grain of the live performing body: the body's dual production of language (as sense) and of music (as sensuality).

Ecstasies

> *I take the microphone from the stand, hold it up to my mouth and face the audience. The word 'ecstasy' is projected onto the notebook. I pause here and make eye contact with two or three audience members. I move as if going to say something, but instead shove the microphone down my trousers. It makes a loud scraping sound. I start to squeeze the microphone between my legs, trying to produce sounds by rubbing it against my groin and the fabric of my trousers. The microphone starts to feedback. I attempt to stop the feedback by shifting my body in relation to the speakers. The microphone falls down my trouser leg slightly and, in an attempt to make louder and more rhythmic movements, I start to kick my leg into the air. I end up on all fours trying to reach some sort of sound climax by shaking my leg. I roll onto my back and start to rub my legs together, then kick both legs in the air. I am starting to get tired as my body is contorted into strange shapes and situations by the task.*

> *The microphone has moved to the back of my right thigh and so I stand and start to shake my leg until the mic falls out of my trousers, making a loud thud.*

> *I pull on the cord of the microphone, unthreading it back up my trouser leg and out of the top of my trousers. It makes scraping sounds and a small pop as it comes out the top.*

The "ecstasy" section of the performance initially developed as a performance task to explore the grainy textures of the body through sound. I started experimenting in the

studio by literally trying to amplify my clothing and bodily sounds using a microphone. At this stage, I was interested in exploring the relationship that Barthes sets up in *Camera Lucida* between the body and the material textures that might frame it. This resulting action could have simply been read in a denotative way—an absurd task where I try to make rhythmic noises by rubbing the microphone against my trousers. However, choosing to frame the action with the word 'ecstasy' encouraged a number of additional connotative readings of my action: the section could have been read as my body attempting to reach sexual climax, which gave way to a frustrated exhaustion as I was unable to sustain a suitable rhythm or position; it could have been read as a playful dance between me, the microphone and the speaker; it could have been read as a tragic, failed attempt to reach a state of euphoria.

André Lepecki discusses choreographer Jérôme Bel's playful use of movement alongside text as *paranomasia*: literally alongside or beyond name. Lepecki argues that in Bel's piece *The Last Performance* (1998), the repetition of a short choreography by Susanne Linke (by different dancers who all start the dance by pronouncing on the microphone "*Ich bin Susanne Linke*" [I am Susanne Linke]), explores the ways that moving alongside a name might allow for language to slowly turn around ideas, like a pun (Lepecki 2006, 62). Lepecki argues that this section reveals how "dancing alongside and beyond a name is also to stay with it, to reveal its undersides, to unfold it, to unleash its lines of force, to break open the illusion of fixity a name is supposed to bring to its referent" (62). Similarly, to move alongside the word 'ecstasy' in this section (but also in all of the captioned moments in *Kairos*) slowly turned around ideas of sexual pleasure, euphoria, movement and stasis in an effort to complicate and multiply the relationships between the word, the action and their meanings.

I was also interested in the connotations that come from the etymological root of the word ecstasy, from the ancient Greek *ekstasis*: to be or stand outside oneself. This definition of the word was invoked by the technological amplification of my body's textures when I rubbed up against the surface of the microphone. The sound was produced locally but projected out into the space to become audible to the audience. This definition of ecstasy is certainly implied by Barthes in *Camera Lucida* when he discusses, not only the way that the "photographed body touches" him, but also the process by which he loses himself in the blissfulness of this encounter (*CL*, 55&59).

In Gernot Böhme's 1993 essay on atmospheres he discusses the term "ecstasies of the thing" to describe the ways that something is present in space and "makes its presence perceptible" (Böhme 1993, 121). Giving the example of the particular blueness of a blue cup, Böhme argues that its blueness can be thought of not as "something which is restricted in some way to the cup and adheres to it, but on the contrary as something which radiates out to the environment of the cup, colouring or 'tincturing'; in a certain way this environment" (121). According to Böhme: objects, things, and (we might add) bodies, can be thought of in terms of the ways they go forth from themselves. Thinking of my body's ecstasies in this moment of the performance, along the lines of Böhme, encourages a reading of the ways that I made my presence perceptible through the materiality of the body, bringing forth my body's energy and highlighting its textures as grain.

Intractable

My dark blue shirt and jeans are dishevelled and have patches of wet milk stains on them. I am barefoot. I change the slide and the word 'intractable' appears on the notepad. At the side of the space, facing the wall, I undo the buttons on my shirt and trousers and pick up a large orange from the floor. I walk to the centre of the stage and, facing the audience on a slight diagonal, carefully wedge the orange into my open mouth so that my teeth just pierce the peel. My jaw is wide open. I begin to shake, using my knees and ankle joints to bounce my body up and down. My wet, open shirt flaps about and my trousers start to slowly fall down to my ankles. My upper body and limbs are loose so that my shoulders lift up and down and the flesh of my torso, my arms and hands are thrown about uncontrollably. As my trousers fall past my groin, my genitals are revealed and are also being thrown about by the shaking movement. At some point, the movement throws my open shirt off my shoulders and onto the floor. The sound of flapping wet clothes is replaced by the flapping and slapping of skin hitting skin. My neck is slightly bent back and my breath is loud as I breath in rhythmically through my nose. The movement thrusts the air back out of my lungs and through the space between my mouth and the orange. As the action progresses, I start to make sounds of grunting, moaning and straining that appear to come out by themselves and in rhythm with the shaking.

There is a repetitive thud as my heels hit the ground.

The movement slows slightly as I become tired.

I continue this action until it has forced my teeth to fully bite down on the orange, making it fall to the floor. This lasts for around 70 seconds.

I stand bent double with my hands on my thighs in order to regain my breath. My trousers are still around my ankles. I slowly spit out the section of orange peel that was left in my mouth. I lift up my trousers and move on to the next slide.

The "intractable" section was another moment of the performance that explored the body's materiality. The term intractable appears a number of times in *Camera Lucida* and is used by Barthes in relation to an unexplainable, hard to control, stubborn reality that defines his interaction with the photograph (*CL*, 77&119). I was hoping that in this moment the audience might shift between perceiving my body materially and semiotically. The sounds made during this action—the flapping of wet clothes on my body, the slapping of skin hitting skin and the grunting and panting of my breath as I attempted to breathe around the orange—all attempted to draw attention to the specific fleshy and material qualities of my body in the space. Similarly, I thought that the audience's reading of my body-as-image might be disrupted by the repetition and speed of the movement which threw me into unexpected shapes and positions. The action may have been difficult to interpret, with no narrative context and no dramaturgical reason for me to start the shaking other than the directive of the word 'intractable' appearing on the slide projector.

This said, some audience members did draw meanings from this section relating the image to acts of torture, eroticism and the meat of animal flesh. The action was at times painful for me to perform—as my genitals would slap against parts of my body—and the repetitive nature of the task exhausted my joints and caused me to lose my breath. Many audience members commented that they found this section "uncomfortable" and while it could be said that this feeling resulted from the combination of the actuality of my exhausted body and the associations of other suffering bodies, it could also be the dual posture between the two that caused this: the shaking action, mirrored a shaking of perceptual modes where my body was constantly resisting the status of sign by drawing attention to its own materiality.

Thought about in this way, the grain of the body in performance can be linked to Erika Fischer-Lichte's shift from semioticity to materiality, discussed in the previous chapter (Fischer-Lichte 2008, 94). In this shift, the performer's body is perceived as sensual, as instinctual and pre-linguistic. However, as Barthes points out, the grain is experienced when the voice is caught in "a dual posture, a dual production—of

language and of music" (*IMT*, 181). Therefore, and in contrast to Lehmann's comment above that *all signification* fades in this process, the grain of the body refers precisely to a moment in which the body is perceived as both material *and* sign, sensuality *and* sense. This dual posture is similar to Fischer-Lichte's conception of a perceptual multistability where, in the shift between two modes of perception, there is a "profound sense of destabilisation" and the spectator "remains suspended… caught in a state of betwixt and between" (Fischer-Lichte 2008: 148). Fischer-Lichte questions whether we can ever experience purely sensual phenomena, instead arguing for a collapsed binary between sensual perceptions and sense-making. She writes that while we may not always be able to describe our experiences in words, "conscious perception always creates meaning" and suggests a more nuanced version of the term "sensual impressions" as "meaning of which I become *conscious* through specific sensual impressions" (142). This sensual meaning is not easily expressed in language, as Fischer-Lichte goes on to argue, the meanings generated in performance "vehemently elude the grasp of linguistic formulation" and yet they can only ever be articulated through linguistic structures (147).

The grain of the body in performance captures a more nuanced approach to the discussion of presence in the previous chapter, one that accepts the dual posture of the phenomenal and semiotic body, without diminishing the powerful effects of perceiving the body "in its very materiality". Both the "ecstasy" and "intractable" sections attempted to make felt the exhaustion that my body experienced during the tasks. In both, there is a sense in which the shaking of my body drew attention to its particular material fleshiness and the effect of gravity on the flesh (especially as I performed the piece in increasing levels of nudity). The way that my body produced sound in these moments also emphasized the material, rather than meaning-making, possibilities of my body. Although they may move us in ways that are not linguistic, these particular ecstasies can still be read in terms of sensual *meaning* rather than purely sensual phenomenon—they are still made sense of in and through language. What these moments highlight are the ways in which the body's materiality emerges through semiotic processes (are always already a type of language). For instance, there are various cultural codings of my naked body (white, male, cisgender, able-bodied, relatively young) that are inescapable. However, Barthes's conceptualisation of the grain marks the moment when the phenomenal body is perceived from within and at

the edges of a semiotic language of the body. Something like the music of meaning in Barthes's rustle of the signifier, which Lepecki uses to describe Jérôme Bel's work, "resonating on the crust of every object, the rustling of language running along the surface of every body" (Lepecki 2006, 54). For Barthes, it is the body's dual posture that causes a painful pleasure as he loses himself in the rustling musicality of the desired body.

Figure 18 – "caught in 'a dual posture, a dual production—of language and of music'", (Buzzcut, April 2016) Image credit: Julia Bauer.

body, family, covered, alone, man, vulnerability, temporary, permanent, dissolve, knowing.

haiku

According to Jean-Michel Rabaté, in Barthes's move from structuralism to poststructuralism, just as influential as Derrida's writing was Barthes's "discovery" of Japan in his repeated visits to the country between 1966-1967 (Rabaté 1997, 4). Barthes reads Japan as an empire of signifiers "in excess of speech," cut off from their referents, detached from their meanings (*ES*, 7&9). For Barthes, it is the Japanese haiku that is the ideal form of this excess of meaning, a form that never describes but only ever presents—all it can say is "*it's that, it's thus…it's so*" (*ES,* 83). Barthes makes a direct link between the haiku and photography in *Camera Lucida* arguing that both are "undevelopable: everything is given, without provoking the desire for or even the possibility of a rhetorical expansion" (*CL*, 49).

This brief reference to the haiku in *Camera Lucida* is expanded on in *The Preparation of the Novel*. In these lectures Barthes argues that both the haiku and the photograph "produce an effect of the real" and that neither can be "developed any further" or added to as "everything is given straight away" (*PN*, 70&73). Barthes goes further in his comparison to argue that the photograph and the haiku both produce the effect of "that has been" (photography's *noeme* and its traumatic temporality). He writes that "the haiku gives the *impression*… that what it says took place, *absolutely*" (*PN*, 72). Philosopher Markus Rautzenberg has drawn on Barthes to argue that in the haiku, writing becomes a form of photography in which the poem "conjures presence out of language" (Rautzenberg 2015).

Barthes writes that this interest in the haiku stems from the fact that "while being quite intelligible, the haiku means nothing" and in this way it "seems open to meaning in a particularly, serviceable way" (*ES*, 69). For Barthes, the haiku's suspension of meaning is related to its presentation of brief, contingent images and moments, without description or metaphor. Instead of *describing* a scene, the haiku deictically *points* to things in a gesture similar to that of a child pointing at something and saying *that!*, "with a movement so immediate (so stripped of any mediation: that of knowledge, of nomination, or even possession)" (*ES*, 83). The pointing child reappears in Barthes's description of photography, where he names this gesture the "sovereign contingency," aligning it with both Lacan's encounter with the Real and the shock of contingency in Benjamin's theory of photography (*CL*, 4). The impression of the real that the haiku

and the photograph produce result from this gesture, which can only ever point at something and say *that!*, rather than expand on its meanings.

Some of the poems Barthes discusses thematise these limitations of language to successfully describe what we experience. Referencing this Yasuhara Teishitsu poem:

> "That, that"
> Was all I could say
> Before the blossoms of Mount Yoshimo

Barthes writes: "saying that you can't say: the whole haiku tends toward this—toward 'that'. There's nothing to say, in short, other than the vertiginous limit of language" (*PN*, 80). Barthes argues that although the haiku resists meaning and interpretation, if successful, it nevertheless creates a "mental jolt," "*sets a bell ringing* inside us" in an affective encounter similar to the *punctum*. Barthes writes that in the well-executed haiku "an *event* occurs: like a ball of emotion (sadness, nostalgia, love), here, in my throat" (*PN*, 78&82). Barthes's definition of the haiku as event, emphasises the performative possibilities of language to conjure presence and create an ephemeral encounter in the moment of reading.

The impression of a moment

> *I am lying on my left side at the front of the stage. My left arm is propping up my torso and my right arm is resting on my hip at the elbow, allowing me to hold a microphone to my mouth with my right hand. My left leg lies underneath my right along the floor. My right leg is slightly bent at the knee which pinches my genitals between my legs slightly. My right foot is tucked behind my left. The word 'haiku' is projected onto the notebook at the side of the stage.*

> *I start to read from a sheet of paper in front of me, delivering each three-line poem to one audience member at a time. I make direct eye contact with them. Voice:* sotto voce *and without expression:*

> *"Cucumber slices*
> *The juice runs*
> *Drawing spiders legs"*

> *I pause and rest the microphone on my thigh for a moment and then return it to my mouth.*

> *"It is evening, in autumn,*
> *All I can think of*
> *Is my parents"…*

In many ways Barthes's descriptions of the haiku resonate with my intentions for *Kairos*. I hoped to create a performance that put meaning in suspense in the creation of a series of affective moments—material that presented actions, images, text but did not (try to) describe, narrate or represent events. In the moment of the performance described above I delivered a list of 26 haiku to the audience.[45] 14 of these poems are cited by Barthes in his writing on the haiku (in *Empire of Signs* and "The Third Meaning") and the remaining 12, I wrote in response to photographs that I have found significant during the research process. The section lasted around eight minutes. Following Barthes's analysis of the haiku, I developed these texts in a way that attempted to merely translate specific details of the photograph into language, in order to give the impression of a moment, without (too much) metaphorical expansion or description of the elements. This idea developed from a small section of Barthes's essay "The Third Meaning" where, in order to demonstrate the way that Eisenstein's film *Battleship Potemkin* "outplays meaning," he writes a haiku in response to one of the film's still images (*IMT*, 62).[46] Following Barthes, writing haiku in response to the affective quality of photographs seemed a highly appropriate form of text to explore affect in writing.

One image I chose was Daniel Boudinet's *Polaroïd* (1979) that appears in the opening pages of *La chambre claire* (but not in *Camera Lucida*). The haiku I wrote in response to the photograph was:

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[45] This description of the "haiku" section above is based on the second and third performances of *Kairos*. At the first performance, during Buzzcut, I had recorded the poems onto a Dictaphone and lay on my back while they played. While this explored some interesting ideas around the disembodied voice and presence/absence, I altered the section for the subsequent performances to explore the idea of reading the poems directly to the audience—where my eye contact added to the experience of present-ing the text.

[46] "If [the obtuse meaning] could be described (a contradiction in terms), it would have exactly the nature of the Japanese haiku—anaphoric gesture without significant content, a sort of gash rased of meaning (of desire for meaning). Thus in image V:
>   Mouth drawn, eyes shut squinting,
>   Headscarf low over forehead,
>   She weeps" (*IMT*, 62).

It is dawn
Light streams through the curtains
Onto the bed

I tried to avoid describing the specific blue tint of Boudinet's image, the texture of the curtains or their seductive parting. Instead, I focussed on the activity of the light and its interaction with the different elements of the room. In this text, the "illicit Pola-blues" and "raw erotics," that Carol Mavor identifies in Boudinet's image, are lost and replaced by a non-specific moment of dawn (Mavor 2012, 24). Perhaps this could be any bedroom, anywhere—what Barthes might describe as "a repetition without origin, an event without cause, a memory without person, a language without moorings" (*ES*, 79). In some of the other haiku poems, I re-worked Barthes's observations on the photographs he discusses in *Camera Lucida*: Barthes's description of a Mapplethorpe photograph ("Mapplethorpe has photographed Robert Wilson and Philip Glass. Wilson holds me, though I cannot say why" [*CL*, 51]) became rewritten as:

Two men sit with their legs crossed
One of them holds me,
but I cannot say why

Here, Barthes's own description of the photograph, and his affective encounter with it, form the basis of what the haiku aims to present to the audience.[47]

It would have been extremely difficult for audience members to elicit narrative meaning from the relationships between the poems. Although some images and ideas recurred across them, the list of haiku took on a form more similar to a photographic slideshow. However, presenting the haiku poems in this way also transformed them from the snapshots in language that Barthes describes: the haiku flowed into one another as it became more difficult to decipher where one ended and another began. There is also a shift between reading a poem on the page and listening to a performer speak a poem. In my slow and soft delivery of these haiku (line by line, *sotto voce*, amplified) they became more of a durational event, rather than the brief instants that Barthes describes, supporting the arguments I made about the performance time of *Involuntary Memory* as a Bergsonian flow of duration. In other words, the haiku's mode of presenting everything 'all at once' was challenged by the act of speaking the

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[47] The full text of the haiku section can be found in the **Online Appendix**

poems: in the performance the haiku unfold over time, they have to be read from left to right, line by line, one word at a time.

This effect of the haiku poems was also complicated by the presence of my body-as-image in the provocative pose at the front of the space (which I first performed fully clothed and in the final sequence was completely naked and covered in milk). I introduced this pose in order to complicate the images that were being evoked by the poems, to create my own image in space and time that took place alongside the poems and perhaps read:

> *Lying on his side*
> *He speaks softly*
> *Into the mic*

This was a pose that emphasised the particular and distinct ways that bodies and words present themselves to an audience, further complicating the linguistic meanings with my bodily materiality. This again recalls Lepecki's definition of *paranomasia* as movement alongside and beyond a name in order to complicate the ways that words tend to fix meaning. In this pose the act of delivering a poem directly, to one person at a time, troubled meaning by developing a kind of co-presence between audience and performer, which made some audience members feel uncomfortable while others were amused, or even stimulated.

The juxtaposition of my pose with the poems also highlighted one of the differences between written language and images that is captured by Barthes in his idea of the *excessive*. In *The Preparation of the Novel* Barthes accepts that one major difference between the haiku and the photograph is that the haiku is not saturated by excessive details. Much like Benjamin's discussion of the 'optical unconscious', "that which the eye must have seen but which the conscious brain cannot discern or grasp" (Dant and Gilloch 2002, 10), the photograph, Barthes says, "is bound to say everything… it produces excesses of meaning" (*PN*, 73). Performance is even more excessive than the photograph as it takes place in shared time and space, an event "too full and… too quick for you to know or contain it" (Heathfield 2000, 84). Performance's excessive nature has been noted by Barthes who, as early as 1954, wrote about theatre as a "density of signs and sensations", even though back then he thought that he could

decode this density (*CE*, 26).[48] If performance is inherently excessive, then, as the ***grain*** section of this chapter explored, this excess is underlined by the performing body caught in the space between materiality and signification.

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[48] I go on to explore Barthes's classification of theatre's density in **Chapter Four**.

Figure 19 – "Lying on his side / He speaks softly / Into the mic", (University of Glasgow, May 2018).

move, music, slide, shake, vulnerability, exposing, moment, calm, device, warm.

Figure 20 – "this course is made to die on the spot" (Buzzcut April 2016) Image credit: Julia Bauer.

kairos

I chose the word *Kairos* as the title of my performance as the piece was structured to explore a form of durational performance that might place more emphasis on the 'right moment' and the qualitative ripening of time in performance. In *Camera Lucida* Barthes discusses a Robert Mapplethorpe self-portrait from 1975. He argues that there is a "blissful eroticism" in the photograph that emerges from the "luck" of the subject's hand caught "at just the right degree of openness, the right density of abandonment" that the divined body is "offered with benevolence" to the viewer (*CL*, 59). Barthes concludes that Mapplethorpe has found "the right moment, the *kairos* of desire" (*CL*, 59). As discussed in the previous chapter, Bergson's flow of real duration has been influential in defining the subjective experience of time in performance. This section offers a competing reading of performance time through the concept of *kairos.*

Kairos comes from one of two ancient Greek words for time. It is contrasted with the *chronos* which describes linear, progressive time, chronological time or "clock-time". *Kairos*, rather, describes a moment: an opportune moment. As Robert Leston defines these terms, "*chronos* is said to mark linear time or duration; in other words, chronos is quantitative. *Kairos*, on the other hand, marks the instant or moment that chronos comes to a critical point; it is qualitative" (Leston 2013, 32). The idea of *kairos* focussing around a critical point is described by John E. Smith in his essay "Time and Qualitative Time" as the moment a grape ripens and is ready for harvest to make wine (Smith 1986, 5). It is understandable why Barthes uses this term to refer to the photograph (Henri-Cartier Bresson's *decisive moment*). However, the encounter with the photograph also marks a rupture in time (as Barthes discusses in the traumatic deferral of presence discussed in the previous chapter).[49] It is this connotation of *kairos*—as both a rupture in time and as an appropriate time for action—that has prompted its use in describing moments of revolution, fissures in the chronological progression of history. As Kia Lindroos argues, the kairotic "'present moment', which

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[49] There are resonances here between the qualitative ripening of time in the photograph and Barthes's earlier discussion of the use of tableaux in Brecht's epic theatre. In "Diderot, Brecht, Eisenstein," Barthes argues that the epic scene in Brecht demonstrates Lessing's idea of the "pregnant moment," where we can read at once "the present, the past and the future; that is the historical meaning of the represented action" (*IMT*, 73). Barthes is repurposing Diderot's ideas on the tableau in order to identify in Brecht a social and moral message in the instant picture. Barthes relates this idea to Brecht's idea of the social *gest*: "a gesture or set of gestures… in which a whole social situation can be read" (*IMT*, 73-74).

gains its meaning and content from the rupture in history, has clear political implications" (Lindroos 2006, 125). Similarly, Antonio Negri discusses the concept of *kairos* in his book *Time for Revolution* as a challenge to capitalist conceptions of productive time to describe a "moment of rupture and opening of temporality" (Negri 2003, 156).

Performance scholar Maurya Wickstrom has drawn on Negri's conception of *kairos* in a discussion of Cassils's durational performance *Tiresias* (2010). In *Tiresias* Cassils presses their body against an ice sculpture of a classical male torso. Cassils stands still against the melting ice, the drips of which are amplified for the audience, and the performance lasts for as long as it takes for the ice to melt. In her writing on *Tiresias,* Wickstrom charts the possibilities of performance to change our experience of time. She argues that, in Cassils's performance, the audience is held in a time of "eternal innovation" (Wickstrom 2014, 52). Referencing Giorgio Agamben, Wickstrom argues that in *Tiresias* we are held in a point before the end, a point that "pulses … within chronological time" (Agamben in Wickstrom 2014, 49). According to Wickstrom, an experience of *kairos* can challenge the oppressive structures that chronological time has on our lives by creating the possibility of innovation from within *chronos*: the possibility of revolt, or of transformation. Returning to Barthes, the *kairos* of desire might not only be the *right moment* of Mapplethorpe's hand captured by the photographer but also, crucially, a moment of *jouissance* that opens onto the void of being and allows Barthes to linger in the pulsating singular present of a radical time: of something to-come.

In *The Neutral* Barthes relates the concept of *kairos* to the Zen term *satori*—the sudden awakening and spiritual goal of Buddhism. In linking *satori* to *kairos* Barthes refers, yet again, to the exclamation "*Ah, this!*"; noting that both terms share the exclamatory moment of sudden realisation (*N*, 174). Comparing accounts of *satori* to the experience of viewing Caspar David Friedrich's *The Wreck of the Hope* (1821), Barthes highlights a radically violent pleasure that recalls the effects of the *punctum* (as "a tiny shock, a satori, the passage of a void" [*CL*, 49]). Barthes also highlights the possibilities of *kairos* to disrupt normative temporalities. He writes that *kairos* is "all about undoing the time of the system, about putting moments of flight in it" (*N*, 170) and, recalling Agamben's definition of a pulsing within chronological time, Barthes defines *kairos*

as "an energetic element, an energetic time: the moment insofar as it produces something" (*N*, 172). In this moment—on the precipice of time, plunged into the unknown—there is "a sudden opening into the void" (*N*, 174) offering the possibility to produce something new, to transform ourselves, or to *change* time. Reading Barthes in this way, *kairos* and *satori* are just two of many possible ways of conceptualising the experience of the subject in an encounter with the *punctum*.

Barthes evokes discussions of performance in his reference to the kairotic timeliness of his lecture course on the Neutral.[50] He writes that we must accept the course's "'fragility,' its 'perishability,' its contingency, its 'one time only and its finished'" (*N*, 175). Barthes writes that "this course is made to die on the spot" (*N*, 250) and his description of his lecture course as a moment of *kairos* suggests ways in which the liveness of performance (or of a lecture) might particularly create the conditions for the production of kairotic experiences.

Moments

> *I click on the slide projector remote and the notebook goes blank. I walk to the projector stand and pick up a glass jar with a fastening lid. Opening the lid, I start to empty the slides from the projector carousel into the jar. Once the carousel is empty I fasten the lid on the jar, face the audience and shake the jar up and down, side to side and round and round. Once the slides are adequately mixed, I open the jar and, one by one, return the slides to the carousel in their new random order. I pick up the remote, stand a few feet away from the projector, and click for the next slide.*

The structure of *Kairos* was determined by the order of the slides, which, at the end of each 12-slide sequence, were removed, jumbled up and placed 'blindly' back into the slide carousel. This structure drew on notions of the chance operations which have interested artists from the Dadaists, to Allan Kaprow and John Cage. In his lecture course on the Neutral, Barthes invokes Cage's aleatory practices in justifying the sequence of his thirty figures (*N*, 10). Barthes devises an arbitrary process of sequencing by placing the figures in alphabetical order and ordering them based on a random table of numbers he found in the statistical journal *Revue de statistique appliquée* (*N*, 12&215-6n34). The indeterminacy of the sequence of slides in *Kairos* meant that I was never sure which section of material came next and could therefore

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[50] I am thinking here of Peggy Phelan's discussion of the ontology of performance through its disappearance and un-reproducibility (Phelan 1993).

not explicitly encode the performance with meaning based on the order of its constituent elements (although it could be said that this structure merely becomes a sign of chance and randomness). The structure of *Kairos* attempted to suspend the linear flow of dramaturgical units in favour of a dramaturgy of chance moments in an attempt to place more emphasis on the qualitative nature of the individual sections of material.

The figures, as a dictionary of twinklings, also recall Barthes's notion of pathetic criticism where a reader approaches a work through its affective or powerful moments of pathos. In *The Preparation of the Novel* Barthes writes that pathetic criticism could eschew (the novel's) logical units in favour of the "*power* of its moments" and that this would re-construct works based on their affective meaning. Barthes continues:

> I know there are pathetic elements in *Monte-Cristo* from which I could re-construct the whole work… presuming we'd be willing to devalue the work, to not respect the Whole, to do away with parts of that work, to *ruin* it → in order to make it live. (*PN*, 108)

The dramaturgy of figures in *Kairos* developed a structure that encouraged the audience to approach the work based on the *power of its moments*. Both *kairos* and pathetic criticism can also be related to Barthes's concept of The Moment of Truth where a reader experiences a "violent emotion, pity, 'compassion'" on encountering a moment of a novel (*PN*, 106). Barthes's use of the word *truth* here is not to be read as a problematic moment of authenticity in the novel, but rather, what he terms the "truth of affect"—a kind of epiphany or "affective *gestus*" that reveals the co-existence of Love and Death (PN, 104&107).

Of course, Barthes is drawing on Bertolt Brecht's notion of *gestus* here, socially significant gestures, facial expressions, modes of speech and language that make "actions observable, pointing to the structurally defining causes behind them and enabling social critique" (Silberman, Giles and Kuhn 2015, 6). Of particular interest to Barthes in his writing on Brecht was the notion of *social gestus*, which Brecht defined as "the gestus relevant to society, the gestus that allows conclusions to be drawn about the social circumstances" (Brecht 2015, 168).[52] Where Brechtian gestus

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[52] Brecht's idea of the social gestus was a recurring reference point for Barthes's work on Japanese theatre, Sergei Eisenstein's cinema and his earlier writing on photography. See, for example,

reveals the 'truth' of social relations through a series of readable gestures or attitudes, Barthes's affective *gestus* suggests a less rational engagement with an artwork that embraces the affective intentionality he espouses in *Camera Lucida*—a mode of reading where the spectator/reader/beholder keeps their "desire, repulsion, nostalgia, euphoria" with them (*CL*, 21). In *Kairos,* the kairotic structuring of the performance created a temporal landscape apt for a kind of irrational or affective engagement with the work that nevertheless retained something of the epiphanic or, as Benjamin terms it, the "astonishment" of epic theatre's revelations (Benjamin 1998, 18).

Although the figures may have been experienced as qualitative moments, there are still ways in which sections of material overlapped and flowed into each other to create meaning, especially as not all audience members would have been aware of the chance organisation. This was evident in an early work in progress sharing of the performance where the audience watched the material from beginning to end. Some of the spectators of this work in progress commented that there was an unfolding and a linear progression from one section to another, despite the figures being presented in alphabetical order, with no deliberate decisions on my part as to how these moments progressed as a whole. This suggests that the audience saw a coherence and a continuity in the order of the material, that they added their own interpretive rationale to the order of alphabetically arranged units. It was following these audience comments that I decided to exaggerate the randomness of the structure. For the first full performance in April, I mixed up the order of the slides in front of the audience. This chance ordering not only encouraged an exaggerated discontinuity, but also increased the potential for an accidental moment of singular present to be encountered: a moment where time is held at a critical qualitative point. It was also around this time that I decided to make the piece durational, so that over the course of the performance, the audience could enter at any time and leave at any time. Therefore, moments of kairotic engagement—a feeling of being in the right moment—would not only rely on the nature of the material but also on the contingency of a particular audience member being there at the 'right' moment in time, increasing the possibility for a pathetic engagement with the work that would prioritise its moments of affect.

Barthes's essays "The Third Meaning", "Diderot, Brecht, Eisenstein", "The Death of the Author", "Lesson in Writing" collected in *Image, Music, Text*.

There was, however, an inescapable chronological time to *Kairos*. The, almost clock-like, circular advancing of the slide projector organised time in a way that highlighted its passing. While this chronology was 'messed up' when the slides were re-ordered, this moment also made one audience member feel like the piece had come 'full circle' as the structural logic came into focus (although even this could be described as a kind of kairotic ripening). In the "mother" section of the performance I poured a pint of milk over my body in an action that developed from the corpse impression section of *Involuntary Memory*. There was a cumulative effect of this action as the pool of milk on the floor was added to each time the section was repeated and, as the piece progressed, the milk spread across the performance space. The milk also left its traces on my clothes and my body for subsequent sections of the performance (first as stains and milky wetness and then as dried flakes and dust). The smell of the milk pervaded the room under the hot lights; it spilled out into the space and over into the other moments of the performance. The build-up of my body's exhaustion, the gradual count down of the milk bottles, and the revealing of my body in increasing levels of nudity all marked the linear progression of time in a particularly chronological way. Similarly, Wickstrom highlights the melting ice in Cassils's performance as a "clear chronological indicator" and yet the performance still paradoxically suspended temporal logic (Wickstrom 2014, 49). A nuanced version of the performance time I discussed in the previous chapter might be that performance does not suspend chronological time altogether, rather it gives chronological time another quality: a pulsing; a moment of flight; an energy.

The ripening of time in *kairos* has the possibility to expose chronological time and its obsession with "progression and accumulation" (Heathfield 2004, 10). Instead, (some) performance creates the conditions in which the qualitative time of *kairos* can be experienced. This expansion of time harbours the possibility to transform our ways of being in the world and encourages a way of approaching performance works through affective moments of pathos. The structure of my performance, around a series of repeated moments, hoped to encourage a kairotic engagement with the work: that an audience member might have a feeling of being there in the right moment; that they might stay in and with the work and that this may create a radical experience of time that has the potential to transform chronology into a time of eternal innovation.

Figure 21 – "the still-act does not entail rigidity or morbidity it requires a performance of suspension" (Buzzcut April 2016) Image credit: Beth Chalmers.

Figure 22 – "instability, repetition, the ambulant freeze, the by-pass… the shared pre- and re-enactment of tableaux vivants, or living stills" (Buzzcut April 2016) Image credit: Julia Bauer.

surroundings, child, Edwardian, sepia, pose, blurry, distant, voyeur, pensive, spacious.

pensive

> We want to ask the classic text: *What are you thinking about?* but the text, wilier than all those who try to escape by answering: *about nothing*, does not reply, giving meaning its last closure: suspension (*SZ*, 217).

In a creative response workshop I conducted with audience members of *Kairos,* one participant used the word 'pensive' to describe how they felt during the performance. This reminded me of Barthes's brief remark on the pensive photograph in *Camera Lucida*. In reference to images that induce us to think, he states that the photograph is subversive "not when it frightens, repels, or even stigmatises but when it is *pensive, when it thinks*" (*CL*, 38). Initially, this desire—for a thinking image that induces thought in the viewer—appears to contradict Barthes's call, later in the book, to "dismiss all knowledge" in his encounter with the photograph (*CL*, 51). Rather than a celebration of thought as knowledge, however, Barthes's pensiveness describes a suspension of meaning in the act of thinking. This idea is explored in more detail in his writing on the pensive text. In *S/Z,* his in-depth analysis of Balzac's short-story *Sarrasine*, Barthes discusses the last line of the text: "And the Marquise remained pensive" (Balzac in *SZ*, 216). Barthes argues that by concluding the story with the Marquise deep in thought, the reader is left in a state of suspension: not knowing anything about what she is thinking. The Marquise's pensiveness at the end of *Sarrasine* offers an "infinite openness" for Barthes, where meaning is kept "free and signifying" (*SZ*, 216). If Barthes's notion of the pensive *text* is used to unpack his discussion of the pensive *photograph*, then perhaps a pensive image might similarly suspend thought in the act of thinking.

Ideas of the pensive image have been explored more recently by Jacques Rancière in his book *The Emancipated Spectator* (2011). As an extension of Barthes's pensive text, Rancière defines the photograph's pensiveness as a "tangle between several forms of indeterminacy" (Rancière 2011, 114). Extending Barthes's analysis of *Sarrasine*, Rancière notices that the Marquise's "pensiveness" arrives at the end of the book in order to deny any ending and thus "suspends narrative logic in favour of an indeterminate expressive logic" placing "every conclusion in suspense" (122-3). Invoking the way that this indeterminacy might be brought about when there is a joining of two artistic mediums (or "regimes of expression"), Rancière evocatively

writes that at the end of *Sarrasine* "the story is frozen in a painting" (123). Rancière's conception of pensiveness as "the presence of one art in another" has similarities with Rebecca Schneider's approach in *Performing Remains* to read "one medium through another" (Schneider 2011, 163). Where Rancière argues that the conjoining of two aesthetic "regimes" creates a pensiveness that can challenge oppositions between thought and non-thought, art and non-art, the known and the unknown, Schneider goes further to argue that the possibilities of reading one medium through another challenges the linear temporality of much Western thinking in a way that moves meaning into "chiasmatic reverberation across media and across time" (163-4). The presence of one medium in another not only produces pensiveness, in Rancière's terms, but is rich with potentialities for the disruption of medial and epistemological borders, what Rancière has elsewhere termed the "redistribution of the sensible" (Rancière 2009, 24-5).[53] In what ways might I be able to talk of *Kairos* as an example of pensive *performance*? How might a performance embody a certain kind of pensive thinking and what is the subversive potential of this in an increasingly unthinking world?

The presence of one art in another

There are many moments in contemporary theatre and performance in which there is a "presence of one regime of expression in another". Hans-Thies Lehmann writes of postdramatic theatre as "between the arts" to describe the way that a performance might be musical, pictorial, literary etc. (Lehmann 2006, 111-112). Similarly, there were many moments in *Kairos* where there was a presence of one art in another, whether in the durational reading of haiku poems, the movement response to the sound of one of Barthes's recorded lectures, or the re-enactment of photographs. To focus on one example, I would like to discuss the ways in which the "pose" section of *Kairos* attempted to produce pensiveness in the tensions of presenting one medium within another.

During the "pose" section of the performance, I performed a movement sequence of stilled poses drawn from photographs from *Camera Lucida* and other images that have entered into the research process. The individual poses, all situated around a wooden

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[53] Rancière's term is discussed in relation to theatre in interesting ways by Nicholas Ridout in his essay "Mis-spectatorship, or, 'redistributing the sensible'" (Ridout, 2012).

chair, were combined to fluidly transition from one pose to the next. While this created the effect of a 'movement' sequence, I attempted to hold each pose for a significant amount of time so its stillness would register. This section was developed from the work-in-progress performance I made in year one of the PhD. My initial starting point for this sequence was an attempt to complicate the relationship between the live moment and its documentation by performing poses from a series of photographic images that re-enact these images in a live moment. [54] The idea for this approach came as a response to Rebecca Schneider's writing on re-enactment and the archive in *Performing Remains*. Drawing on Derrida's ideas in *Archive Fever* (1995), Schneider argues for the "scriptive" quality of materials in the archive. She writes that "much as a dramatic script is given to remain for potential future production, or dance steps may be housed in bodily training for acts requiring dancers, materials in the archive are given, too, for the *future* of their (re)enactment" (Schneider 2011, 108). In developing these movements, I was interested in thinking of the photographs as scriptive: given for their future re-enactment.

To stage the still pose in performance, immediately complicates the notion of stillness. As André Lepecki has discussed in relation to contemporary dance, "the still-act does not entail rigidity or morbidity it requires a performance of suspension" (Lepecki 2006, 15). Echoing Brecht's notion of the social *gestus*, Lepecki draws on the concept of the still-act to discuss the ways that stillness in dance can interrupt historical flow and reveal the gesture of history. [55] For Lepecki, the still-act provocatively slows the progressive time of modernity, exposing its movement (15-16). Similarly, Schneider challenges the often reinforced oppositions between moving and still, living and dead, theatre and photography in order to trouble the status of originary events and historical "forefathers". Schneider troubles medial distinctions that position photography as providing "thanatical 'evidence' of a time considered, in linear temporal logic, irretrievable" (Schneider, 2011, 139). Instead, Schneider argues for both performance and photography as technologies of the live, writing that they both share the "legacy

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[54] The photographs that I developed poses from were – from *Camera Lucida*: James Van der Zee's *Family Portrait* (1926); Alexander Gardner's *Portrait of Lewis Payne* (1865); Robert Mapplethorpe's *Self-Portrait* (1975); Robert Mapplethorpe's *Philip Glass and Robert Wilson* (1976). The other photographs included an image of one of the Abu Ghraib prisoners that Rebecca Schneider discusses in *Performing Remains* (2011) and the image of Alan Kurdi, the refugee child who washed up on a Turkish beach in 2016.

[55] I go on to discuss the political potential of this suspension in more detail in **Chapter 4** in reference to Samuel Weber's discussion of Brecht and Benjamin's concept of interruption through *Haltung*.

of theatrical irruption—instability, repetition, the ambulant freeze, the by-pass… the shared pre- and re-enactment of tableaux vivants, or living stills" (144). What Schneider is redressing here is a linear temporal logic that thinks of photography as both progenitor of the still and as a medium that fixes a moment in the past for eternal preservation. This thinking troubles the binary between performance and photography that I perhaps employed in an overly simplified way when developing *Involuntary Memory*. As I will go on to argue, in *Kairos,* by placing the still poses 'in time', as temporary *tableaux vivants*—in an ambulant freeze, or still-act—the performance encouraged a critically affective relationship to my body, and its gestures, that emphasised the theatricality of the pose.

I 'delivered' each pose to an individual audience member, making eye contact with them as if their eyes were imaginary cameras. In these moments of eye contact, I attempted to keep my facial expression as neutral as possible. This neutral expression can be related to Barthes's discussion of a split between attention and perception in pensiveness. Referring to one of André Kertész's photographs, of a boy holding a puppy (1928), Barthes describes a "lacerating pensiveness" of the boy's face, even though "he is looking at nothing" (*CL*, 113). In other words, Barthes celebrates a fissure between the posing subject's attention (or intention) and the beholder's interpretation of their expression. Barthes's description of the boy's face can be related to a kind of neutral pensiveness explored by many contemporary performance practitioners.

Both André Lepecki and Augusto Corrieri have separately argue that the task-based mode in which the performers carry-out their actions in Jérôme Bel's work approaches a sort of neutrality (Corrieri 2011; Lepecki 2006). Lepecki underlines the neutral attitude of the dancer in *Shirtologie* (1997) (usually Frédéric Seguette), when he references Bel's appreciation of Seguette's capacity to "almost disappear… from his own presence on stage while performing this piece" (Lepecki 2006, 55&137n18). Contemporaneously to Bel—although in the different geographical context of the performance theatre scene in the US—Chicago-based company Goat Island have developed approaches to performance style that also explore neutrality through task-based movement. Echoing Seguette in *Shirtologie*, Stephen Bottoms argues that the performers in Goat Island resemble automata, exuding a kind of "anti-presence" where

"the use of a deliberately blank, unemotional facial glazing, means that there is no sense of these movements offering outward expressions of inner selves" (Bottoms 1998, 425).

This neutrality is reflected in company member Karen Christopher's comments on "acting style" in Goat Island when she comments that "when I play a character I play a series of gestures and sounds… what we do is task-based and we do not 'pretend'" (Bottoms and Goulish 2007, 84). The result seems to again resemble something of Barthes's fissure between intention and interpretation, as Christopher continues:

> In any given moment of the performance, someone just entering the room might see no emotional inflection at all in the delivery of a particular sequence, but for someone bringing with them a chain of connections, built up by the preceding events, that same sequence might seem full of expression. (Bottoms and Goulish 2007, 84)

Christopher is wary of explicitly terming this style neutral, though, instead arguing for a "kind of earnest intentionality" where the performer's focus on the task and their desire to "honour" the quoted material they perform—for it to be "heard on its own terms and not written over by some attitude of our own"—"instructs" the audience in their reading (83).

In these examples, as in *Kairos,* neutrality is a rejection of character and a diminishing of the performer's presence, by using task-based actions and a kind of inexpressive blankness. This acts as an invitation for the audience to bring their own readings and associations to the work. As Bel says, it aims to "activate the spectator" (Bel 2005). In other words, my impassive attitude when performing these provocative poses creates a space for the audience to think and feel in relation to the work. These terms— 'attitude', 'instruct', 'activate the spectator'—are of course reminiscent of Brechtian techniques and they can be considered as a certain kind of continuation of Brecht's project but without the focus on story (or *Fabel*) and with a greater emphasis on affect over meaning. Hans-Thies Lehmann agrees with this when he writes of post-dramatic theatre as a 'post-Brechtian theatre', "it situates itself in a space opened up by the Brechtian… inquiry into a new 'art of spectating' [but] leaves behind the political style, the tendency towards dogmatization, and the emphasis on the rational we find in Brechtian theatre" (Lehmann 2006, 33).

There were also times in *Kairos* when the reciprocal gaze between myself and an audience member provoked a shared smile—breaking the neutrality of my expression, drawing attention to the audience's viewing position and highlighting our co-presence in the shared space and time of the performance. Far from Barthes's split between the look of the subject in a photograph and the beholder's perception, there was, instead a shared encounter in the here and now of performance. After the first loop of movements, I turned the chair to the back of the space and delivered the sequence of poses facing away from the audience. If the direct eye contact drew the audience's attention to the act of looking, then this playful reversal of the poses encouraged a consideration of the viewer's privileged position of distance. Whether my facial expressions were neutral or not (and whether I was facing the front or the back of the space), in the last cycle of poses, my naked body added a provocative theatricality to the sequence. The body, re-enacting poses with utility, was made double by references to vulnerable/desirable/abstract/tortured/male/female bodies.

As the sequence progressed I added in more provocative and overtly sexualised poses and in the final repetition I finished the sequence with a pose referencing the widely circulated photograph of Alan Kurdi, the three-year old Syrian refugee who was washed up on a Turkish beach in September 2015. It is not unproblematic for my privileged, white body to appropriate this pose in order to explore a kind of suffering that I have never experienced. I was, however, initially interested in Chinese artist Ai Weiwei's re-enactment of the Kurdi image from January 2016 (see Cheng 2016). Weiwei's re-creation of the photograph on the Greek Island of Lesbos, although an attempt to put himself in the 'same position' as Kurdi (both literally and figuratively), actually draws attention to their difference. The comparative size of Weiwei, his dry clothes, and the high aestheticisation of the black and white image serve to open up spaces of difference, where Weiwei's repetition of the pose highlights the impossibility of ever being in the 'same position' as the Syrian refugee.

Through my live re-enactment of this image, and other provocative and sexualised poses, I hoped to open up a space for reflection on the circulation of affect in the pose. If as, Susan Sontag suggests, photographs of suffering do not "necessarily strengthen conscience and the ability to be compassionate" (Sontag 1977, 20), then perhaps performance might, through the repetitive re-enactment of a live body, encourage us

to approach each other with compassion. A performative pensiveness might, therefore, open up a critically affective relationship to performance images, or again, the "affective *gestus*" of Barthes's moment of truth (*PN*, 108)—pensive performance as a post-Brechtian embodiment of an attitude that reveals a set of affective, rather than social, relations. This resembles Joe Kelleher's notion of the suffering of images: "something like a political responsibility, to strangers and fellow citizens alike" and "a demand made upon the spectator to be there in some other way than she is" (Kelleher 2015, 8-9).

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Pensiveness in performance might also be considered as a mode of performance philosophy: a pensive performance is a performance that thinks, and in the act of thinking suspends meaning. In this sense, it is close to what Laura Cull terms "performance as thinking" in an exploration of performance's philosophical modes, where she argues for "an embodied encounter with the resistant materiality of performance's thinking", that which resists philosophical scrutiny, resists our attempts to think it at all (Cull 2012, 12). This invites a reading of the *punctum* in performance as a kind of critically affective pensiveness that stages an encounter with performance's thinking—and through this encounter produces thoughts, feelings and sensations in the audience. *Kairos* has allowed me to reflect on the ways that the pensiveness of the pose is a productive space in which to practice performance's thoughtfulness: in the suspension of movement, of subject and of meaning.

Figure 23 – "references to vulnerable/desirable/abstract/tortured/male/female bodies" (Buzzcut April 2016) Image credit: Julia Bauer

Hi Harry,

I felt like it would be useful to reflect a bit further on Kairos. *I think I maybe wasn't clear in the session about the fact that I didn't read the writing on the door before I walked in. I really wanted to see the work from the beginning so I didn't have time to read it before I went it. Therefore, my reflections are completely based on my experience of the work and not knowing the context. I only knew what it said in the Buzzcut programme.*

I think reflecting on the work now makes me feel nostalgic and reflective of my own memories. I felt very calm watching it and there was something about the clean imagery in the work that really stays with me. I have thought back to it quite regularly and when I do my memories of the work are in still images. I see still moments, or clean moments of movement and a lot of space around you. I am obsessed with time and space in my own work and I felt like the repetition and the duration of the moments really made me think of capturing moments in time, trying to validate time passing. To me it felt like it was about time and space, memories, life and death, exposure of identity and an attempt to hold on to a moment in time. Again, this is purely what I thought and felt in the space, not based on the information given on the door. It felt vulnerable but controlled and because of that I think of you being vulnerable and powerful at the same time.

I hope this makes some sense ha! If you have got any questions about anything let me know and also please let me know the next time you do it in Glasgow!

All my best,

A Conclusion in Suspense

For my second-year performance I approached the devising process by adapting Barthes's use of figures into a formal strategy for devising and composing material. This approach allowed for a more associative process of creative response—one that embraced an affective engagement with, and re-presentation of, Barthes's ideas as compositional strategies (rather than a literal translation into performance). Reflecting on the possibilities for performance made in response to *Camera Lucida*, it becomes apparent that my performance of *Kairos* was well placed to explore the relationships between meaning and affect as they relate to theatre practice. What emerges from this chapter is the ways that responding to Barthes's work through performance, and in particular *Camera Lucida*, is useful for thinking and practising in the spaces between materiality and semioticity, text and image, language and voice, thought and meaning. My critical reflections on *Kairos* in relation to the grain of the voice, the haiku, kairos and pensiveness have allowed for a simultaneous process of deepening and opening out a concept of the *punctum* as it might relate to performance practice.

Kairos has encouraged me to reflect on the presence of the body in performance as *grain*—a mode of presence that highlights the painfully pleasurable ecstasies and sensual rhythms and sounds of the body. In *Kairos* the "ecstasy" and "intractable" sections of the performance explored the ways that the body makes its presence perceptible through movement and amplified sound. In these moments, the performance explored the ways that the grain of the body becomes more emphatic when there is a shift from semioticity to materiality—a shift that, for Fischer-Lichte, causes a "perceptual multistability" (Fischer-Lichte 2008, 147). These oscillating perceptual modes are still read as sensual *meaning* rather than sensual *impressions* as they are made sense of in and through language, although, Fischer-Lichte's reading does not account for the pre-signifying affect, and its suspension of thinking, that moves us prior to sense-making.

Kairos worked with the form of the haiku as a mode of writing that "conjures presence out of language" (Rautzenberg 2015) and suspends meaning in a deictic pointing. The haiku offers another way of considering *Kairos* as a series of affective moments. My process involved writing haiku in response to the photographs in *Camera Lucida* (as a

stripping out of the photograph's excesses) and then staging these in the performance as a durational reading. The act of reading introduced something of the durational flow into the haiku—an aspect that was complicated further by my naked body, which re-introduced the excessive into the performance image.

The notion of *kairos* as the right moment offers a challenge to linear, chronological, time through the possibility of revolt or transformation. Kairotic time also enables a competing reading of the Bergsonian performance time discussed in the last chapter and focusses instead on moments of qualitative ripening. Barthes relates this to the sudden awakening of *satori* that recalls his definition of the *punctum*. My performance emphasised performance time as kairotic through the random structure that encouraged an engagement with a series of pathetic moments. There were inescapable aspects of linear and chronological time in the performance that highlight the ways that *kairos* takes place from within clock time but gives it another quality: a pulsing; a moment of flight; an energy.

Finally, Barthes explores pensiveness as a suspension of thought in the act of thinking. Barthes's ideas are developed by Jacques Rancière who argues for pensiveness as a presence of one art in another that might disrupt the oppositions between thought and non-thought, art and non-art, the known and the unknown. Pensive performance similarly suspends thought in an encounter with performance's thinking and the neutral attitude with which I performed the poses in *Kairos* opened up a critically affective relationship to the performance images that encouraged an affective *gestus*: a post-Brechtian mode of (com)passionate critical engagement similar to Joe Kelleher's conception of the suffering of theatre images. Exploring the possibility of neutrality to produce affect is an idea that arose in my reflection on *Kairos*, but which I actively explored in the development of *After Camera Lucida* in year three (and which I go on to reflect on in the next chapter).

While the use of figures as devising method helped me to develop a mode of response that was more associative than my year-one process, I am aware that it was somewhat at odds with the form of *Camera Lucida*. For all of Barthes's experiments with fragmentation and the dispersal of self in his writing of the 1970s, *Camera Lucida* seems, for some, to reassert the problematic notion of the autobiographical subject. However, Katja Haustein argues that Barthes returns to a style of 19th century

novelistic writing, epitomised by Proust's *Recherche*, in order to explore "a new pathos-weighted form" (Haustein 2012, 150). My third-year piece attempted to develop a more complex method of response to *Camera Lucida*, one that took as a departure point the particular pathetic forms and methods of this novel(esque) book. In year-three, I therefore adopted Barthes's methods of *emotion as departure* and *mother as guide* in the making of a performance that responded to *Camera Lucida* through my own autobiography.

Chapter Four: "a denatured theatre"

After Camera Lucida (2017)

Introduction

Emotion as departure / mother as guide

> *The year must be 1986. We are in the back garden of our family home on Beechwood Road in suburban Birmingham. It's a bright day. There are white sheets hanging on the washing line. My sister, who must be about 5 years old, is playing with her friend Ruth. They are dancing around and performing for the camera, competing for the attention of my dad, who is filming. My brother George, who is 2 years old at the time, is less aware of the camera and instead seems more interested in the people, going up to my dad and trying to join in the games that my sister and her friend are playing.*
>
> *There is a distinctive blue tint to the daylight in the film. It strikes me today as a very 80s colour: the colour of over-exposed VHS tape perhaps; the colour of my childhood (or of documents of my childhood, at least).*
>
> *There are a series of shots of me and my mum. I'm about 6 or 7 months old and I'm sitting on her knee on a low wall at the end of the garden. There is a laurel hedge behind us. My mum bounces me on her knee, tickles me and recites the nursery rhymes "round and round the garden" and "this little piggy went to market" (accompanied by the appropriate finger and toe actions). My mother doesn't seem to be performing for the camera, she is immersed in the task of caring for, and playing with, me. When she occasionally does notice the camera, looking directly down the lens, it is as if she is caught seeing herself being seen, at one point saying to my dad "stop taking pictures of* me*!"*

This footage forms part of a small handful of family movies that were filmed between 1984 and 1987. My dad had a huge VHS camcorder that he brought home from work during this time, upon which he captured five or six seemingly uneventful moments of our early childhood. When I watch this footage now, I am struck by how sort of banal it is. We are not really doing anything. This particular 'scene' consists of about seven minutes of children playing in a garden on a sunny afternoon. The footage seems to linger, attempting to capture more than just actions, but perhaps, as if trying to hold on to how it felt to be in the garden on that day.

In the summer of 2016, I re-watched these family movies with the idea that they might be useful for my research. I homed in on this particular video, and specifically the footage of my mum holding me, as I found it to be both viscerally painful and strangely beguiling. My mother died on 9 October 2000, when she was 49 and I was 14. The

ongoing grief I feel over this loss has informed my previous work for this project but for this third-year performance it was both my departure point and my guide when making the work. Following Barthes's intensely personal method in *Camera Lucida*—one that he titles "Emotion as Departure" (*CL*, viii)—I decided to make this third piece in response to the family movie footage of me and my mother. The footage—and its textures of nostalgia, grief and memory—would guide my creative process. In Barthes's book he not only takes his own desire for photographs that he loves as a departure point but, as Diana Knight has highlighted, he plays with the idea of "Mother as guide" by placing The Winter Garden Photograph as the photograph from which he will derive the essence of photographic knowledge (Knight 1997, 254). What might I discover about the affective qualities of theatre and performance by attempting to present my family movie footage to an audience? With *emotion as departure* and *mother as guide* I decided to explore ways to stage an encounter with the footage of me and my mother in a way that examined the textures of grief and the thickness of emotion in the time and space of performance.

The resulting performance, *After Camera Lucida*, was made in collaboration with artists Rachel O' Neill and Nick Millar, whom I relied on for visual, dramaturgical and technical support. The piece was performed on 22 May 2017 at the Citizens Theatre in Glasgow. For the performance, I took 2 minutes and 40 seconds of footage of my mother holding me and slowed it down so that it lasted 27 minutes. I installed this footage in the 19th century auditorium of the Citizens Theatre, projecting it onto a suspended semi-transparent gauze. After introducing the performance in the foyer of the theatre—with contextualising information about *Camera Lucida* and a snippet of history about a stage adaptation of Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* from 1980—I led 30 audience members onto the stage, via a side corridor, where they sat facing the auditorium. Initially hidden behind the theatre's safety curtain, the seats and the projection were slowly revealed from behind the curtain (only to be hidden again towards the end of the piece). Birdsong played out faintly in the auditorium for the duration of the piece. After an initial three and a half minutes of the slowed-down film, I took my place on a wooden chair at the front of the stage, facing the audience, and performed an increasingly extended series of stilled poses and re-enacted movements and gestures from the video. The back-left chair leg was balanced on the last volume of Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* (*Time Regained*), which made the chair rock back

and forward depending on my movement. Following the return of the safety curtain, the lights slowly faded to pitch-black and a slow rendition of Robert Schumann's *Gesänge der Frühe* played on loud speakers on the stage.

Affect as form / theatricality as medium

To develop the piece described above, I experimented through gentle processes of composing and layering elements in order to explore a range of performance textures.[56] This process worked towards the development of what Eugenie Brinkema has termed, *affect as form*. In her book *The Forms of the Affects,* Brinkema discusses the affective spaces of cinema in particular and argues for an approach that "reintroduce[s] close reading to the study of sensation"; not as felt sensation in spectators (and readers), but as "composed in specific cinematic, literary, and critical texts" (2014, xvi). In other words, Brinkema's approach is to read for the "structures of… affective form" in works (xvi). While the sensations that *After Camera Lucida* produced in the bodies of its audience are *also* of interest to me, Brinkema's study offers one model to consider the ways in which artistic media may compose *with* affect (rather than merely represent emotions in the hope that the same emotions will be produced in the spectators).[58] Drawing on Brinkema's idea of the forms and structures of affect allows for an exploration of the ways in which *After Camera Lucida* was utilising elements of performance to produce what Joe Kelleher has termed "affective temperatures": qualities of a performance that encourage the audience to feel something before they can name what that feeling is (Kelleher 2015, 65).

Interestingly for this study, while Brinkema avoids discussing theatre and performance directly in her choice of affective 'texts', she does rely on a series of theatrical comparisons to discuss the affect of grief. When analysing Michael Haneke's film *Funny Games* (1997), Brinkema draws on the concept of the *tableau vivant* to define a moment of uncharacteristic stillness from the actors; she describes the spatial

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[56] These experiments were 'tested' through a series of work-in-progress sharings I conducted for my collaborators, supervisors, and peers. Their feedback helped me to refine the careful balance of elements in the piece.

[58] In her book on affect and performance in cinema Elena del Río argues that, while affect and emotion are "connected and coterminous," their differentiation should be kept in mind. Del Río refers to *affect* as "the body's capacities to affect and be affected by other bodies… [which] precedes, sets the conditions for, and outlasts a particular human expression of emotion". On the other hand, *emotion* refers to "habitual, culturally coded, and localised affects (such as a character's sadness or happiness)" (del Río 2008, 10).

dynamics in one moment to flatten out in a "collapse of the cinematic [space] into the theatrical"; and in another scene of the film, describes the play of light and dark as "one horrid little *son et lumière*" (Brinkema 2014, 100&105). In these examples, Brinkema uses a variety of theatre forms to describe what happens to cinema in a moment of affective engagement. In other words, in these examples, the *form* of Brinkema's affects appears to be the theatre.

This chapter explores the idea that both *Camera Lucida* and *After Camera Lucida* employ theatricality as a certain kind of affective form. This counters the argument, made by Michael Fried, that Barthes's book is an exercise in "antitheatrical critical thought" (an argument based on the well-rehearsed derogatory coupling of artifice and theatricality) (Fried 2008, 98).[59] Fried's reading of the book echoes his arguments elsewhere—that privilege the concept of absorption over theatricality—and is centred around Barthes's descriptions of the accidental nature of the *punctum*. Fried claims that if the photographer's intentions are too easily discernible in a photograph, it becomes artificial and loses its affective force. In other words, if the photograph *shows itself being seen* it displays an artificiality, a theatricality that must be overcome (102&109-111). In a discussion of Fried's earlier work, Nicholas Ridout claims that this antitheatrical position is a result of the "unease" of theatre's acknowledgement of the beholder's body (Ridout 2006, 8). It is true that Barthes treats theatricality and artifice with suspicion in *Camera Lucida*—like when he celebrates his mother's ability to be photographed "without either showing or hiding herself", avoiding "the tense theatricalism" of the pose (*CL*, 67&69); however, Barthes's supposed antitheatricalism is contradicted by his focus on a "co-presence in the act of spectatorship" (Ridout 2006, 8), both in *Camera Lucida* and in his earlier writing on theatre.

In "Baudelaire's Theatre" from 1954 Barthes discusses Baudelaire's unfinished plays through the concept of theatricality. He defines theatricality as "theatre minus-text… a density of signs and sensations", and the "perception of sensuous artifice" (*CE*, 26). As I explored in **Chapter One**, usually theatre scholars have dealt with a similar comment from Barthes from an interview in *Tel Quel* in 1963, where he defines theatre as a "real informational polyphony, which is what theatricality is: a density of signs" (*CE*, 261-262). However, this later definition of theatricality leaves out the more tricky

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[59] For a useful summary of this coupling see Ridout (2006, 1-15).

but crucial "sensations" and "sensuous artifice" of Barthes's earlier definition—that foreground the beholder's body and a more phenomenal and erotic relation between theatre and its audience. Theatre's density, in Barthes's essay on Baudelaire, can be located in bodies that are "touched… by the grace of the artificial" (*CE*, 28). For Barthes, Baudelaire's theatre is so concerned with hiding its artifice (in order to present fully-formed fictional worlds) that it loses its potency. In fact, in this essay, Barthes has no time for art *without* "sensuous artifice," arguing that theatricality must be protected, must "seek refuge" from the "*petit bourgeois* sensibilit[ies]" of the 19th century stage (*CE*, 26&30-31).

Additionally, while Barthes's ideal *photograph*, according to Fried, may be one that 'overcomes' theatre in order to absorb the viewer in an 'authentic' encounter, it is possible to discern the graceful artifice of theatricality in Barthes's *writing*. The narrator of *Camera Lucida* is aware of being read, he poses for the reader. Barthes's last book shares similarities with his unconventional autobiography *Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes* where he instructs the reader to consider the text "as if spoken by a character in a novel" (*RB*, 2). At times Barthes poses as the Proustian narrator, at other times as the semiotician in search of a new language (or a "kind of philosophical detective" [Batchen 2011, 10]). Beryl Schlossman takes the theatrical metaphor of Barthes's posing further by arguing that the luxury and artifice of his writing stages a "theatre of subjectivity" (Schlossman 1997, 146). In this sense, Barthes is practising the kind of performance of self that he describes in the photographic pose, where he "transform[s himself] in advance into an image" (*CL*, 10). Barthes's writing explores the grace of the artificial in the theatrical split between Roland Barthes and 'Roland Barthes' (the narrator of *Camera Lucida*).

To argue for theatricality as an affective form that can mobilise across media is, along the lines of Samuel Weber, to explore theatricality *itself* as a kind of medium. Weber defines theatricality as "not the same as theatre, although also not separable from it" and reads a series of philosophical, cinematic and dramatic texts where the "reader is called upon to play an active part" (Weber 2004, ix). For Weber, theatricality stages an exposing of self-presence that takes place in the ongoing "singularity of the theatrical event" and an "exposing of the present" where the medium reveals itself (7&109). Additionally, for Maaike Bleeker, theatricality signals the moment at which

the spectator is made aware of the ways that theatre constitutes the audience's perspective in particular ways. She writes that "theatricality (and by extension the theatre itself) is what has to be repressed in order to safeguard the illusion of the seen as evidence, as truth and fact" and that, paradoxically, theatre's inauthenticity exposes this as an illusion (Bleeker 2008, 3&38). Following Weber and Bleeker, it becomes apparent how theatricality might disrupt the indexical link between real and representation in photography's claims to truth. Positioning theatricality as medium, therefore, encourages a reading of the theatricality of performance, photography and writing as an exposing of the illusion of authenticity and of claims to self-presence.

What insights might be revealed if we consider the *affects* that Barthes explores in *Camera Lucida* as certain kinds of theatrical *effects*? How does returning Barthes to the theatre (and in this case a literal theatre building) help to explore theatricality as medium and affect as form as it takes shape in writing, photography and performance?

This chapter will explore these questions in dialogue with my performance of *After Camera Lucida*. The following writing is divided into two parts: **Part One** weaves some of the critical concepts explored by Weber, Kelleher, Brinkema, among others, with critical reflections on the performance; **Part Two** attempts to gesture towards some of the affective traces of the performance through the re-performance of photographic documentation and audience responses. The two parts thus repeat both the structure and the method of *Camera Lucida* and *After Camera Lucida* in an ongoing attempt of this thesis to find a form of writing and reflection appropriate to the structures and modes of the performance works. This form also explores how text/writing and performance can be thought together in a practice-as-research context: as praxis.

Part One

"Constructed in the manner of a classical sonata"

As I outlined in **Chapter One**, in part one of *Camera Lucida* Barthes develops his photographic ontology based on the elaboration of the terms *studium* and *punctum* and with reference to a series of photographs drawn from a familiar repertoire of 19th and 20th century images. In part two Barthes takes a different approach: the location of the *punctum* shifts from a detail in the image to its temporal structure. Barthes also moves from the consideration of many photographs to an examination of one specific photograph, one he never shows: The Winter Garden Photograph of his mother as a child. In his ekphrastic descriptions of this image he punctuates his writing with a kind of textual *punctum* for the reader.

This move from part one to part two—from the public to the private, from things that can be said to things that cannot and from *studium* to *punctum*—informed the structure of *After Camera Lucida.* With a spoken introduction in the foyer of the Citizens Theatre building, I introduced Barthes's book, his concept of the *punctum* and this move from a general theory of photography to an affective praxis.[60] I also used this introduction to draw attention to a production that was being rehearsed in the building in January 1980, when *Camera Lucida* was published in the original French as *La chambre claire.* In February 1980, The Citizens Theatre Company staged a three and three-quarter hour adaptation of Marcel Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu*, titled *A Waste of Time* (Coveney 1990, 155-160). What I hoped to echo, in this move from introductory text to performance installation, was a similar shift to that found in *Camera Lucida*: from things that can be spoken to things that cannot; from telling to showing; and from theory to praxis.

The structure of *After Camera Lucida*, then, initially attempted to replicate the two parts of Barthes's book. In part one of the book, Barthes writes that the two "themes" of the photograph—the *studium* and the *punctum*—construct it "in the manner of a classical sonata" (*CL*, 27). Noting that he will "occupy" himself with "one after the other," we can discern that the general structure of the book attempts to speak the *studium* of the photograph (in part one) followed by the *punctum* (in part two) (*CL*, 27). As Jacques Derrida remarks in his elegiac essay "The Deaths of Roland Barthes", Barthes *composes* with the terms *studium*/*punctum* and in his analogy of the classical

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[60] The full text of this introduction can be found in the **Online Appendix**.

sonata "Barthes is describing his way of proceeding, of giving us an account of what he is doing while he is doing it" and that he does so "with a certain cadence, progressively, according to the tempo" (Derrida 2001a, 42). This structural link to the sonata frames the thematic importance of Robert Schumann's *Gesänge der Frühe* [Song of Dawn] in *Camera Lucida*. Barthes situates Schumann's dawn song as the musical equivalent of The Winter Garden Photograph—a piece of music that "accords with both my mother's being and my grief at her death" (*CL*, 70).

The idea of the classical sonata's three sections of *exposition*, *development* and *recapitulation* helped me to find an appropriate structure for *After Camera Lucida*. The text introduction in the foyer acts as the piece's exposition: it provides "a referential arrangement… of specialised themes and textures against which the events of the two subsequent spaces… are to be measured and understood", articulating a "structure of promise" (Hepokoski and Darcy 2006, 17). The video and poses in the theatre are structured like a development, which "refer[s] back to (or take[s] up as topics) one or more of the ideas from the exposition" and develops them (19). The Schumann music in the darkness is the recapitulation: a "referential retracing of the rhetorical materials laid out in the exposition" where the thematic material is resolved (ibid.).

In this performance, though, the material is not quite resolved by the Schumann section but this moment functions more like a *coda*: an "add-on to the basic structure," a "parageneric space that stands outside the sonata form", which is not part of the general "argument" of the work (281&282). According to James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy, in moving from the recapitulation to the coda, one might find:

> a last-instant deviation from a strict correspondence with the end of the exposition: a shying away from the anticipated final cadence… [it] might even pause on an unexpected chord… one might also find smoothing or blurring features peculiar to the area surrounding the introduction of coda material. (282)

The status of the final section of *After Camera Lucida* aimed to both "pause on an unexpected chord" and blur the edges of the performance. After the safety curtain had come down on the auditorium, I put my boots back on and resumed the first pose of the performance. As the lights slowly faded to black the first notes of *Gesänge der Frühe* played lightly on the stage. The first movement of the music, lasting 4 minutes

and 25 seconds, was played in its entirety on the pitch-black stage. The two sections therefore blurred into each other, like a coda. The coda is a kind of liminal space, both connected and separate from the strict sonata that proceeds it. The coda comes after the sonata but retrospectively alters it. In this performance, the Schumann section created a moment of reflection and contemplation: it provided a space for a deepening and drawing out of the performance's emotional themes and textures; it invited the audience to remember the performance they had just seen, and its images, while the tonal qualities of the music extended, and acted as counterpoint to, the performance's affective textures. Derrida borrows the metaphor of counterpoint to explore the dynamics of *studium*/*punctum,* arguing that their relation "is neither tautological nor oppositional, neither dialectical nor in any sense symmetrical; it is supplementary and musical (contrapuntal)" (Derrida 2001a, 58&43). Jay Prosser also picks up on this idea, arguing that music—and in particular Barthes's evocation of Schumann's dawn song in *Camera Lucida*—is the counterpoint to Barthes's writing on photography, that which "puts in motion what exceeds, comes before or after language" (Prosser 2005, 48).

The formal structure adopted by Barthes in *Camera Lucida* is exemplified by his rigid dividing of the book into 48 sections, with 24 photographs and 12 bibliographic items (a numerical logic that Prosser deduces to add up to the age at which Barthes's mother died: 84 [Prosser 2005, 24]). I also employed a formality of structure in *After Camera Lucida* that was applied to the placement of objects within the space, the choice of costume, and the timings of my poses (which progressively slowed from 60 seconds, to 90 seconds, 120 seconds, and 180 seconds before I turned to mirror the video). While the rigid nature of these forms may seem at odds with a desire to explore the structures of affect and emotion, Eugenie Brinkema argues that "formalism" may in fact have the opposite effect. Examining Michael Haneke's film work, which displays a "rigorous attention to cinematic structure", Brinkema writes that "formalism might be read as working *toward* affective commitment… making formal rigour a *cause* for affective spectatorship" (Brinkema 2014, 99). This relationship, between form and feeling, was an aspect that *After Camera Lucida* highlighted in the oscillation between the affective and emotional aspects of nostalgia, grief, loss and the more formal uses of colour, spatial configurations and posing.

A more nuanced version of Barthes's formal structure can be explored through the concept of the *palinode*: a re-turn, re-cantation or re-traction of an earlier statement; a "singing back or again"; the "ode in reverse" (Prosser 2005, 12-13). In part two of *Camera Lucida* Barthes re-works the conceptions of the *punctum* that he has set up in part one. At the end of part one Barthes writes, "I would have to descend deeper into myself to find the evidence of Photography… I would have to make my recantation, my palinode", sign-posting the intended structural relation between the two parts as ode and palinode (*CL*, 60). Jay Prosser explores this structure in more detail, arguing that Barthes's retraction of part one by part two functions as both a descent into himself and a backwards movement in time—a structure that echoes both Orpheus's descent into the underworld and Proust's search for lost time. Following Prosser's observation that part two of *Camera Lucida* is the "*punctum* to the first part's *studium*," the structure of my performance can be considered in a similar way: in *After Camera Lucida,* the activity inside the theatre, "punctures and reverses" the spoken introduction as the "palinode punctures through the study of the ode with the poignant autobiographical detail" (Prosser 2005, 26). If the move from ode to palinode is a kind of descent, then the journey that the audience took—from the foyer space of the theatre, down a side-corridor and onto the stage—also functioned in this way: from light to dark, public to private and as a kind of moving backwards, from now to 1986, from a foyer space built in the 1990s to a Victorian auditorium.

Like the exposition of a sonata, the text I delivered in the foyer introduced the themes of memory, grief and of a search for lost time, through its own *recherche*. The text functioned as a search for points of connection between *Camera Lucida*, The Citizens Theatre building and Proust that was deepened (or complicated) through the introduction of the autobiographical footage and my own search for that lost moment in 1986. The audience's memory of the introductory text framed (or haunted) their subsequent experience in the theatre. Audience members commented on ideas in the introduction that informed their reading of the actions: the notion of framing, for example, or the idea of the *punctum* shooting out of the image—an idea that one audience member was "holding on a little bit to". But it is also less chronological than this. Nancy Shawcross discusses the palinodic structure of *Camera Lucida* as an invitation to "*glisser* [to slide] between the two parts" (Shawcross 1997, 75). In the palinode (as in the sonata), the first part structures a promise that is re-worked and

transformed in the second part. The palinode looks back and re-writes our understanding of what went before. The palinode echoes the paraphrased Kierkegaard quotation from the Citizens Theatre Company's programme of *A Waste of Time*; "life is lived forwards, but it is understood backwards" (Citizens Theatre Company STA Ex 24/9f). In our minds, we *glissons* from part one to part two and back again.

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The structural forms of the coda and the palinode challenge a traditional forward movement of action that might be associated with dramatic plot in an Aristotelean sense. Samuel Weber argues that the importance of plot (*muthos*) for Aristotle is in the transformation of *opsis* (view) into *synopsis* (total view) that brings about a meaningful purgation through *catharsis* (Weber 2004, 104). In other words, the value of drama, in Weber's reading of Aristotle, is to transform "the events represented on stage into the complete and meaningful sequence of a unified action and life", a process that renders the theatre's view of reality as transparent, a medium that "ultimately effaces itself" (104-5). In contrast to this Aristotelean formulation, Barthes claims that nothing in the photograph "can transform my grief into mourning"; it is the "foreclosure of the Tragic" that "excludes all purification, all *catharsis*" (*CL*, 90). The next section of this chapter will explore the idea that this suspension of mourning and catharsis in the space of grief is a particularly theatrical effect that is explored in *After Camera Lucida*, through the suspension of movement and of time.

Suspending mourning and movement

I took the 2 minutes and 40 seconds of footage of my mother and me in the family movie from 1986 and experimented in the studio with slowing the film down. I noticed that when the film was slowed down to 10 percent of its original speed, so that it lasted 27 minutes, there was an interesting effect where each frame was shown briefly as a still image. The result allowed for a more direct focus on the details of facial expression, gesture and movement in the film. It produced an initial jolting rhythm that, for me, became more fluid as the eye got used to the pacing of the footage. This slowing down of the video also exposed the cinematic illusion that 24 frames per second constitutes an unmediated reality, thus ex-posing the medium in quite a theatrical way: "placing it before" the audience in its primitive form—as a sequence of still images. This slowing of the video recalls artist Douglas Gordon's work. In *24*

Hour Psycho (1993) Gordon slowed Hitchcock's iconic film down to 2 frames per second, resulting in a 24-hour version of the film. Mark Hansen has written of the way that Gordon's work produces physiological effects of "affective anticipation," arguing that the single frames of the slowed down film "call attention to—the body's crucial role in mediating the interstice or between-two of images" (Hansen 2003, 592). At play in my slowed down family movie too, was a simultaneous process of exposing the medium of representation and present-ing the physiological a/effects of moving light.

I accompanied the footage with a sequence of stilled poses performed at the front of the stage. I was positioned in the centre of the space, slightly below the projected image from the audience's perspective. Although I initially worked with re-cycled poses from my performance of *Kairos* in 2016, it became apparent in feedback I gained from work-in-progress showings of the performance that some of the sexualised and provocative positions from my second-year performance were unhelpfully at odds with the 'feel' of the video footage. As a result, I developed 10 poses that directly responded to the footage of me and my mum. These poses were all situated around a wooden chair: the *tableaux* moved from more obvious photographic poses 'delivered' to the audience (with less explicit relation to the video), to more abstract positions that either developed a relationship with the chair or attempted to place my body in similar situations to the baby in the video. The poses were timed to get progressively slower, I held the first pose for 60 seconds then 90, 120, 180. Finally, I turned to face the screen and attempted to directly copy movements from the footage (sometimes of me as a baby and sometimes of my mother). Most of the 'still' poses were activated with subtle movements: the wriggling of fingers or toes, or the accidental trembling of my body attempting to plank. As I was developing these poses I added another element to the sequence by balancing the chair on the last volume of Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time*. Initially, I was more interested in the way that a book placed underneath one of the legs disrupted the stillness of my poses by adding a gentle rock or tilt to the chair. As the other elements of the performance developed, though, the reference to Proust seemed like another way to develop (or re-work) the thematic content of the introductory text in relation to the performance inside the theatre.

Both the decision to slow down the footage and to slow down my movements can be considered as forms of *suspension*. Multiple senses of the word suspension are resonant here: the slowing delayed progression; it let the movements and images 'hang' in the time and space of the performance; and, in the musical sense, the images were elongated like a suspended note. Samuel Weber draws on the idea of interruption to describe the way that citable gestures suspend teleological progression. Weber, building on Walter Benjamin's ideas, references the German word for pose, *Haltung*— literally a "holding" or "stopping"—to argue for the ways that gesture is a kind of present-ing that suspends "progression towards a meaningful goal" (Weber 2004, 46). In Benjamin's use of *Haltung* he is discussing epic theatre's interruption of action, whereby gestures make conditions strange through interruption, "destroy[ing] illusion" by creating "astonishment rather than empathy"—an effect that enables the spectator "to adopt a critical attitude" (Benjamin 1998, 18-21). The poses in *After Camera Lucida* harboured similar political potential but did not aim to present an argument or instruction, as epic theatre might do but, instead, an opening up to time. Foregrounding the unquantifiable singularity of the encounter between myself and the audience members, the poses interrupted the forward movement of time, opening up a space of "incommensurable singularity" (Weber, 2004, 46).

The effect that this suspension produced in some audience members of *After Camera Lucida* was of a slowing down of time, described by one spectator as a kind of "time dilation," which they related to the crisis of perception in traumatic events. This shift in the perception of duration may have something to do with what Weber, again drawing on Benjamin's discussion of epic theatre, terms the "citability of gesture," arguing that gesture is "never simply present, but split between past and future" (46-47). This idea is foregrounded in *After Camera Lucida* as the gestures I am performing explicitly refer back to those performed by me and my mother on *that day* in 1986. There is also nothing particularly unique about these gestures and poses, they are common interactions between a parent and their child and therefore cite a future in which they continue to be (re)enacted. The suspension of movement in the pose, then, not only suspends time, but it also messes with time; it troubles the present moment by calling backward and forward to its citational references, invoking what Rebecca Schneider has termed the *theatricality of time*: "the warp and draw of one time in another time" that challenges notions of presence, immediacy and linearity (Schneider

2011, 6). This is not about revealing history, in a Brechtian sense, but perhaps about feeling time. A kind of path-etic astonishment.

While the suspension of movement through the slowing down of video and the pose shifts our perception of time in quite a theatrical way, it is still necessary to explore the relationship between these forms of suspension and affect. We can approach this by returning to Barthes's claim that nothing in the photograph "can transform grief into mourning" (*CL*, 90). Eugenie Brinkema notes important distinctions between the often conflated terms of grief and mourning, where grief is the "private passion (feelings, sentiments, experiences) and mourning the public manifestation of that interior state to the outside world (rituals, customs, shared beliefs)" (2014, 72). Put simply, grief is the felt affect and mourning is the naming of the emotion and subsequent cultural practice of working through that emotion. This dynamic can be mapped onto Freud's distinction between mourning and melancholia, where mourning is the healthy response to loss in that it ultimately "overcomes the loss of the object"; whereas, melancholia is unhealthy, a pathological response that "behaves like an open wound" (Freud 1953 255&253). In *Camera Lucida*, Brinkema argues, "we are offered the fullest picture of grief as something radically different from mourning" (Brinkema 2014, 76). This difference lies in Barthes's classification of his grief as undialectical. He writes that "no culture will help me utter this suffering" and goes on to classify the photograph, and therefore his grief, as undialectical (in opposition to dialectic as "that thought which masters the corruptible and converts the negation of death into the power to work" [*CL*, 90]).[61] It is at this point in the book that Barthes makes a crucial link to the theatre, terming the photograph a "denatured theatre… the foreclosure of the Tragic" (*CL*, 90).

In stating that this suspended mourning forecloses the tragic, Barthes is positioning photography in opposition to a dramatic paradigm in which catharsis turns *opsis* into *synopsis*, gesture into action, images into a "complete and meaningful sequence" of action (Weber 2004, 104). It is at this moment that photography becomes theatrical, in the suspension of mourning and in the refusal to master the "corruptible" forces of

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[61] This is in contradiction to Benjamin who celebrates the 'dialectical image', the photograph that opens up history, allowing us to see a relation between the past and the present. For Benjamin the photograph is "dialectics at a standstill" (Benjamin 1999, 462). For a discussion of Benjamin and Barthes in relation to photography and history see Dant and Gilloch (2002).

affect. Above all, Barthes's undialectical grief is a challenge to the self-present mourner who is able to transform their grief into something productive. Ironically, given that Weber's starting point is epic theatre, a dialectical theatre, Barthes's suffering in *Camera Lucida*, is something like Weber's interruption of movement in the gesture, which, through a suspension of action, exposes theatre as a representing before an audience, "a process of setting before… a placing-before that is also an exposing… [of] the claim of humanity to be present to itself" (115-116).

This exposing of self-presence resonates with Brinkema's discussions of grief as form. Radically, Brinkema argues that in situating grief as undialectical and by locating his suffering in the structure of the photograph, Barthes "prompts a thinking of grief outside of the grieving subject" where grief "inheres in material objects, takes shape in exteriority and in formal structures bound up intimately with light" (Brinkema 2014, 76-77). It is not (just) Barthes who grieves, but grief as a structure of the photograph that shapes Barthes's suffering. Drawing on the etymology of grief from the Latin *gravare* (to make heavy), the suspension of mourning in *Camera Lucida* explores ways of *composing with* grief, of exploring the ways that the force of this particular affect "*pulls weightily down*" on the textures of his writing (Brinkema 2014, 72&77). Brinkema's ideas necessitate a shift from thinking of the ways in which *After Camera Lucida* may or may not have produced a sensation of grief in the audience to thinking about how the performance composed with grief, the way that grief inhered in the formal structures of the work and the affects that this produced in the spectators: a force placed upon the audience by the form of the work.

The audience responses to *After Camera Lucida* suggest a slightly different relationship. Rather than the gravity like weight of grief, many of them talked of a kind of hollowed out space that they were able to fill with their thoughts and feelings. These responses are something similar to what Kelleher describes, glossing Rancière, as "the withdrawal of action" that might allow a space for "critical thought, for imagination, for sensation as such and its reflections" to enter the stage (Kelleher 2015, 130). Perhaps this is also akin to Hans-Thies Lehmann's "moment of hesitation", that he identifies in the tragic, that allows for a "reflective pausing… a cathartic connection to thinking" (Lehmann 2016, 423). Crucially though, in my performance, this is an *extended* moment of hesitation: and therefore, a suspended catharsis. A suspension of

action, then, that was also a suspension of the usual dramatic activity of The Citizens Theatre, that took place when the theatre was "dark"—in an interval—in the "un-illuminated gap between productions" (Kelleher 2015, 87).

This pensive, reflective space that the performance opened up seemingly had to do not only with the suspension of time but also the formality with which I performed the poses and the neutrality of my facial expression. To think about the neutrality of facial expression, however impossible a "neutral face" might be, is to return to Barthes's idea of pensiveness that I explored in relation to *Kairos*, where a thinking body suspends meaning (*CL*, 111-113). While far from Barthes's desire in *Camera Lucida* for "a body which signifies nothing" (*CL*, 12), the attitude with which I performed these poses did allow meaning to circulate in interesting ways and also invited the audience to fill the space with their thoughts and feelings. One audience member commented on my "unimposing" presence that recalls my discussion, in the previous chapter, of the "anti-presence" of Goat Island's performers or Jérôme Bel's celebration of Frédéric Seguette's ability to "almost disappear… from his own presence on stage" (Lepecki 2006, 137n18).

Bel has described this as an attempt to explore the zero degree of performance. Drawing on Barthes's work in *Writing Degree Zero* and "The Death of the Author", Bel discusses how his work in the 1990s attempted to find the "minimum requirement[s] for choreographic-theatrical practice" in an attempt to "activate the spectator" (Bel 2002&2005). Not only did this involve the kind of task-based modes and inexpressive blankness discussed in **Chapter Three**, but also, a stripping back of the complexity of dance. In relation to his piece *Nom donné par l'auteur* (1994) Bel defines this as "objects placed in space with set times" and in *Jérôme Bel* (1995) that it merely requires "bodies, music and light" (Bel 2005). Bel talks of this neutrality as a way for the audience to bring their own readings and associations to the work, a way of encouraging "the audience's movement towards the actor" (Bel 2002). In *After Camera Lucida*, my attitude to performing the material, and my unimposing presence, also encouraged the audience to 'meet me half way' in the hollowed-out space between us. A *suspension* of meaning, then, in the sense of deferring the artist's imposition of one meaning over another. Neutrality, as Barthes says in *The Neutral*, as that which "outplays the paradigm" (*N*, 6-7).

The suspension of expression explored here chimes with Brinkema's argument on traditional representations of grief. Brinkema writes that in Barthes's configuration of photography, grief is not expressed (as in represented) but ex-pressed, it "puts great pressure on, as though to cast in rock, the form of a beloved body" (84). Brinkema notes that situating grief as form avoids conceptions of grief as expressed by characters "in narratives of loss, marking the subjective pain through gestures that exteriorise and communicate emotion" (Brinkema 2014, 95). Instead Brinkema thinks of bodies as "lines weighted down with loss's pain". Less of a representation of inner psychological states but "materially vulnerable to the image of gravity's effects on flesh" (109). When thinking about the forces that were circulating in *After Camera Lucida*, then, it is crucial to think about the play of light in the performance, as Brinkema argues, "reading for what the heaviness of loss in grief does to light in form" (97).

Luminous shadows

The prototype for the camera as a technological apparatus was the *camera obscura*: the 'dark room' in which a small hole on one side of the room projected an enlarged image onto the opposite wall. The camera's 'room' and the 'hole' of the lens have worked in much the same way since this early invention (albeit in a much smaller form and with the addition of a mirror and something to capture the image on). Jay Prosser argues that the *camera obscura* still usefully frames the act of photography as a kind of "magical space… where one went to receive an illuminated version of reality" (Prosser 2005, 3). This conception of illuminations in a dark space sounds a lot like a theatre, a connection that Joe Kelleher picks up on when he argues that some theatres operate in a similar way: a "light-filled black box… that receives text and histories at one end and puts out myth, magic and images at the other" (Kelleher 2015, 82).

The French title of Barthes's book on photography rethinks the dark room of early photography as a *chambre claire*—a light room, the glass conservatory of the Winter Garden Photograph. This light is, in fact, one that radiates throughout Barthes's book. In describing the photograph of his mother, Barthes refers to the "brightness of her eyes" as a "physical luminosity" (*CL*, 66). Jacques Derrida argues that Barthes's mother's eyes, much like the *punctum*, irradiate the whole book, noting that "I can no longer not associate the word 'clarity,' wherever it appears, with what he says much earlier of his mother's face when she was a child, of the distinctness or luminosity, the

'clarity of her face'" (Derrida 2001, 47). The French word Derrida is referring to here is *clarté*: a word that links the brightness of Barthes's mother's eyes, to the clarity of her face and to the light room of photography. The brightness of this radiation is somewhat muted by Richard Howard's translation into English, however, which variously translates *clarté* to either "brightness," or "distinctness" (as Howard has to choose between the two meanings) (*CL*, 66&69). Barthes's description of his mother's luminosity as "*une luminosité toute physique*" [an all-physical luminosity] (*CC*, 104 my translation) positions luminosity not as a reflection of light but as an emanation, a blinding radiation coming forth from the loved body. This radiant body also recalls Barthes's definition of theatricality as a "radiant perception of matter amassed, condensed as though onstage, glowing with colours, lights and cosmetics" (*CE*, 28). In other words, luminescence binds Barthes's encounter with the Winter Garden Photograph to theatre's "density of signs and sensations" (*CE*, 26). Thinking of theatricality as a dense radiance, or luminescence, draws together Barthes's metaphors of light with the gravity-like force of grief discussed above. Light that does not make meaning clear but blinding, materially felt in the body of the spectator. There are two aspects of light that I would like to discuss in relation to my performance of *After Camera Lucida*: light as colour; and the play of light and dark.

The family movie footage was projected onto a five-metre-wide translucent white gauze that was hung in the middle of the auditorium. The choice to use gauze (rather than an opaque projection screen) meant that the image shone through the surface of the gauze and was projected onto the balcony and the back wall of the auditorium. This not only created a doubling of the image but also meant that, instead of the screen being the final destination for the projected light, the image had been caught on the gauze on its way somewhere else. Joe Kelleher discusses theatrical gauze as a kind of diaphanous surface that is "translucent (it allows the passage of light) but not transparent (it does offer some resistance to light)" (Kelleher 2015, 24). In other words, the diaphanous surface has a density that comes into contact with light's materiality. The use of gauze also meant that the auditorium could occasionally be glimpsed through the projection. Additionally, the incandescent lightbulbs that line the two balconies of the Citizens Theatre made this effect more prominent as they lit the balcony and were clearly visible through the material.

Kelleher draws on philosopher Marie-José Mondzain's conceptualisation of *le diaphane* to argue that diaphaneity is "what enables colour to be seen, the colour of life as it were" (ibid.). This concept of the diaphanous capturing colour resonates with the use of the screen in the performance, and Barthes's reflections on colour in *Camera Lucida*. As much as their luminosity, Barthes is struck by the "blue-green" colour of his mother's eyes (*CL*, 66). Diana Knight has linked this blue-green hue to the polaroid by Daniel Boudinet that appears on the inside cover of *La chambre claire* (but not *Camera Lucida*) (Knight 1997, 266-7). The only colour photograph in the French edition of the book, Boudinet's polaroid depicts a set of curtains at dawn, with light shining through their fabric textures. A small parting at the bottom of the curtains just about illuminates an empty bed and cushion in the foreground of the picture. The colour of polaroid film mediates this light, producing an image in vivid turquoise. Barthes does not discuss this picture in the book and it acts, as Brinkema has suggested, as a counterpoint to the Winter Garden Photograph: "produced but not described" as opposed to the "image of the mother that is described but not produced" (Brinkema 2014, 88).

To think of light and colour in relation to the colour of polaroid (or any old film technology for that matter), is to think of their relation to memory. As one audience member succinctly put it in a moment of realisation: "oh those are the *colours* of nostalgia". The colours of my VHS family movie from 1986 were also a kind of blue-green (albeit from a different 'era' to the polaroid). Writing about the polaroid, Carol Mavor writes of the nostalgic power of colouring that "coats true blues in dishonourable cyan" (Mavor 2012, 24). Extending the reach of blue-green radiance from Boudinet's *Polaroïd*, Mavor writes that, it is the "condensed sum of Proust's very blue *Recherche* (from the eyes of Albertine to the sea at Balbec to the sky of an unalloyed blue to a love of Giotto's Arena Chapel)" (ibid.). Much like the *punctum*'s power of expansion, and the mnemonic taste of the Proustian madeleine, colour can *move us* in time and space, take us back, across and inside ourselves.

This was not only an effect of the blue-green footage of me and my mum. The performance had a carefully arranged palette of colours that attempted to draw connections in light. Audience members commented on the "warmth" of the lights in the auditorium and the "beautiful colour arrangements with the dark burgundies" that

brought together my live body, the bodies in the video and the empty theatre seats. Eugenie Brinkema argues for colour as an autonomously circulating force, rather than something that just serves meaning. In another theatrically resonant example she argues that "colour shows that it is, and shows that it is all that it is" (Brinkema 2014, 173-174). In her argument, she references Barthes's discussion of Cy Twombly's work where he argues that:

> it is not necessary that colour be intense, violent, rich, or even delicate, refined, rare… it suffices that colour appear, that it be there, that it be inscribed like a pinprick in the corner of the eye…, it suffices that colour lacerate something: that it pass in front of the eye, like an apparition—or a disappearance, for colour is like a closing eyelid, a tiny fainting spell. (*RF*, 166)

In *After Camera Lucida*, colour's autonomy, and its appearance and disappearance, was tied to the play of light and dark in the effect of theatrical lighting on my live body. I was lit from the side and above with a small amount of 'fill' light from the right. This lighting state aimed to emulate the direction of light in the video. It also references Rembrandt's famous "lighting from the left" that resulted from the position of a skylight in his studio (Brinkema 2014, 107). This light, paradoxically, creates much shadowing over the right side of the face (and body) creating a play of light and dark known as *chiaroscuro*—popular among the Dutch painters—a sort of reality effect that caused one critic to say of Vermeer's *Girl with a Pearl Earring* "we are in the presence of the real world of light" (ibid.).

Another element of play between light and dark came at the end of the piece, when the lights slowly faded to blackout and Schumann's *Gesänge der Frühe* played in the darkness. Not only did this moment allow the audience to transition between the live images and their memory of them, there was also a sense in which the stage space became a huge darkroom: the light blocked out by the iron curtain aperture. Sitting in the dark, my attention was drawn upwards (something my collaborators also noticed in this moment). Above the stage, in the ceiling, some 20 metres up, thin slithers of light leaked in from the vents in the roof. The blackout in this moment re-configured the space from horizontal to vertical, from a picture to a room. A final example of *chiaroscuro* in this moment of the performance: Schumann's *Gesänge der Frühe*, his dawn song, the last music he composed before his death and "a work of light when the composer was entering his darkness" (Prosser 2005, 48). In "Loving Schumann"

Barthes writes of Schumann's music as a confrontation with the "tender melancholy of a subject who sees death facing him" and that this is a music that is continually "taking refuge in the luminous shadow of the mother" (*RF*, 297-298).

Diana Knight has written of *Camera Lucida* as a "utopian staging of the mother's luminous return" (Knight 1997, 268). However, Barthes troubles this return with two implicitly theatrical examples: the *camera lucida*; and the luminous shadow. In the title of the English translation, Richard Howard reverts to the latin name for a 19th century optical drawing device that preceded the invention of photography: the *camera lucida*. Barthes's only explicit mention of this device comes in the following passage where he rethinks photography's link to the dark chamber:

> it is a mistake to associate Photography, by reason of its technical origins, with the notion of a dark passage (*camera obscura*). It is *camera lucida* that we should say (such was the name of that apparatus, anterior to Photography, which permitted drawing an object through a prism, one eye on the model, the other on the paper). (*CL*, 106)

Barthes does not say much more about this device, but his invocation of it in his definition of photography turns the documentary authenticity of the photographic image into a kind of theatrical trace. The *camera lucida* involves a "three-sided glass prism suspended before the eye of the draftsmen, such that a subject and the piece of paper beneath the prism meld together onto the back of the draftsmen's retina" (Batchen 2011, 11). Thus, the outline drawn on the paper is only ever a trace of the double image produced in the eye of the operator. Like the photograph of a loved body, the image coalesces in the mind of the viewer as a combination of the real body and the photographic trace on paper.

The *camera lucida* therefore rethinks the photograph not as an "illuminated version of reality", as Prosser would have it, but as a theatrical image, in the sense that Joe Kelleher describes: "a sort of operator of relations, generating and drawing attention to those relations between our gaze and the visible world" (Kelleher 2015, 27). The implications of this re-thinking of the dark room of photography for theatre is that it highlights the ways that the theatre image "exposes the interval 'between'… and in so doing allows [a certain theatricality] to 'enter' the stage'" (Weber 2004, 15). In the example of the *camera lucida*, this interval is the perceptual space between the 'real'

body and the trace, in which the image enters.[62] As Eugenie Brinkema argues: the *camera lucida* "double[s] vision by superimposing an image of the subject… on the surface for the reproduction", suggesting "the simultaneously live and dead, past and present" (Brinkema 2014, 84). Like the double image of me re-enacting the video, in exposing the interval between the two, a sort of haunting affect enters.[63]

Barthes's other radiant words are luminous or luminosity [*lumineux, luminosité*], terms he uses to describe the rays emitted by the subject of the photograph that are captured by the camera (allowing him to classify the photograph as a literal "emanation of the referent" that will "touch" him [*CL*, 80]). Barthes also uses the term luminous to describe the *air* of a face: something like a person's soul, "a kind of intractable supplement of identity", a moment of collapse between the memory of the loved person and their representation in a photograph that allows their 'true essence' to be encountered (*CL*, 109). The idea of luminosity in these examples goes some way to developing a concept of the material forces of light which can "extract" and "express" an image, and which Brinkema emphasises as "a light that moves… a light that caresses, that presses, that strains" (Brinkema 2014, 83).

It is somewhat surprising to read these mystical "reflections on photography" from the same exposer of myths who wrote *Mythologies*. Brinkema argues that *Camera Lucida* itself "functions as a kind of magical thinking, a leap or departure—even a point of peculiarity—in the history of the narrative of Barthes's own writing" (ibid.). However, a close reading of Barthes's book suggests a sort of deconstructive collapse of the more surface-level discussions of photography. One such example lies in Barthes's juxtaposition of *luminous* and *shadow* in the term *l'ombre lumineuse* (*CC*, 169). Barthes continues: "thus the air is the luminous shadow which accompanies the body… its bright shadow" (*CL*, 110). In the compounding of luminous and shadow Barthes brings together ideas of light and dark, presence and absence, the referent and

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[62] Greg Hainge has argued that this interval exists in photography also: in the chemical development and processing of a photograph there is a shift from an indexical ontology to a performative one due to the "technical adjustments" that can be made in the photographic process (Hainge 2008, 723&727).
[63] This is a similar effect to The Wooster Group's *Hamlet* (2006) in which they re-enact the footage of John Gielgud's 1964 Broadway production of *Hamlet*, starring Richard Burton. The entire film version of the Gielgud production is projected onto a screen at the back of the stage and the performers re-enact the camera angles, blocking and delivery of the film documentation to create what Johan Callens has termed a "staging the inevitable split between the copy and the ever-absent original" that introduces a "spectral logic" to the performance (Callens 2009: 539).

its double in a way that recalls Samuel Weber's discussion of the "darkly glimmering void" of the loge in Kafka's *The Man Who Disappeared*: "in its emptiness it is strangely full, in its darkness 'glimmering'" (Weber 2004, 93).

In other words, Barthes *theatricalises* the literal emanation of a body to include its double, its shadow, and therefore disrupts his previously unbroken indexical link between photographed subject and viewer—thus challenging the latter's privileged viewing position. This is a point that Weber picks up on when discussing Plato's distrust of the theatre's shadow play, noting that "the desire for self-identity informs the condemnation of theatre. It is the desire to occupy a place from which one can take everything in… that renders the theatre and theatricality so terribly suspect" (7). Plato's desire is to leave the cave and enter the natural light outside where there are "no shadows or obscurities, no echoes, projections, or simulacra: only light as it is and things as they are, in and of themselves" (8). Barthes's formulation of the luminous shadow re-introduces theatre into the light of the photograph, in the form of a shadow, and in doing so troubles self-identity through a corporeal haunting. As Derrida writes, "the return of the referent indeed takes the form of a haunting… whose spectral arrival in the very space of the photogram indeed resembles that of an emission or emanation" (Derrida 2001a, 54).

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Lucid and *clair* are light and bright but they are also 'clear' (both transparent and empty): a room full of light and nothing else. Barthes's blinding radiance and luminous shadows add a density, a theatricality to his clear room. The glimmering void of the *chambre claire* recalls a certain theatrical space, the "hollowed place under the earth" that describes Plato's subterranean cavern—another place where "'shadows' are apprehended as 'reality'" (Weber 2004, 5). In the final section of this chapter I would like to explore this hollowed out space in more detail and its relation to the maternal spaces of *Camera Lucida* and *After Camera Lucida*.

Mother is a theatre

Psychoanalytical readings of *Camera Lucida* have argued that Barthes's desire for his mother introduces an oedipal logic to the book. However, as early as 1992, Eilene Hoft-March classed the mother-love in *Camera Lucida* as a diversion from a Freudian

logic that is meant to "resolve… death by passage through the Oedipal" (Hoft-March 1992, 69-70). Instead, Hoft-March argued that Barthes disrupts this oedipal logic by restoring his mother to her feminine-child. In *Camera Lucida* Barthes describes how he looked after his mother in her ill-health:

> During her illness, I nursed her, held the bowl of tea she liked because it was easier to drink from than from a cup; she had become my little girl, uniting for me with that essential child she was in her first photograph… I experienced her… as my feminine child… I had in her very illness, engendered my mother. (*CL*, 72)

Hoft-March asks how Barthes "weakens the Oedipal myth with his alternative myth of engendering mother" arguing that, in Barthes's nurturing of his mother in her illness, he "preserves a desire to be to her what she has been to him, preserves his identity with her rather than fulfilling a desire to have mother by usurping father's place" (Hoft-March 1992, 70-71). As Barthes engenders his mother, he not only upends the phallic logic of the mother-son relationship, but also troubles the patrilineal forward flow of the family. As Jay Prosser has noted, Barthes's configuring of his mother-as-child—or perhaps more accurately: mother-child (from Barthes's French *mère enfant*)—is an elision, a coinciding of the generational differences that creates a palindromic dynamic (child-mother-child).

It has also been noted that Barthes resists a certain Freudian configuration by distinguishing between *the* Mother and *his* mother—a distinction that, as Jane Gallop argues, is often overlooked by psychoanalytical readings of *Camera Lucida* (that are "able to only see *the* Mother" [Gallop 2003, 35 my emphasis]). Stressing the importance of his mother's singularity, Barthes writes that "what I have lost is not a Figure (the Mother), but a being; and not a being, but a *quality* (a soul)" (*CL*, 75). Prosser has linked this distinction to societal expectations placed upon mother-son relationships, suggesting that Barthes defensively refuses to discuss his and his mother's living situation according to psychoanalytical discourses ("as if our experts cannot conceive of families 'whose members love one another'" [*CL*, 74]). Prosser writes that Barthes "loves his mother looking back before anthropological and psychoanalytical conventions. He inverts the diagnostic syllogism he has been subjected to in his grief that imputes some blame for his melancholia with his staying too long with her" (Prosser 2005, 46-47). Carol Mavor defines Barthes's love for his

mother as "boyish" and even "effeminate," suggesting that in Barthes's nursing of his mother he feminises himself but also effeminates himself, becomes unmanly (Mavor 2012, 48). As Mavor has developed in her book *Reading Boyishly*, to be boyish is to "covet the mother's body as a home both lost and never lost… to desire her as only a son can—as only a body that longs for her, but will never become Mother, can" (Mavor 2007b, 14-15). While Mavor's definition still favours a psychoanalytical logic of loss, the son's desire for the mother's body is not a sexual desire, but a desire to return home, *and* a longing for a kind of maternal becoming.

My own relationship with my mother was cut short in its boyish phase, when I was 14, on the cusp of pubescence: a moment of suspension between child body and adult body, "betwixt and between" (Mavor 2007b, 5). If Mavor's version of boyishness is wrapped up in nostalgia as the "yearning for home" and an "intense longing" (42), then *After Camera Lucida* explored similar affective temperatures. For one audience member, the performance provoked feelings of being held, or the longing for such a feeling; for another, the setting of the video footage provoked a kind of Proustian memory of their childhood home, its details, textures and feelings.

Mavor's definition of boyishness as "betwixt and between" subject positions was also explored in *After Camera Lucida* through a kind of blurring of subjectivities between me-as-an-adult, me-as-a-baby and my mother. My re-enactments of the gestures in the video attempted to blur both temporal relations and subject positions. At times, it was apparent that I was performing as the baby in the video; in other moments, I could have been performing as my mother, and at times there was a merging of both. One movement towards the end of the performance encapsulated this tension between me, baby-me, and my mother. Facing the projection screen with my back to the audience, I clutched onto the top of my right arm with my left hand. In the video, my mother is walking away from the camera and holding me-as-a-baby on her right side. The top of baby-me's head, and left side of my body was visible, baby-me's left hand was holding onto my mother's arm. Sitting on the chair facing the footage, adult-me rolled my shoulder back to echo the side to side movement of my mother walking. In this moment I am adult, mother and child; man, woman and baby boy. There is what Katja Haustein has called a "reciprocal inhabitation" between me-as-baby, me-as-mother, baby-as-me, mother-as-me (Haustein 2015, 141).

It could also be argued that the performance explored theatre space as a kind of womb space. The 'warm' semi-circle of lights that followed the curve of the two balconies was completed by the curving shape of the audience seating—a circular configuration that created the feeling, for one audience member, "of being held". Building on my reflections on the maternal space of *Involuntary Memory*, to think of theatre as a womb space is to re-read Plato's allegory of the cave along the lines of Luce Irigaray's critique (1997). Implicit in Plato's cave is a distrust of the shadow-play of mimesis in favour of the Truth of the outside world. Irigaray riffs on the implicit birth metaphors of Plato's subterranean cavern to define it as a *hystera*, from the Greek for uterus, and in doing so, places the theatre (and the womb) as the site of man's origins. Irigaray troubles the idea of origins by focussing on the ways that Plato's cave messes up front and back: the cave dwellers are chained "with their heads and genitals facing *front, opposite*—which in Socrates' tale, is the direction towards the back of the cave" (Irigaray 1997, 64). Configured in this way it is impossible for the prisoners to conceive of the origin of the shadowy figures, as "chains, lines, perspectives oriented straight ahead—all maintain the illusion of constant motion in one direction. Forward" (ibid.). By exposing the backward nature of this forward-facing perspective, Irigaray troubles the mimetic origin of Plato's scene; or, as Elin Diamond has put it, "what they experience as origin is already mimcry, a representation or repetition… mimesis without a true referent: mimesis without truth" (Diamond 1997, xi). To reconfigure Plato's cave as a womb-theatre places the mother, rather than the father, as origin, but as a kind of non-origin—where earth and body are linked to theatre's apparatus, its "mirrors, fetishes, lights, voices", so where "ideas of essence, truth, origin are continually displaced into questions of material relations and operations" (xii). As Diamond has insightfully argued in her reading of Irigaray:

> Platonic philosophy wants to place man's origins, not in the dark uncertain cave, but in his recognition of the (Father's) light. The philosopher wants to forget—wants to prove illusory—his female origins. Irigaray turns that wish into a playfully anarchic scenario; philosophic man discovers that, horrifically, mother is a theatre. (xi)

To situate the mother, rather than the father, as origin is to re-think a Platonic logic based on Truth and replace it with a theatricality that exposes representation to movement: to the circulation of material affects rather than stable truths, "dislodg[ing] the referent from its idealised moorings" (Diamond 1997, xiii). Despite his claims that

the photograph is a certificate of presence, Barthes plays on this theatricality: in his mother's luminous shadow, she is present and absent, a mother-child—introducing what Margaret Olin describes as a "performative index" (Olin 2002, 115). To return to Weber's discussion of theatricality as medium, the mother as theatre "haunts and taunts" Western philosophic man's "desire to occupy a place from which one can take everything in" (Weber 2004, 7): the ontological promise of photography.

The aspects of spatial dis-orientation that Irigaray describes in Plato's cave were also explored in *After Camera Lucida* by reversing the audience perspective of the stage. I was interested in using the performance to subvert the associations that the audience may have had with the Citizens Theatre (and with theatres like it). *After Camera Lucida* drew attention to what Augusto Corrieri refers to, drawing on Foucault, as "the theatrical *dispositif* (apparatus), as a mechanism that captures and directs perception and signification" (Corrieri 2016, 7). By reversing the usual configuration of the space, and having the audience onstage with me looking into the auditorium, the performance heightened the audience's experience of watching in a way that both drew attention to their viewing position and encouraged a more affective engagement with the space and its materials. These creative decisions were partly inspired by three series of photographs of empty performance spaces: Klaus Frahm's series of empty auditoriums from the stage (2010-ongoing); Tim Etchells and Hugo Glendinning's *Empty Stages* project (2003-ongoing); and Doug Hall's photographs of Opera Houses from his *The Past* series (1997&2002). All three of these projects explore the haunting atmosphere of empty performance spaces. Hall's reflections on how it felt to stand on the stage of the grand European opera houses that he has photographed were particularly useful for this project. He writes that:

> As I stood at the centre of the stage and looked back toward the halls, I felt as if the halls themselves were looking back at me so that in a sense I was photographing not just the spaces, but the act of looking itself… With the empty seats and vacant tier of boxes arrayed before us, we are aware of ourselves as both the one seeing and the ones being seen… I see myself looking at myself looking at myself and the result is a real and perceptible unease. (Hall 2005, 3-4)

Some similar feelings to this are captured evocatively by audience members of *After Camera Lucida* who describe the feeling of being viewed, or being on show, or that they felt "positioned… as a viewer".

In her book *Visuality in the Theatre* (2008) Maaike Bleeker discusses the ways that perspective painting produces the seer as subject. In exposing perspective as a culturally and historically located conception of the world, Bleeker challenges the idea that painting might represent "the thing itself" in the "real world" and instead contributes to an understanding of the ways in which "our senses are cultured to perceive certain privileged modes of representation as more natural, real, objective, or convincing than others" (Bleeker 2008, 13). Bleeker transposes these thoughts on perspective to the "picture frame" proscenium arch theatre in which a dramatic structure "functions as a framework that presents the audience with a perspective on what is there to be seen as a result of which the audience knows how to look and how to understand what it sees" (10). In developing her ideas on the visuality of theatre, Bleeker draws on Barthes's *punctum* to describe moments when the audience's viewing position is destabilised by a detail, "leaving the audience in uncertainty about how to look, how to understand what is presented" making them "aware of [their] own visual habits" (87).

There were at least two moments of destabilisation in *After Camera Lucida*. The first came in the foyer space, where the doors to the auditorium were open, as if to invite the audience in through their usual entrance. Instead, I asked the audience to follow me down a corridor that led backstage. One audience member talks of this moment as "the breaking of the assumption" that they are going to be led into the auditorium through the main doors. The second moment came when the auditorium was revealed from behind the safety curtain. One audience member, who was familiar with the theatre, thought that I had led them into a rehearsal space (as the safety curtain initially concealed the auditorium). They described their response to the moment of the curtain rising with a *gasp*: a moment of revelation, or of excitement, or of breath being taken away. This was a moment that situated the audience by making them aware of the "locus of looking" and that destabilised their position through a trick of theatrical deception. In other words, this moment exposed the act of looking by *theatricalising* space, in Weber's definition of theatre as medium: "when an event or series of events *takes place* without reducing the place 'taken' to a purely neutral site" (Weber 2004, 7). A process that, according to Irigaray and Diamond, transforms space into a womb-theatre.

In *After Camera Lucida*, conceptualising mother as theatre (or theatre as mother) meant to explore both a kind of anti-oedipal, boyish longing to be nurtured but also to expose origins—and even the original space of the mother's womb—as already representation. In this space, the referent is not tied to our gaze through an umbilical connection—as Barthes says of the photographed body (*CL*, 81)—but rather, the womb/theatre "dislodges the referent" from its moorings (Diamond 1997, xiii). Like the time of *kairos*, it adds a movement, an energy, a moment of flight.

~

Part One of this chapter has explored the idea that returning Barthes to the theatre allows for an exploration of theatrical a/effects in writing, performance and photography. The process of making *After Camera Lucida* has encouraged me to reflect on how *Camera Lucida* theatricalises the relationships between text and reader, how the book composes with affect and some possibilities for how this might be transposed to performance making. By critically reflecting on the performance of *After Camera Lucida* in relation to Samuel Weber's conceptualisation of theatricality as medium and Eugenie Brinkema's theories of affect as form it has been possible to explore: the ways that a formal structure in performance produces affect through a transposition of emotion from characters onto materials; the ways that the suspension of movement in the pose provides a space that the audience can fill with their own thoughts and feelings; and the theatrical play of light and colour as an autonomous force. This section has also reflected on the use of space in *After Camera Lucida*, examining how the performance subverted spatial configurations of the 19th century stage in an exploration of the maternal space(s) of the theatre.

Somewhere between the performance on 22 May 2017 and this critical and theoretical reflection on the work, ideas have emerged about the way that composing with affect opens up a space in which a pervasive theatricality circulates between technology, people, and objects: living and dead; past and present; forward and backward in the time and space of performance.

Part Two

Impressions

Throughout this thesis I have attempted to avoid presenting the audience's responses as 'evidence' of the performance's a/effects, instead prioritising the contingent and performative aspect of their re-presentation. In the context of audience research, Matthew Reason has explored the "difficulties or limitations of language" in expressing audience experiences of performance, noting that "language might be considered at worst a hindrance or at best a medium that conceals its limitations" (Reason 2010, 392-3). However, in Reason's other work he explores the possibility of language and speech to articulate something of the experience of live performance through the very failure of words and through poetic forms of writing. Reason writes that "spectators' expressions of frustrated ineffability could be seen as articulations (even if failed articulations) located in the space between the two lived experiences" (Reason 2012). Reason argues that audience's attempts to express performance, and specifically physical performance and movement, represent "the beginning of reflective meaning making and, at the same time, utterances that recognise that the experience itself while still known and felt is already only a trace" (Reason 2012).

In *The Illuminated Theatre* (2015) Joe Kelleher writes of theatre images not as fixed stage pictures but "as a sort of impression… taken from what the spectator sees and hears on stage" (Kelleher 2015, 5). Expanding upon this claim later in the book, Kelleher draws on Paul Ricoeur's notion of the affective, physical traces of memory to define theatre's "persistence of first impressions, impressions that 'touch' us and which continue to leave a mark long after" (137). This section hopes to capture some of the performance's impressions and affective traces through a re-presenting of the audience responses in relation to photographic documentation of the performance by Glasgow-based photographer Julia Bauer. The photographs are not intended to illustrate the comments (or vice-versa) but have been placed in relation to each other in a way that might emphasise what Rebecca Schneider, drawing on Fred Moten, terms the "inter(in)animation" across media—the way that different media "cross-identify," "cross-constitute" and "improvise" each other (Schneider 2011, 7).

Accepting the limitations of both language and photographs to capture an artwork, my hope is that in the space between my previous reflections, the audience comments and the images, something of the performance's affects might be touched (and might touch

the reader). In the presentation of these traces, I hope to communicate something of the performance and *how* it made the audience *feel*. As such I consider this section as a kind of staging of performance documentation, a theatricalisation of text and photography.

Robert Schumann's *Gesänge der Frühe* plays in the darkness

"The light is fading out
I'm struggling to see you
There's a moment where I'm not sure
If I can see you or a memory of you
Then all I have is the memory of
An image
To orientate towards
And that too, fades
And in the darkness I'm on my own."

"your socks told a story, your book told a story and to me the emotion was in these other places."

~

"you can feel it in your body, a book being squished."

"I remembered my family home and the details of that home space, investigated in detail, known in depth. I thought about the full understanding of the textures and all the senses that the family home has".

"Your movement felt like a little echo".

"I could put myself in the position of feeling, of being the baby or being in that kind of space, so being held."

~

"it is extremely powerful to witness you place yourself in relation to the projected film, to put yourself into her arms in a sense."

"not a task but a balancing act… because you're not just going from tableau to tableau, you are in fact considering how you move yourself because of the precarious position which the book offers the chair".

"Your poses, the choreography of the work. Positions that, as a child, are comforting and natural, felt like they placed a strain on you as an adult."

~

"because of the accident of the lights hitting your eye lashes and because they're blonde gives you more emotion… I don't think he's trying to be emotional, but there's something about that position that's kind of punctuated that."

"Oh those are the colours *of nostalgia."*

"I felt a sense of security, the feeling of being held, or rather the longing for such a feeling."

"the gap between the male child – the male baby – and the male adult just felt incredibly sad to me."

~

"You leant into the film, as though to try to enter it."

*"I appreciated watching you watch.
I tried to imagine what you felt when watching the images.
I filled in the gaps with my own experiences.
My own relationship to my mum.
I imagined the camera operator to be your dad".*

~

"Are we there to expect an audience, to expect someone looking back, or have they already left?"

"The grandness of the space felt powerful, steeped in that vast theatrical history. It was not overwhelming but maybe exhilarating in some way to reveal the whole auditorium. It perhaps gave me the sense of being on show that I was also being viewed by the projected people. Perhaps too that there was a reciprocal viewing across time between the young you and the present day you".

"there was something about putting the two pieces together—of Camera Lucida *and* this theatre—*that happened to me on that journey and I didn't speak to anybody, I couldn't."*

"the moment where you reveal what was happening whilst the book was published right here where we were."

"I was in a kind of thoughtful contemplation of the space that we're in."

~

"I was in a place to have memories evoked and I was thinking about mothers".

"I felt very held in that beginning moment."

Conclusion: Practising Performance with *Camera Lucida*

This project has practised with Roland Barthes's *Camera Lucida,* working with his book as a guide or implicit set of instructions for making performance. This process has enabled a series of generative strategies for creatively responding to Barthes's book. In year one I made *Involuntary Memory*, a piece that approached Barthes's book by asking: How do you *perform* a *book* about *photography*? The piece attempted to translate Barthes's encounter with the Winter Garden Photograph into a sensually affective performance image. The form of the piece explored what I have called *photographic performance*, where the visual and temporal aspects of the photograph influenced the dramaturgy of the performance. Text from *Camera Lucida* was presented on index cards alongside photographs of my mother to frame the audience's reading of my live body.

In my second-year performance, *Kairos*, I developed a more associative method for responding to Barthes's writing by adapting his use of figures as a devising process and dramaturgical structure. This approach enabled the performance to think in proximity to Barthes, rather than translating or applying Barthes's ideas to my performance, allowing the practice to do its own thinking. However, I was aware that the method I adopted came from texts other than *Camera Lucida*—a book that on the surface appears to reassert the importance of the narrative subject.

In year three, I made *After Camera Lucida*, returning to the specific forms and approaches of *Camera Lucida*, using Barthes's intensely personal method as a departure point and by responding to family movie footage of me and my mum. The performance used Barthes's idea of the suspension of mourning in the photograph as a devising stimulus, to explore a mode of pensive performance that might linger in an extended period of grief. The piece returned Barthes to a literal theatre building in an attempt to explore theatricality and affect through the form of the work. These strategies of creative response have foregrounded how autobiographical experience and personal loss might be translated into an affective experience for an audience.

My process of creative response and critical reflection has enabled multiple reflections on Barthes's *punctum* that challenge arguments that Barthes remained largely within

the realm of a linguistic (i.e. Structuralist) ontology.[64] My reading of Barthes through performance has also avoided the kind of all-knowing psychoanalytical analyses that defined responses to Barthes in the 1990s. While not ignoring readings of Barthes's book that focus on photography as the traumatic missed encounter, and his book as an exploration of the repeated loss of the mother, practising performance in response to Barthes has opened up various readings of the *punctum*'s theatricality that have sought to challenge dominant definitions of *Camera Lucida* as an exercise in *antitheatrical* critical thought. Instead, I have advanced a more generative definition of theatricality to gesture towards the idea that the *punctum* is experienced in instances of theatrical doubling: of presence and absence; of shifts in perceptual modes; and in moments of explicit theatricality, where authenticity, truth and self-presence are exposed as an illusion. These reflections, while not possible to develop fully in this thesis, would be interesting areas of further research for scholars in Barthes studies, photography or theatre and performance to address in more detail than I have been able to here.

Insights for theatre and performance studies

Performance time

All three performances explored different aspects of performance time. In *Involuntary Memory* the audience's experience of real duration disrupted the photographic structure of a series of instants with a "succession without distinction" (Bergson 2001, 101). The performance encouraged audience members to pleasurably linger in the time of the performance, to be with the work, in a similar conception of performance time to Boris Groys and Adrian Heathfield, where the performance enacts a "pure being-in-time" (Groys 2009, 4) or "holds you inside the duration of these experiences" (Heathfield 2001, 16). These aspects of performance time resisted the photographic structures of the repetitive instant, instead highlighting what one audience member referred to as the "waves of awareness" of their sensualised experience.

Through reflections on my second-year performance I have developed an idea of performance time as *kairos*, the right moment or a kind of qualitative ripening in the live encounter. The time of *kairos* was explored through a dramaturgy of figures that highlighted the performance as a series of randomly organised moments. This aleatory

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[64] See Félix Guattari's critique of Barthes in *Chaosmosis* for example where he argues that Barthes "confers on linguistic semiology a primacy over all other semiotics" (Guattari 1995, 5).

structure emphasised the accidental qualities of kairotic time as a reciprocal dynamic between audience and performer. The time of *kairos* is not in opposition to *chronos*, clock-time, but within it, giving *chronos* a pulsing energy that can disrupt and shift our experience of time. The radical potential of kairotic time, as suggested by Maurya Wickstrom, is that it creates the possibility of transformation from within the oppressive structures of chronological time. Wickstrom's reading of *kairos* was explored in the way that my performance structured the engagement based on its powerful moments of pathos, which challenge the linear progression of time.

Finally, *After Camera Lucida* worked with performance time as suspension: a slowing down of time that interrupts the movement towards meaning and mourning. The suspension of time through the slowing down of footage of me and my mum, and through choreographies of the pose, aimed to resist catharsis—resist turning gesture into action in order to expose the "claim of humanity to be present to itself" (Weber 2004, 116). Performance time, as suspension, reveals a theatricality that aims to expose the desire to take everything in, the desire for self-identity. Conversely, slowing down time in performance, through suspension, also disrupts the stasis and stability of self-presence, in other words, paradoxically, it shows us movement, instability, change. Bringing performance closer to the photograph draws out the theatricality in both: the twinklings of affect in the image, the shimmering that produces thoughts and feelings that move us.

The grain of the body

The performances in this project have all explored the relationship between material and semiotic meaning as a co-presence. *Involuntary Memory* explored the associative connotations of the performance images: of a naked body lying in a pool of milk, biting down on a projector lead; of a series of thoughts of a narrator figure presented alongside family photographs. The performance attempted to juxtapose these connotations with the physiologically affective smells of milk and violent flashes of light in the darkness. The result was a complex relationship between affect and meaning where smells, textures and feelings brought up memories and associations for the audience.

In *Kairos*, the performance material attempted to foreground the material textures of the body through repetitive exhaustive movement, amplification of the body, and

nudity. These experiments led to an exploration of the sensual meaning of Barthes's grain of the voice as it might relate to the live performing body. Following Barthes, the body becomes grainy in the "dual production—of language and of music" (*IMT*, 181)—in other words when the body is perceived both semiotically and materially. It is in this "perceptual multistability" that there is a "profound sense of destabilisation" (Fischer-Lichte 2008, 148). The grain of the body highlights the ways that the body's materiality emerges through semiotic processes but appears at the edges of a semiotic language of the body.

Pensive performance

Kairos also prompted my reflections around pensive performance as both a suspension of meaning and as the presence of one art in another. Drawing on Barthes's, and Rancière's, notion of the pensive image, *Kairos* encouraged a kind of suspension of metaphysical thought in the act of thinking. By adopting a neutrality of expression in the performance of a series of poses, and a task-based approach to performing the material, my aim was to create a space for the audience to think and feel in relation to the work. Following Lepecki, staging the pose in performance can reveal the gesture of history (Lepecki 2006, 15)—or as Rebecca Schneider suggests, it can trouble medial distinctions that reinforce history's linear progression (Schneider 2011, 139). In *Kairos*, the performance of pensiveness through the pose encouraged a critically affective relationship to my body and its gestures—pensive performance as a sort of post-Brechtian affective *gestus*: gestures that prompt a realisation of the co-existence of Love and Death; or, the embodiment of an attitude that reveals a set of affective, rather than social, relations.

After Camera Lucida responded to my insights around pensive performance by further exploring choreographies of the pose. Samuel Weber's notion of the gesture as *Haltung*, via Benjamin and Brecht, was useful in this respect—a holding or stopping of progression that interrupts dramatic theatre's teleology, its movement towards a meaningful goal (Weber 2004, 46). The pensive aspects of *After Camera Lucida* relied on a kind of withdrawal of action that aimed to allow space for the audience to bring their own thoughts and feelings to the work. The suspension of meaning in pensive performance can be thought of as the deferral of one meaning over another through "unimposing" actions that, similar to Jérôme Bel's neutral presence, approaches the

zero degree of performance and encourages the audience's movement towards the performer.

Form and feeling

Drawing on and extending Eugenie Brinkema's arguments for affect as form, my practice has explored the ways that devising strategies and dramaturgical structures might open up spaces for affective engagement with performance work. Whether through the 30-minute one-to-one encounter with a sensualised image in *Involuntary Memory*—one that encouraged the audience to linger in the time and space of the performance—or the kairotic structuring of moments in *Kairos*, where the feeling of perceiving my body in its materiality, or of being there in the right moment, might destabilise and open up a space for transformation.

This project's investigation of affect as form culminated in *After Camera Lucida,* where I attempted to compose *with* affect. In other words, the formal qualities of the work explored a dramaturgy of affect and the textures of grief through the use of poses, space, light and dark, colour and objects. The performance practised through the form of Barthes's book, by responding to his two-part structure along the lines of the classical sonata and the palinode. These practical approaches explored the ways that formal rigour might work towards "affective spectatorship" (Brinkema 2014, 99). In *After Camera Lucida* audience members highlighted an "oscillation" between the more formal aspects of the work and their emotional engagement and sometimes even that the form produced feeling. In this project, practising with Barthes has encouraged a critically reflective feeling mode of spectatorship, one that extends the role of feeling in Brecht's notion of *gestus* by encouraging affect to rustle at the edges of the signifier.

Methodological implications

Staging documentation

In each critical reflection chapter of this thesis, I have experimented with the staging of images and audience comments to explore the performativity of performance ephemera and possible strategies for staging the deferral of self, capturing affect, and disrupting the linearity of reading.

In **Chapter Two**, this mode of presenting documentation attempted to fragment the body, play with presence and absence and re-perform some of the ways that text was presented on hand-written index cards in *Involuntary Memory*. The placement of the images and cards, and their references in the main body of the text, acted as an invitation for the audience to drift between the images, text and audience comments in a similar way to how they might have experienced the performance. In **Chapter Three**, I experimented with similar captioning strategies to Carol Mavor in her book *Black and Blue* (2012)—where the captions are derived from the main body of the text, but set up an evocative (rather than descriptive) relationship between text and photograph. I presented audience writing from creative workshops I led with audience members two weeks after the performance of *Kairos*. These texts explored the sort of after-effects (or after-affects) of the performance—the ways that elements of the performance lingered and stayed with audience members after the event. The texts also explored the ways that writing might actually *extend* the affective experience of a performance, producing its own kind of creative response to the work. Finally, in **Chapter Four**, I presented photographic documentation and audience comments as a second part to the critical writing. This section of the chapter explored the affective traces of the performance through a staging of its documentation—emphasising the theatre image as "a sort of impression" (Kelleher 2015, 5). I reversed the chronology of the images in an attempt to explore a kind of palinodic mode of presentation and in an attempt to resist teleological movement towards an end goal.

These methods of presenting documentation have sought to emphasise the performative force of images and text through their self-conscious staging in this thesis. This approach has allowed for additional explorations for the ways in which the body, time, affect and theatricality might be explored through particular artistic forms—extending the ways in which the performances themselves were employing affect as form and theatricality as medium and developing a model for the practice-as-research thesis as a way thinking text/writing, images and performance together.

Creative Response

Through this project I have developed strategies for responding to theoretical ideas through a devised performance practice focussing on iterative methods of creative response. As Matthew Goulish writes, creative response can allow us to "keep the

creative mind deliberately engaged as we engage the critical mind" by focussing on what is inspiring or miraculous about a work instead of "making a collection of problems to be corrected" (Bottoms and Goulish 2007, 211). As Katja Hilevaara observes of this process, "the purpose is to acknowledge criticality in a creative act and develop a critical-creative practice", endowing an artwork with "critical agency" like Mieke Bal's argument that artworks can be "theoretical objects" (Hilevaara 2016, 40). While Goulish and Hilevaara are discussing creative response to *artworks* and *performances*, this project has used a similar approach to respond to a critical text, suggesting that theoretical texts can also be creative (or performative) and that responding to them creatively allows for a kind of generative proliferation. This approach encourages modes of doing thinking in which theory and practice are mutually informing and which place importance on the role of the intuitive and subjective aspects of the research process in contributing valuable insights.

There might also be something useful that theatre practices and practice-as-researchers can learn from the slow process of iterative reading, where a 119-page book becomes the focus of a three-and-a-half-year project. Through the slow turning around of ideas, something of the unproductive time that Heathfield and Groys invoke, in relation to durational or time-based art, comes to mind. These methods might also, in some cases, challenge the demands for "productivity" prevalent in the neo-liberal university, an idea that is explored in more detail through the emerging field of 'slow-scholarship', which employs a "feminist ethics of care" that "challenges the accelerated time and elitism of the neoliberal university" (Mountz et al. 2015, 1236-7).

Additionally, approaching *Camera Lucida* through creative response has proved an extremely generative methodology for attending to the tensions, the contradictions and the performative qualities of Barthes's writing. It has explored methods that develop Laura Cull's invitation for performance philosophy as a "felt knowledge of unknowing" (Cull 2014, 33), that which responds to the "resistant materiality of performance's thinking" (Cull 2012, 12). My methods of practising in proximity to critical theory may be fruitfully applied to other writers whose work explores the liminal spaces between meaning and affect. For instance, Cull's work on Gilles Deleuze and performance could be usefully extended through a practice-as-research methodology to explore the staging of the performing body's affects, "that which is

produced by relations of force and encounters with the affects of other bodies" (Cull 2013, 10).

Practising performance in response to Barthes may also provide a key methodological strategy for approaching his recently published lectures at the *Collège de France*. Following Kate Briggs's work in creative writing—whereby she responds to the implicit teachings of Barthes in *The Preparation of the Novel*, to "*make* a novel out of notations" (Briggs 2015, 122)—future research related to this project could explore how practice-as-research methodologies might suit modes of inquiry that are particularly appropriate for an exploration of Barthes's lectures as a pedagogy of praxis. The elliptical nature of Barthes's notes, and their resistance to conclusive knowledge about their topics, leaves spaces in the published lectures for a critical performance practice to respond to the ideas discussed within. Approaching Barthes's lectures in this way might afford insights between the fields of performance, pedagogy and critical thinking.

~

Into Feeling

Crucial to my practical methods has been the use of auto/biography and an approach to developing performance material that takes Barthes's concept of affective intentionality as a starting point for developing performance work. In this project I have attempted, like Barthes, to keep my desire and my grief with me or, following Barthes's approach in *The Neutral*, to be led by the twinklings of affect. By performing in my own works this auto/biographical approach has also enabled reflections on how the performer's body might hold and transmit something of a personal experience of loss in an encounter with audiences. This approach can be a radical way of doing research that extends the work of qualitative methods that already offer fundamental epistemological challenges to the empirical methodologies of "objective observation by neutral researchers who infer general truths" (Nelson 2013, 49). Practising with Barthes has encouraged distinctive modes of developing a praxis—where the intuitive processes of both practice and research are foregrounded: to mine the deeply personal in an attempt to gesture towards something more widely significant.

What is evident from the audience comments from my three performances is the ways that the practice foregrounded the non-representational feelings and affects of performance, or moments where meaning falters and the audience are unable to put their experience into words. In *Involuntary Memory* there was an "unfathomable relationship" between elements, an inability to "grasp the image"; in *Kairos*, a slippage of subjectivities where I start to resemble an audience member's mother or evoke the smell of their school classroom by reading haiku poems; or in *After Camera Lucida* a willing deflection of critical interpretation to emphasise the "affective encounter with the theatre, the film and your own careful and controlled presence". What is also evident is moments of relationality and compassionate engagement with the work, through my body's exhaustion, vulnerability, and the rhythms and emotional textures of the performances. One audience member described feeling like they were well taken care of, which evoked the "unconditional love that some of us were lucky enough to receive from our mothers". There was also a negotiation between moments of intimate connection and moments of critical distance, where the pensive space of the performance allowed for thoughts and feelings to interact—"putting these thoughts and feelings back into my body as embodied emotions… I really appreciated the time and space to let my thoughts and emotions echo through my body".[65]

My performances have foregrounded these relationships between audience and performer by exploring compassion through vulnerability, the public display of private images, home movies, and deeply personal feelings. My practice, with Barthes, has developed what I would term a compassionate relationality, a politics of form that encourages compassion through kairotic time, pensiveness, suspension, *durée*. Like the German word for empathy *Einfühlung*—which literally means *into feeling*—this approach has encouraged audiences to come into feeling with the work. To be held in these moments of affective spectatorship is not about empathizing with a specific character or person but to be opened up to a way of attending (to performance, to images, to writing, to the world) that foregrounds our relations to each other. A kind of being *in feeling* that feels like a particularly important mode of resistance in the context of the capitalist and patriarchal hegemonies that continue to define our

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[65] These comments can be found in the Online Appendix: "Involuntary Memory Audience Feedback Sheets" pp. 4&15; "Kairos Audience Feedback Sheets" p. 7; "After Camera Lucida Email feedback from audience members" p. 1&4.

interactions in the 21st century: it draws close whilst also keeping critical distance; it transforms us in an encounter with images, performances, writing, rather than allowing us to remain the same; it 'animates' and 'activates' rather than 'immobilises', a contemporary kind of *verfremdungseffekt* that proceeds from affect rather than intellect.

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