











CONCRETE FASHION:
DRESS, ART, AND ENGAGEMENT IN PUBLIC SPACE
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THE SWEDISH SCHOOL
OF TEXTILES
UNIVERSITY OF BORÅS



In memory of Ulla Eson Bodin

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I BACKGROUND

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Setting

The genesis of this PhD project lies in a significant unfolding of events that took place during different phases of my university education. Initially, I studied fashion design at the Swedish School of Textiles, the University College of Borås. After earning my bachelor's degree, I worked as a fashion designer for a mass market fashion label in Sweden, but resigned after one year and enrolled in the Master of Fine Arts Program at the Valand School of Fine Arts, University of Gothenburg. I now find myself, once again, in the process of creating yet another new identity in the role of researcher creating a dissertation within the framework of artistic research at the Faculty of Fine, Applied and Performing Arts at the University of Gothenburg. The tensions which ensued after moving from a fashion design background to working within a contemporary fine art context, and the meeting of these two fields, is the foundation of this project. The intertwining of my experience in these roles has created a new way of thinking and working, and what is characteristic of this dissertation is that the identities, the languages, and the traditions from different contexts are trajectories intersecting the body of work.

One of the keys to understanding how this project developed is that during my university training in fine art, from 1995 to 2000, there were a number of artists working in a way that has been described by Nicolas Bourriaud as relational aesthetics (2002). The internationally renowned artists mentioned in the book are Rirkrit Tiravanija, Liam Gillick, Andrea Zittel, Carsten Höller, Angela Bulloch, Gabriel Orosco, Pierre Huyghe, Lincoln Tobier, Ben Kinmont, and Felix Gonzales-Torres. In 1995, Åsa Nacking, the newly appointed editor of the Swedish art magazine *Paletten*, dedicated a whole issue to this group of artists (2—3).

At the same time, however, academic teaching was still grounded in a tradition of easel painting and sculpture, especially when it came to behavioural patterns in relation to the gallery space. When I began my education at the Valand School of Fine Arts, the school had moved from its location on the outskirts of Gothenburg to an old-fashioned university building in the city centre. The former location of the school had served as a prime setting for the more experimental subculture scene of

the eighties. In its new setting, it grew towards an institutional existence in academia, enhancing art theory. In this situation, relational aesthetics, combining art theory and the experimental use of the gallery space became the craze in contemporary art. The art scene moved quite quickly away from representation of different parts of reality and was, instead, becoming contextual, participatory and action-orientated in its practices. As a result, I was affected by both traditional art teaching, underground culture, and relational aesthetics.

One reason for the long lasting success of relational aesthetics in Sweden was the forty years of Social Democratic rule in Sweden, with its tradition of social engineering. The 'relational' in relational aesthetics was understood as an instrumental use of art. I went to numerous interactive situations, which took the shape of dinner parties, designed and built bars, lounges and cafés, and which featured social interplay, but were mostly safely installed in art institutions. In retrospect, it seems as though the field of visual art in the eighties had wished to move art into real life, while in the nineties its wish was to move real life into the art institutions. I was genuinely interested in clothing as a means of communication and as a medium for art-making. At the same time, I had no interest in exploring the boundaries between art and fashion by simply moving design and fashion into an art context.

Many of the artists mentioned and described in the book *Relational Aesthetics* had an interest in design and popular culture. The most prominent of those was Andrea Zittel. Zittel demonstrates, in a very clear way, the connection between the daily use of clothes, our subjective reality, and systems of control. She wished to develop into a designer, not only for others, but for her own life. Her consistent way of doing so, gave her work a strong utopian quality. In the works of other artists from this era, there are many examples of connections with design, applied arts, and popular culture such as music, film and fashion.

This spirit of give and take resulted in many types of boundary crossings. In the fine art context, it became interesting to discuss usefulness. In the field of design, use was replaced by meaning in the discussions among the avant-garde. Many experiments were carried through in both fields. My conclusion was that the difference between art and design only really matters when a piece of work is observed from the outside, and in the objectification or commoditization of visual economy. To define or label a piece of work is less interesting if when looking at it from the inside, from the viewpoint of an acting person. From that perspective, working with dress and appearance in a fine art context was not problematic at all. Still, my work was met with many questions from both teachers and other students. To

work with textiles as a material was accepted, but when the result resembled fashion it was more difficult for people to regard it as fine art. I was considered a trespasser.

After completing my fine art education, I discovered other people with the same interests to collaborate with. The project *Artist Clothing*, initiated and run by the artist Ulrika Gunnarsdotter became a very important platform, not only to be able to show my work in an adequate context, but also to meet like-minded people and discuss this 'in-between' field of practice.

Today, from an international point of view, boundary crossing is more rule than exception and there are several young artists and designers who move in between different disciplines within the fields of fashion and art. Artists are not any longer only dedicated to one medium, but use the medium they find most suitable for the occasion, and tend to use skills they have acquired from other periods in life. These skills can include anything from carpentry, documentary photography, ceramics, journalism, sociology, or having read art history prior to their fine art education. Still, this group of interdisciplinary artists is quite small and scattered in Sweden. In order to help address this situation, Madelene Gunnarsson and I have started the forum *Inside/Outside*. *Inside/Outside* is a presentation and discussion forum with its focus on the mixing and merging of the contexts of everyday life, fashion design, contemporary art and theory. *Fashionplay* is another organization initiated by Therese Dahlqvist and Helena Hertov which works with boundary-defying projects aiming at creating a balanced discussion surrounding the functions of fashion.

Throughout my art education, I was interested in the relations between daily life and public space and I found that clothing is an ultimate way to actualize that connection. I could also use my craftsmanship to realize work of high quality. From the very beginning, I attempted to combine the dressed body with social space, and use them as my basic mediums as a contemporary artist.

One early project which became very important as an influence to my later work was entitled the *T-poncho*. I consider this project a foundation for the projects of this dissertation. The *T-poncho* is a T-shirt refashioned in the shape of a poncho, and the concept was to combine the military origin of the T-shirt with the multicultural expectations associated with the poncho. This project was done in collaboration with Karin Landahl, a fashion designer and PhD student at the Swedish School of Textiles. The *T-poncho* was presented, worn, and exhibited at the exhibition Art-Genda in Hamburg, Germany in 2002 with artists from cities around the Baltic Sea (Göteborgs Stad, Kultur, 2002). The *T-*

poncho was made in honor of the St. Pauli area in Hamburg, which includes Reeperbahn, housing projects for immigrants, and people with low incomes. St. Pauli has an interesting cultural life with many galleries and restaurants, but also many problems with drugs and prostitution. The *T-poncho* had a label sewn inside with the text “T-PONCHO ST.PAULI HAMBURG 2002”. Two Hundred and fifty *T-ponchos* were produced, funded by the city of Gothenburg.

Before leaving Gothenburg for St. Pauli, we staged a photo shoot in which we pretended that the *T-poncho* was a garment used by many people in the city [1]. This photo was used on a flyer to promote the *T-Poncho* in the St. Pauli area. In St. Pauli, People in the area could pick up a *T-Poncho* in a gallery and then ‘take the *T-poncho* for a ride’, which meant that they could take photographs of it in use, and exhibit the snapshots in the gallery space. I spent a great deal of time walking around the streets, handing out *T-ponchos* to people. [2]. I wore a *T-poncho* myself during the two weeks of the exhibition. At one point, I asked the clerks at the St. Pauli football club’s retail store if I could leave some *T-ponchos* there for people to have. We were able, thanks to the management at the exhibition, to visit the homes of people in Hamburg, present the idea of the *T-poncho* project, and were successful in getting people to wear it. We also made a special edition, with a printed logo for *WUUUL*, a performance group from Hamburg. These *T-ponchos* were used by both the group and the audience at a spectacular night performance in the harbor where they shot a gigantic hamburger into the air using a big catapult. [3] [4] We also created an oversized *T-poncho* that many people could wear at the same time [5]. We came back from Hamburg with 600 images from the exhibition.

The garment worked very well as a focal point when experimenting and adding new activities to the project. However, at this point, I was not aware how important the walking and moving around in the public space of Hamburg was to the result of the project. My moving around and meeting with people allowed for spontaneous initiatives and experiments on site, as the work progressed. In Hamburg, I also understood how difficult it is to frame this kind of intervention. It is always part of a process and gets easily mixed with other activities. This made it difficult to find a consistent way to present the project with its 600 images. While the border between art and design was not a problem when carrying out the project in Hamburg, this dimension of the work became an important issue in the aftermath and representation of the project.



1



2



3



4



5

The question of documentation had come up earlier when I carried out performances in public spaces. At that time, I tried not to use any technical mediums for the purpose of documentation; I simply engaged an observer who accompanied us during the performance and later re-told the experience. When I related and examined these two approaches, the heaps of images, and the absence of any lens based documentation, neither of them seemed satisfactory. I desired a type of documentation that I could present and communicate through, but at the same time I did not want to objectify what happened and lose the quality of the lived experience. I wished to be open for spontaneity, and to maintain the effect of surprise and coincidence, even when it does not contribute to the idea of the project in a predetermined way.

Clothing and dress are, per se, mediums that follow and accompany us through our lives, from the very first day of our lives to our death, and even beyond that. We all share the experience of putting on clothes, and it is an experience repeated every day. There is a resonance between the unconscious ‘everydaylike’ process of putting on one’s clothes and the conscious ‘artlike’ process of dressing, also found in the projects of the dissertation.

Dress is present in every aspect of culture, and constitutes a living material that not only engages in all parts of our daily lives, but also in the process of creating the norms and discourses that shape and control our identity and are a part of the manifestations of our society’s social values. The dressed body’s ‘in-between’ character causes it to be a ‘shape-shifter’, in that it moves between the personal and the society at large. Hence, the key point is the body in its connection to lived experience and how the body/mind in various public spaces can be engaged in exploratory processes, with the medium of dress and appearance as a tool.

My interest in the interplay and interaction that takes place between people, especially in public spaces, has propelled me to work with the outer layers of dress. In the projects presented here, you will find examples of jackets, trousers, shirts, brooches and scarves. They belong to an individual body, but also have an impact on others. My work focuses on the particular, the local, the subjective and the specific. This ‘ad hoc’ way of working must be followed by a very conscious mediation and translation. However, my work is also built on the repetitiveness of the everyday life, which gives it a type of continuity.

Everything starts with getting up, putting on one’s clothes, going out, and so the story begins...

Walking & Falling

I wanted you. And I was looking for you.
But I couldn't find you.
I wanted you. And I was looking for you all day.
But I couldn't find you. I couldn't find you.

You're walking. And you don't always realize it,
But you're always falling.
With each step, you fall forward slightly.
And then catch yourself from falling.
Over and over, you're falling.
And then catching yourself from falling.
And this is how you can be walking and falling
at the same time.

Vocals, Electronics: Laurie Anderson, All words and music
by Laurie Anderson From the Album *Big Science* by
Laurie Anderson, 1982, Difficult Music, (BMI)

The ordinary practitioners of the city live “down below”,
below the thresholds at which visibility begins. They walk
— an elementary form of this experience of the city; they are
walkers, *Wandersmänner*, whose bodies follow the thicks and
thins of an urban “text” they write without being able to read
it. These practitioners make use of spaces that cannot be
seen; their knowledge of them is as blind as that of lovers
in each other's arms.

Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*,
[1984] 2002, p.93

The fundamental tension between design and fine art lies in their
different traditions and in their different types of connections
with business and financing. As long as each side stays within
established norms, there is a certain space for experimentation.
They are free to construct status and validation systems of
their own, but as soon as some fundamental rules are broken
everything can be questioned. How a border-crossing is regarded
depends on from which point of view it is scrutinized. On the one
hand, from the point of view of fashion design, fine art is often
regarded as complicated and bound to rules that are difficult to
see through. On the other hand, when clothes appear in a fine
art context they are treated as objects that are not intended to
be worn. The emphasis is on how much clothes as art differs
from ordinary fashion. The pieces are often viewed as a critique
on the capitalist system. An illustrative example of what can

Introduction

Standpoint

happen when the two fields meet is when the “designer-as-
artist” (Duggan, 2006, 242), Siv Støldal, was interviewed in the
magazine *Form* after she had won the +46 Award. Støldal's *Three
Wardrobes* is a collection of clothes and an exhibition. The work
is built on multiple in-depth interviews of Norwegian men (i.e.
Steinar the electrician, Ingemar the professional diver, and Alf the
pensioner). Støldal's investigations of their wardrobes, together
with the interviews, resulted in the research that in turn created
a collection. I consider Siv Støldal to be a contemporary artist
working in the field of fashion design, and in the article she is
presented as such. However, in the interview she states:

No, I am not an artist. This is not art, it is clothes that are
supposed to be bought and worn by ordinary people in
ordinary situations. But if you ask me what trend is coming,
then I don't have a clue,” she says but continues, “The
research I am doing is of an absolute necessity. There I gain
my inspiration and my energy; it is my fuel, my engine. Only to
run a business is not enough. (Lindén Ivarsson, 2008, 80—82)

The difference between Støldal and a contemporary artist is that
Støldal sells clothes and not objects, and she does not finance her
work by means of funded projects. However, these economical
differences are not sufficient for a differentiating of her as an artist
or a designer. The character of her work resembles participatory
art by her way of focusing on relationships and collaborations.
The result is that people wearing her clothes will tell stories
about them as though they had a ‘second life’ in a way that an
art collector may do commenting on her/his collection. Her final
comment about running a business points at the difficulties for
an ‘artist-designer’ or ‘designer-artist’. Artists are not expected to
run a business through the simple production and consumption of
goods. This is seldom referred to as something an artist does, but
it is always implied as being part of a fashion designers work.
Clothes are regarded as commodities and the role of the designer
is just to get them to sell better than the ones created by their
competitors. The development in recent years has shown that
there is a power struggle between commodification and meaning
in all the arts and that this is not only a question of design.
Støldal connects herself with a history of anti-fashion projects
by stating that she does not have the slightest idea what trend is
coming next. Historically, the anti-fashion projects were run by
artists such as Stepanova, Malevich, and the Dadaist Balla, for
example. These artists had a strong interest in fashion but wanted
to liberate it from its mercantile logic. To reach this utopian goal
they thought that they had to be on the inside of the system (Stern,
2004, 3). The anti-fashion projects of today are not as utopian

as they were historically, but they still bring up the questions of use and meaning and the financing of artistic endeavours. Siv Støldal is one example of many who works as an artist/designer. Other examples of artist/designers working with a combination of fashion design and art are ___fi (*fabrics interseason*) from Austria and the Italian and Dutch artist/designer *Elisa Marchesini*, and the well known example of *Bernhard Willhelm*.

When I started this PhD project, my standpoint was somewhere in-between the fields of fashion design and contemporary art. The basic question I put up was if the dressed body in everyday life and in public space could be regarded as a medium and material in the field of contemporary art. Looking back, I realize that this question was quite inconsiderate and did not reflect a thoroughly thought out standpoint. In order not to be locked into this rigid position, that in fact would preserve the dichotomy I found so unconstructive, I began to look at my situation from a more ideological perspective to discover what I wished to promote in society. By losing the rigidity of my own identity as designer and artist I could see a large number of possibilities to engage in a wider field of engagement and activity. I looked for other social structures and contexts where my work could make a distinct amendment.

The aim of my PhD project developed into studies of performance and identity processes, where dress and appearance play a significant role. I wished to study how these types of practices can be used to explore and open up the creative processes in shared situations and public spaces. My initial dilemma of how to document a performance and stay true to a lived experience was still in focus and I will come back to that in the last track.

In these new efforts the book *Arts de Faire (The Practice of Everyday Life)* by Michel de Certeau (1925–1986) became important for me. It was written in 1980 and is based on his studies of popular culture and marginalized groups of people. After the Second World War he traveled around in France biking or riding. He continued to travel throughout his life and spent a considerable amount of time in South America. In the student revolts of May 1968 in Paris, he was very active. Certeau's constant moving around gives his work a special character. He is more interested in what people 'make' or 'do' in our culture, rather than in the production of its symbols and representations. His underlying theme is resistance and survival; he shows how ordinary people can escape a system without having to leave it. Still, it is difficult to put a label on Certeau's work because it also moves around in many academic fields; his subjects of study comprise, among others, philosophy, history, anthropology,

Walking, Talking
and Screaming

sociology, psychoanalysis, and theology. Inspired by Certeau, I have identified the three main sections of my dissertation as "Tracks" and have given them the headings: Walking, Talking, and Screaming. I have used the idea of walking and the concept of 'the itinerary' as one of my filters (methods). I also make use of Certeau's ideas on the concepts of place, space and time-space. The new direction of my work also actualized a number of other art movements, e.g. performance art from the seventies, *Feminist Art*, the *Neo-Concretist* art movement from Brasil and the *Fluxus* art movement. Some contemporary fashion projects also became an important source of inspiration. When studying the ideas of these art movements I found some interesting links to the thinking of Certeau. His writings are usually connected with the Situationists who started their work in the fifties and were most active during the sixties. I find the *Situationist* movement too idealistic and formal. I have found more interesting connections to the *Neo-Concretist* movement with its focus on the lived experience, and a concept including everyday life in *vivências*, which means total life experience, and which was constructed by the artist Hélio Oiticica, as a counter to the alienating relations of capitalism (Bishop, 2005, 106).

The Tracks
and Certeau

When I named the first track Walking I was inspired by the chapter "Walking in the City" in Certeau's book ([1984] 2002, 92). In this text Certeau compares the experience of walking with the pleasure one derives from climbing a tall building, in this case the World Trade Center in New York. Up there one escapes being "clasped" by the streets, one also escapes having to be turned and moved around by the laws of the streets and having to engage in the constant play and interplay there (Certeau, 92). One gets freed from the body and becomes a viewpoint and nothing more. At the same time the body becomes part of society and by that submissive to the system but still with access to cunning tactics and actions to build up reciprocal relations to other people. The second track, Talking, was inspired by the chapter "Quotations of Voices" in Certeau's book (154). In this text, he makes a distinction between saying (speech), doing (writing) and "scriptural enterprise" (discourses) (Certeau, 158). He refers to Saussure and means that the scriptural enterprises (discourses), through two centuries of history, have presupposed the break between the statement (an object that can be written) and enunciation (the act of speaking) (Certeau, 159). In my work, the act of speaking, body language and the act of wearing clothes have a similar relationship to the written and the textual.

The third track, Screaming, goes back to a special understanding of the concept in Certeau's texts. He claims that screaming escapes the body and by that the social and the

symbolic. It creates a connection with the in-fans, the ill-bred, the intolerable in the child, the howls of the baby, the possessed, the madman or the sick and what we consider as a lack of good manners (Certeau, 148). In the chapter “The Scriptural Economy”, he also means that clothes and other props are instruments that hold the body in a social law (Certeau, 131). He describes how the body is coded and decoded and that clothing is one of the regulators (Certeau, 147). In my work, screaming has become a representation of that which goes against the system of norms. It does not escape the norms, but certainly has the ability to challenge them. I also connect screaming with surprise, coincidences, and the uncontrollable aspect of the performances.

Certeau has also been of great help to handle the issues of place and space that arise in the art world as in e.g. ‘spatial work’ and ‘room installations’. He makes a distinction between place (*lieu*) and space (*espace*), a place being an instantaneous configuration of positions, while a space is composed of intersections of mobile elements (Certeau, 117). Space is obviously more connected to accidental occurrences than place. A place is a proper location for things and indicates stability while space is, and is thought of as being, in transition and open to change. Place is connected to eternity, while space is ambiguous, and yet open to transformations. “in relation to place, space is like the word when it is spoken, that is, when it is caught in the ambiguity of an actualization” (Certeau, 117).

In my work, the stability of place and the flow of time have become two concepts that I have found challenging. It seems that in everyday society, and also in the arts, we like to make contradictory distinctions between time and space. In contemporary art, the emphasis is on space, while in fashion people talk about timing. Using Certeau’s distinction between place and space as a metaphor, I regard the dressed body as similar to space and clothes not worn an equivalent to place. The wearing of clothes becomes related to and ‘caught in the ambiguity of an actualization’ and this actualization is mostly non-verbal.

What is then the relation between place, space and time? As Certeau points out, space is not a fixed ‘room’, it is related to time. Space is also more connected to time than place. Space could be understood as a kind of time-space. My interest lies in the presence and the appearance of being in a space, as well as inhabiting space, and engaging in the activities that are carried out there. I work with the notion of space, everyday performance and the ways in which dress and appearance has the potential to affect this space. The focus on presence makes it important for me to be an active part of the work, either as a member of a group or by participating in a performance.

This connection to time is important in relation to the political. If we view space as time and not space as a solid and motionless ‘room’, it becomes open for change and also interference, not necessarily through physical changes of the room but through changes happening over time. Therefore, space is both ambiguous and political. According to Massey, categorizing space as the opposite of time removes it from the sphere of the political (1994, 250). Understanding that space is a time-space relationship connects it to the social and vice versa, and to quote Massey, “that the social and the spatial are inseparable and that the spatial form of the social has causal effectivity” (Massey, 255). From this, it is evident that space is organized in the flow of a continuum, it has an effect on the social and the social is political, even if it is of volatile character. Furthermore, we need to conceptualize space as constructed out of interrelations, as the simultaneous coexistence of “social interrelations and interactions at all spatial scales”, from the most local level to the most global (Massey, 264). Time-space is characterized by the in-between space between people, interactions and relations.

To conclude, I work as intimately as possible with the actual lived experience and accept the consequences of this way of working when dealing with the material that emerges and is mediated through the projects.

The Evasion of Abstractions

My point of departure is to avoid direct links to discourses and abstractions. To do so consistently is impossible and besides the point, but it is possible to avoid obvious connections to established lines of thinking. This does not mean that I am indifferent to what happens during discussions about politics, art, and other important issues, but I wish for people to be less bound to a specific pre-understanding of my work. I operate with a conscious aim to work with multi-faceted formats in order to keep my work open for different use and interpretations. I wish to become independent of abstractions that have lost their connection to real life, and to come closer to the particular, situated, and concrete actions.

A way of working that I find closely related to this evasion of abstractions, although it has had quite different prerequisites, is described by Dorothy E. Smith in her book *The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Sociology*. Smith works as a sociologist and her aim has been to look into the existing and to determine how things are, rather than to intervene directly in social processes. Still, her way of working takes its starting-point in ‘lived experience’. This approach means that she dissociates herself from the kind of sociology that does not consider the presence and the experience of particular subjectivities. She believes sociologists should begin where they are and discover

the institutional organization of power they are part of (Smith, 1987, 175). Born in 1926 and with a degree in Economics prior to her sociology studies, she received her Ph.D. in Sociology at the University of California at Berkeley in 1963. She read Marx and Engels, in a way that gave prominence to “the everyday realities and in which relations it explores are realized and which indeed bring them into being” and was deeply affected by that (Smith, 1987, 223). In her work Smith emphasizes the process of investigation rather than the validation of theories. She is anxious to be open to what really happens and attempts to avoid quick theoretical conclusions based on simplified models. I connect my own way of working to her ideas by not beginning with a well-thought out conceptual program, but by placing myself in specific social situations which provide clear direction to the work.

Inquiry of this kind builds in an open-ended character. It is like the making of a piece of a quilt that remains to be attached to other pieces in the creation of a whole pattern. We begin from where we are. The ethnographic process of inquiry is one of exploring further into those social, political, and economic processes that organize and determine the actual bases of experience of those whose side we have taken. Taking sides, beginning from some position with some concern, does not destroy the “scientific” character of the enterprise. Detachment is not a condition of science. (Smith, 1987, 177)

In contrast to Smith, I attempt to understand in what way my actions and interventions can contribute to a new knowledge about what we have to accept as given, and what we are able to change by new experiences that result in a re-directed attention. My aim is not to describe and explain, but to explore and transform. What Smith and I share is a conviction that all people involved in both sociological studies and artistic interventions are part of the same reality and are already related to each other in ways that affect the outcome. This has to be considered both in the design of the work and in the interpretation of the result. Both Certeau and Smith are focused on avoiding ‘the Eye’: a single viewpoint that stands free from the body. However, Certeau is, consequently, process-oriented by relating the experience of living to the flow of life. Smith is more interested in the relational structures that are part of shaping different ways of living. She says that the culture we live in does not arise spontaneously; it is built on the dominant productions of some and the silence of others, a methodological theory of different standpoints (Smith, 1987, 19–20). In my perspective, both viewpoints are necessary. If Certeau had experimented with a more structure-oriented perspective, he probably would not have dedicated his text

The Practice of Everyday Life to ‘the ordinary man’, but to the ‘the ordinary woman’, (McLeod, 1996, 13). According to Smith, this change would have made a fundamental transformation in what becomes recognized and not.

What I attain by applying the feminist standpoint theory represented by the work of Smith and others, is a deeper understanding of how my specific historical background affects the potential and the limits of the types of interventions I do. I am not looking for a new and different method in order to get closer to the fundamental forces behind social drive. Nevertheless, I do hope that the interventions I create will become more powerful by my, and the participants, deeper self-understanding. The analysis derived from the use of a feminist standpoint theory can help to, not only, understand the mechanisms behind a specific course of events in an intervention, but to be part of the exploration of inconsistencies and ‘cracks’ which can be used for the development of ideas promoting radical change. Feminist standpoint theory presents opportunities for shared moments in situations that are part of larger complexities, compounded from structurally related problems. It can also offer a framework for inter- and multidisciplinary works of research in contemporary art, fashion, and the social sciences, even if those fields and practices are incomparable.

My reading and use of the feminist standpoint theory, or the standpoint of women by Smith, are connected to the main focus and dilemma of this dissertation, that is, the importance and the mediation of ‘presence’ and ‘lived experiences’. Standpoint theory does not start in cultural locations, but in individual lives. This starting point is favorable to artistic research mainly because the specificity and particularity of it creates a relationship to the ‘here and now’ and to the actualizations. Thus, the feminist standpoint theory supports the avoidance and evasion of levels of abstractions.

I have found this focus in another example of artistic research, in the dissertation: *Lak-ka-pid-lak-ka-perd: contemporary urban conditions with special reference to thai homosexuality* by Sopawan Boonnimitra, publicly defended at the Malmö Academy of Performing Art, at the University of Lund, Sweden in 2006. “*lak-ka-pid-lak-ka-perd*” is a common term in Thai language and the closest translation of it in English would be: “sometimes close-sometimes open” (Boonnimitra, 2008, 19). Boonnimitra connects this term to the element of time as a function in identity construction, and specifically in the unsettlement of identities. In an interview, she connects this term to Buddhist philosophy and how she thinks about time as a consequence. “In Buddhist philosophy, the desirable time is always the present. It is in the

moment of ‘here’ and ‘now’ that things can simultaneously take place. It also offers an alternative terminology and viewpoint from another specific location” (Boonnimitra, 2008, 31).

Through this statement, it is possible to connect presence, not only to action (which excludes passivity), but to a potential situation where contradictions can meet, in other words, where things, identities, and concepts can exist simultaneously, not in a stable position, but in a political and ambiguous flow.

Methods

All I could do was to offer you an opinion upon one minor point — a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction; and that, as you will see, leaves the great problem of the true nature of woman and the true nature of fiction unsolved. I have shirked the duty of coming to a conclusion upon these two questions — women and fiction remain, so far as I am concerned, unsolved problems. But in order to make some amends I am going to do what I can to show you how I arrived at this opinion about the room and the money.

Virginia Wolf, *A Room of One’s Own*, [1928] 2004, p. 4

The Framework of Knowing in Artistic Research

Artistic work always starts with a vision that does not fully consider the possibilities to realize it. This basic fact illustrates that artistic practices are related to resources. There is a tradition of avoidance surrounding the relationship between fine art and economic conditions. It is even more unusual to actualize that the resources are unevenly divided between different artists depending on e.g. sex or social background. The classic example of Virginia Wolf and her writing in *A Room of One’s Own* still stands as a consequence, work within the arts often starts by searching for resources rather than by looking for an adequate method. Other types of considerations have been very well articulated in the feministic standpoint theory. Depending on our standpoint we do things differently, and the result sounds, looks, and reads differently when using different kinds of resources at hand. Methods are not just free floating assets. The choices are dependent on the whole situation.

This complex relationship between methods, results, and resources doesn’t make it less important with a conscious choice of method and process, just more difficult. By relating different goals and ways to achieve them, completely new connections and possibilities may appear. The simple view of methods as unequivocal functional tools is no longer relevant.

Artistic research does not differ from art practice in this respect. Once again, it is a question of the result, in this case, the kind of knowledge we are looking for, in relation to the actual situation and the resources. My main approach has been not to hurry into specific tracks, but to be open to the unforeseen opportunities that arise when the artistic work has been put in play. I do not decide beforehand exactly what should be learnt. The determination not to be trapped by discourse and abstractions is part of my overall focus on the everyday life. As artistic research is, in my case, subordinated artistic work methods, I will be talking about both practices in the coming paragraphs.

Upon entering PhD studies, I was careful not to lose contact with my artistic methods and my earlier ways of conducting artistic work. I have tried to get deep into, and use, the particular energy that comes from the particular way I tend to do things in the studio and elsewhere. I have attempted to make how I work more clear and obvious to myself and others, in order to reflect and act upon that knowledge. The reflections I present are therefore closely related to the practice, my projects, sketches, toiles¹, photographs and notebooks.

At the same time, the process of conducting a PhD project has made me more conscious of the dilemmas which arise in the artistic practice itself. I have constantly tried to enunciate these ‘dilemmas’². These dilemmas express themselves as “friction” and “unworkability”, and they drive the researcher to try and understand more and to consider taking a stand for new directions of development and new solutions, in both a material and conceptual sense (Hannula et al., 2005, 107). The role of the dilemmas can be compared to the role of ‘questions’ in other types of research; they guide the process, but the dilemmas are so intermingled with the practice that they cannot be articulated beforehand. They can only be discovered by an extreme awareness of what happens during the artistic work.

In the history of epistemology, there have always been a number of different and competing views on knowledge production. Much of the discussion has been based on different theoretical understandings, but based on new results from the discipline of sociology of knowledge we now also know more about the practice of research. People within feminism, anti-racism, and anti-colonialism have, for example, questioned the pretension to objectivity and the possibilities to find a final truth. Artistic research, which still is a fairly new practice, will hopefully contribute to this discussion about the aim and methods of research by introducing the knowledge development process from artistic work. However, the risk is that the new research practice adapts, instead of confronts, the established methods of doing research and recedes from the artist’s way of working.

When reading about different scientific traditions and methods I have, in many cases, at first been attracted by their elegance and coherence. But, after closer scrutiny I have found their ambitions very different from those of art. They mostly emphasize encircled parts or specific perspectives instead of trying to grasp the whole, and they do not consider the fact that different people experience the same situations very differently. The scientific approach simply rejects the existing complexity and ambiguity. Still, these approaches have sometimes been inspiring. I have been very

¹ A toile is a version of a garment made by a fashion designer or dressmaker to test a pattern. They are usually made in cheap material, as multiple toiles may be made in the process of perfecting a design. Toiles may be called “muslins” in the United States.

² An expression of Mika Hannula’s during a seminar on artistic research at the Faculty of Fine, Applied and Performing Arts at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

influenced by the work of feministic researchers, as they are so aware of the impact of their own habits and practice and do not think too highly of the generality of their results. Harding’s ‘relational’ standpoint theory and strong objectivity are good examples, as they argue for multifaceted view-points and rejects reductionism (Edeholt, 2004, 50–51). However, I have kept a critical distance and trusted the artistic process and explorations.

In this difficult process, the idea of methods as a ‘filter’ has been of great help (Bode & Schmidt, 2008, 25). This idea makes it clear that the choice of a method has to be open and conscious, as it not only causes some parts of reality to be more visible, but also causes others to disappear. It clearly relates to art practice by pointing at the possibility to work creatively with aspects and parts without ever forgetting the complex whole. When applying one filter you are also always conscious about the possibility of other filters, it actualizes the question of ethics, as most ethical shortcomings are the result of filters that make important aspects invisible.

The difficulty in adapting to and using traditional scientific methods in artistic research is also a question of the different goals. Most scientific work has the basic aim to make it possible to control the future. It has no immediate ambition to change it. The emphasis is on threats rather than on possibilities. Therefore, the objectivity and the security of the results become so important especially in Western democracy, where decisions are made as a matter of procedure and not of personal power (Hirsch & Olson, 1995). However, even if objectivity is sought after in a democracy, all procedures have to be questioned; a system can never be finished and left to its own mechanisms. This passive attitude is no longer regarded as the only one. We are able to change the conditions if we don’t simply look for what is eternally given, but for cracks and incongruence that may represent something different or emerging, and that can be both good and bad depending on how we make use of it.

Feministic standpoint theory has been an important factor in this discussion about objectivity and subjectivity in research (Harding, 1991, 48). Several researchers have contributed to the development of it. Harding, a feminist philosopher of science, who earned her PhD from New York University (NYU) in 1973, gives Dorothy Smith, who I presented earlier, as an example of an early standpoint theorist (Harding, 119).

Situated knowledge has become a key concept for the standpoint theory. It was introduced by Donna Haraway in the article *Situated Knowledge: The Science Question in Feminism*

and the *Privilege of Partial Perspective*, by Donna Haraway (1988, 575). Haraway was born in 1944 in Colorado and has a degree in zoology and philosophy and she also studied evolution before finishing her PhD in the department of Biology at Yale in 1972. She is probably most famous for her way of understanding relationships between people and machines that is clearly described in the *Cyborg Manifesto*. “Situated knowledges require that the object of knowledge be pictured as an actor and agent, not as a screen or a ground or a resource, never finally a slave to the master that closes off the dialectic in his unique agency and his authorship of “objective” knowledge” (Haraway, 592).

It is important to remember that Haraway says all this in her role of researcher trying to understand how things are. Artistic research has another aim by presenting unknown possibilities of looking and thinking. It is a question of creating and documenting a new future and, in so doing, makes it possible to discuss it critically and creatively. This changes the relationship between the researcher and the object of study. It is not just a question of the viewpoint of the researcher in relation to something given. New artifacts are introduced that change the whole context and by that also question the relevance of old and established knowledge. The knowledge produced by artistic research has not the character of yet another piece that completes the puzzle. It constructs a new base for the use of already existing and for development of new knowledge in the actual situation. The dialogue is not taking place between the subject doing research and the object of study (even if this kind of activity could be a part of the process), the overarching dialogue is with ‘something’ of the future, through ‘mediums’ which are accessible in the present. This is the challenge and particular aspect of artistic research.

In order to have this dialogue with the future through the mediums of the present, possibilities to intervene into and interact with the flow of historical determinations of events has to prevail. To further this direction, I connect the work of Haraway to that of Cornelius Castoriadis (1922–1997). Castoriadis was both an economist, philosopher and a socialist and his work is often mentioned as another source of inspiration for the students’ revolt in Paris 1968, similar to that of Certeau. To describe the historically determined input, Castoriadis talks about the ‘magma of social imaginary’. This presents a picture of something very complex and difficult to grasp and understand, but, as we all know, we are able to both imagine and realize changes that break the continuity. Castoriadis is using the concept of “radical imagination” when talking about these interventions (1997a, 321). Haraway seems to agree with this general standpoint, but awards science a more important role for a re-thinking, saying that “science has been utopian and visionary from the start; that is the

reason why “we” need it” (Haraway, 585).

Artistic research puts a finger on this particular spot in the practice of science and may even go further by adding concepts and methods. The way I am practicing artistic research is by taking into consideration everything around me, including myself, as having the potential for change and transformation. I am mostly concerned with retaining the flow of the creative processes, and this involves acting, and keeping processes and institutions as open as possible. It is an open ended process in the making which proposes action space in the historically determined structures of power without denying these structures. As a matter of fact, artists and designers use a vast number of methods to find plausible processes that lead into the future. In this dissertation I am proposing that art and design are a kind of example of multiple ‘entrances’ into the future which can be experienced in the present.

Status Modification
as a Filter of
Maintaining
Animated Artistic
Processes

Based on this general point of departure, I will argue for a filter that I call *status modification*. The filter creates new action spaces by changing the status and position of different phenomenon, like situations, matter, or people. It is a metaphor in the meaning that the modification is not just restricted to text, but includes all kinds of actors in a situation, both artifacts and people. It is a way of moving from the predictable to an unknown and dynamic situation.

‘Status modification’ could be regarded as corresponding to the use of metaphors in the process of rethinking something which is ingrained. In his book *Hur låter Åskan: Förstudium till en Vetenskapsteori* Johan Asplund³ references the epistemological value of these kinds of tools for re-thinking. His book is an attempt to deal with the borders between art and science, and how they are on their way out (Asplund, 2003, 18). Asplund is using the concept of ‘transformation’ to describe what happens in this kind of epistemological processes. But while metaphors are comparing objects and transferring characteristics, I work with performance and appearance, which makes status modification relate to role-play and shift of relations. However, in both cases it is a question of keeping, reopening, or triggering a creative process.

The basic idea of ‘status modification’ is to use interventions that temporarily re-orientate objects, places and situations, to provoke reality so that previously invisible, but important structural mechanisms can be seen. We are transported from our established positions to new ones from which things appear differently. This is in accordance with standpoint theory. What has earlier been regarded as self-evident becomes something that is possible to affect, even to radically change. The result is a

³ Johan Asplund is a Swedish sociologist and social psychologist born in 1937.

transformation of our own standpoint and a new knowledge that opens up for completely new transformations.

I have so far differentiated two ways of 'status modification'. The first maximizes the 'communicative complexity' or the meta messages via a type of 'subjectification', this means to animate an object so that it becomes a subject, actor or agent. A dialogue is established even though there is no real response. The second minimizes the 'communicative complexity' or the meta messages by a type of 'objectification'. This means that something living is treated as a passive object. In this case, the prospective dialogue is interfered and disturbed. We know the method of 'objectification' from the examples of Andy Warhol's work. His denial, or looped dialogue, and the 'objectification' of his art and especially himself, made art that was simultaneously seductive and disturbing.

In the Track Talking, the project of *Passing in Venice I*, I 'subjectified' the picture of the woman from the *Venice biennale* by 'responding' to her in the performance of *Passing in Venice II*. In a way, I accomplished the same in Walking when I changed the status of the place and the situation by adding the story of the visiting goddesses from India. In a text written for the *Art Monitor magazine* titled: *Sea Harbour People – Mimesis, Camouflage, Masquerade*, I wrote about the Nordic sea as if it was an actor and has agency (Eriksson, 2008, 24). In the track Screaming, I did the opposite and 'objectified' 'feelings' by allowing them to be represented by silk material and flags in different colors.

Boonnimitra gives another example of 'status modification' in her piece *Memory of the Last Supper* from 2007 (Boonnimitra, 2008, 19–23). Here she changes the status of a situation by asking immigrants to remember their last supper before leaving their former homes. She asks them to re-live this last supper while she photographs them in their new homes. Boonnimitra is, therefore, along with the immigrants, changing the status of the situation by using a kind of 'memorification'.

I can imagine that there are endless combinations and possibilities of 'status modifications' that could transform something in the world, thereby unsealing possible transformations and explorations of standpoint.

My use of 'status modification' is dominated by the strategy of 'subjectification', even if I sometimes employ 'objectification'. I work with dialogue and sometimes I use misapprehensions as a strategic tool in my artistic methods. In correspondence with other artists I make conscious use of affect and use it to govern the artistic processes. This position has been clarified and made much more operational by application of feminist theory.

The Itinerary as a Filter of Organization

"Feminism loves another science: the science and politics of interpretation, translation, stuttering, and the partly understood. Feminism is about the sciences of the multiple subject with (at least) double vision" (Haraway, 1988, 589).

The aim of a method as a filter is to guide the researcher, but also the collaborators and others who take part in what happens, through a complex reality, and finally the readers of the report. A striking concept that is able to stand for the idea of the whole is often looked for in order to keep the work on track in large design projects involving many people. Most of these concepts are based on metaphors. In this project, the concepts of 'walking' and 'itinerary' from Certeau have played this kind of role. It has been used both as a basis for the development of the performances, and for the choice of format and design of the report, e.g. the way text and images are related.

Walking is in fact more than a metaphor; it creates the real presence in my work. I have literarily used 'one step at a time', especially in relation to time planning and the mixing of artistic work, discussions, reading and writing. There hasn't been a detailed plan for the activities within the project from the start. I have made use of the opportunities that have appeared and have dealt with unexpected problems as creatively as possible. To keep coherency, I have relied on my intuition and inner artistic prime mover.

At the same time, it has not been my intention for others to repeat my journey and experiences by creating an unambiguous map. For me the 'map' is closely connected to traditional scientific discourse. Instead I rather think in terms of 'the tour' that de Certeau relates to 'ordinary' culture (Certeau, 119).

The first medieval maps included only the rectilinear marking out of itineraries (performance indications chiefly concerning pilgrimages), along with the stops one was to make (cities which one was to pass through, spend the night, pray at, etc.) and distances calculated in hours or in days, that is, in terms of the time it would take to cover them on foot. (Certeau, 120)

So the itinerary predated the map. The stories told were not just to enrich the experiences of the future travelers; they also contained critical information necessary to carry out the journey safely. A representation of the ship that had been used on the voyage was also included in the resulting naval maps emphasizing the importance of the circumstances of the expedition for the result (Certeau, 121).

Consequently the report demonstrates one possible road through a landscape that is full of available viewpoints, stops,

and detours that appeal to different people in different ways depending on their background or interest. The travel story and itinerary in this report is just one of the possible results (Certeau, 115). Hopefully, several subjective, particular maps and accounts will appear that are different, but still have so much in common that the experiences can be related, discussed, and enriched by each other. It is my hope that other artistic researchers will make use of what I have found, and develop the tour and the knowledge in many directions in the future.

The 'travel' stories may, at times, appear as though they have a clear beginning and end, but it is important to remember that all descriptions of these types of processes are made on the fly. I elaborate on the understanding, while composing the description. This dissertation is a collection of narratives that present the chosen directions and indicate the circumstances and activities behind them. The itinerary has been a filter for the organization and communication of both the actions and the material.

I have also found that a dissertation in artistic research, and especially one in design, has pretensions in regard to the graphic design of the printed dissertation. Therefore, I decided early on to collaborate with graphic designers for the final version of the dissertation. I was interested in a continuous artistic process which involved collaboration, and in loosening the controls which would allow the unanticipated to happen even at a late stage of the PhD work process. This continuous process was a way to test some of my concepts and ideas, and to reopen the process for undetermined or unexpected possibilities. The graphic design becomes both part of the result, in that I am 'performing' my art works in this book, but also part of a continuous work process. The work of the graphic design becomes an in-between translation and interpretation that bridges my activities with the activities of the user and reader of the book. The translations of the reader are, therefore, an important step towards the idea of a continuous process of research, instead of a conclusive research which ends with the dissertation.

I have chosen to work with *Friendly Matters*, a design studio whose aims and intentions comport with mine. They describe their work process as one that always begins with an open mind, and where the design is a consequence of the analysis and ideas that specifically arise for every particular project. Even so, their own subjective, intuitive, and personal touch is always present in their work and they have no intention of making a totally transparent design.

We have worked closely with the idea of the 'itinerary', which is positioned in stark contrast to the creation of a graphic design

concept that the PhD project would have to conform to. We have used metaphors and status modification in order to delve deeper into the process. The application and use of different voices and references in the texts has been given its own graphic form, which opens up the possibility to experience the artistic research on many other levels, rather than strictly through the photographic image and the textual.

Throughout the collaboration, everyone has been anxious to adhere to an artistic integrity and, at the same time, combine this with the aims of a continuous process and dialogue. Our aims coincide with a basic focus on interaction, communication, and availability. A simple description of our goals could be to achieve dialogue without losing either depth or complexity.

THREE

This is a story of three Indian Goddesses and how they ended up visiting the streets of Gothenburg, the second largest city of Sweden. Their lives in India were prosperous and interesting but lately they had become bored with all the worshipping (puja), philosophy, colors, flowers and incenses. They loved their home but felt in need of a change, to see and experience something different. So they thought, "Why not travel somewhere else, to an exotic place?" Since they knew that their gaze was a blessing for the people who worshipped them, they thought, "Why not see and experience something new and make it possible for other people, outside India, to be blessed by our gaze and appearance?"

The three Indian Goddesses came to an agreement to meet each other in the city centre in Gothenburg, at Harry Hjärne Square to be more precise. Since they were strong headed and forceful Goddesses they had to travel alone arriving at the square from three different directions. In order to understand and appreciate Swedish culture, they tried to dress up the same as the people living in Gothenburg. They chose denim jeans, white shirts and dark jackets after they had studied Swedish dress code. To make the garments fit they had to have the outfit adjusted to their many arms.

The Goddesses entered the city, and when they met, the power of them meeting caused an eruption that flowed into the surroundings. Suddenly, other people around them started to meet each other. Three men in brown coats and briefcases met and shook hands with each other, a car started to flash with three rear lights and three teenagers reached for each other's hands. Since the three Goddesses enjoyed their time in Sweden so much they decided to go back home to India but make it an annual ritual to pay a visit to Gothenburg.

The text was part of an art show at Gallery 54,
Gothenburg, in May 2006



THREE
Performance, Photographs, 2006
Models: Hanna Lepp, Frida Pehrson, Cecilia Wickman
Photo: Kajsa G. Eriksson



THREE
Performance, Video stills, 2006
Models: Hanna Lepp, Frida Pehrson, Cecilia Wickman
Photo: Kajsa G. Eriksson

II TRACKS

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I would rather think of something unpretentious yet significant — of the glances which strangers exchange in a busy street as they pass one another with unchanging pace. Some of these glances, though not charged with destiny, nevertheless reveal to one another two dialogical natures.

Martin Buber, *Between Man and Man*, [1947] 2002, p. 5—6

17TH DECEMBER 2005
GOTHENBURG, SWEDEN

The Central Railway Station: the speed of encounters in the morning hour, everyone is moving swiftly, on a certain track, with a goal in mind. You fend off those you meet. The sound of shoes and heels are the soundtrack and the rhythm.

To make a move or not make a move is crucial; you are a part of a bigger picture, something that could be called the masses. Pedestrian streets, the mall, the pace of shopping; slow and dreamlike, you are looking for something, searching both inside and outside. In both cases, to hesitate, to stop, or to sit down, so as to not engage in this focused walking activity, is considered suspect. Could it be that you have nowhere to go? Or that you don't need anything?

My artistic work went through a transformation when I began to utilize public space as a place to show my work through performance, my work became more time-based. Working with dress and public space gave rise to the realization that I was never really satisfied when showing my work in the 'white cube', since my work became two-sided: one side of it worked as an actualization, usually set in public space and involving

Walking

The Gallery Space and Public Space

performances, and the other side was mediated material installed in the gallery space. The more I worked with dress as a material, the more apparent and acute this division became.

The question of where my work is situated and the problem of contextualization run like the 'main threads' throughout the PhD project. Maybe the lack of a given context is, in fact, part of the inner structure of the work and a valid aspect to be embraced. An organized physical context, a 'place', has a certain relationship to lived experiences, and this relationship is studied here. In this track, I present the project entitled *THREE*, which includes both a performance of walking the city streets and a gallery show. At the time, when working with the performance and the exhibition and connecting the two, I was unsure about how the two related to each other. I found that by connecting them in a project, I had the opportunity to better understand the ambiguity of my work.

Today, there are many artists working outside the gallery space, but who eventually return to exhibit there. The 'white cube' is not so much questioned by artists; it is rather the only safe haven for artists to show their work. It seems that provocative discussions and actions questioning gallery space were most alive in the seventies.

One good reason for me for working outside the gallery space is the opportunity to meet a different audience than that of the art institution. The art gallery space has very specific parameters. In the gallery, the audiences who come there to experience the exhibition, have themselves precise expectations, and are also expected to behave in a certain way. They are expected to reflect intensely and to be educated in some way about art. The everyday addresses another kind of spectator, that is, someone who is less conscious of their reflections and not necessarily educated about art. This audience may be less sensitive to certain aspects and may view them in a much different way than an art gallery audience. They can react in a more direct way, and have fewer preconceptions of references from art history. The artist is also able to step out of the conventions of being the artist and to become involved in another relationship, that of one between two people sharing the same time-space. In the street, you are more likely to experience a kind of interaction that does not operate through meta-layers, at least not initially. Also, when art moves into life, something else happens than if art stays in a gallery space: the mixing and merging of weather, material (other than white walls) and unexpected sounds and activities, for example, are part of that experience.

There are other differences between the gallery space and public space that should be explored. One, of many, concerns vision. In the gallery space, we are aware of the importance of the gaze

and the way we look is a kind of a stare that fixes the object of contemplation. Here, the gaze works like the shutter of a camera as it freezes the object in order to discern it (Leach, 2006, 163). However, when walking and moving in the street, the actual movement whilst looking creates another sort of vision. This fleeting vision is defined by its transitory character, and, in the way the gaze operates, the movement causes us to become slightly blind and allows other senses to come alive, instead. The street is perceived as a more dangerous space than an enclosed room, such as the gallery space. Therefore, our other senses, especially our hearing, become more alert. We usually make more use of our bodies in a public space setting, or, rather, our body is in some way restricted by the gallery space.

Conversely, vision at work in the gallery space is very much transformed into the 'Eye'. Here, eyes and minds are welcome, while the body seems much more of an intrusion. This becomes obvious when people in the 'white cube' attempt to adjust their bodies in order not to obstruct someone else's line of vision. Today, video art with its many projections, results in people trying to contort their bodies into positions that are as little disturbing to other spectators as possible. The spectator of the gallery space is an intruder in the act of trespassing. This causes the spectator, visible to him or herself, to remove vivid body language, and it also creates silence, or at least whispers (O'Doherty, 1999, 49).

The ultimate proof of the uncomfortable body in art spaces are 'installation shots'. The spectator is eliminated and the space itself is filled with expensive props (O'Doherty, 15). This has become a very common way of showing and presenting the ideals of fine art. The book *Installation Art in the New Millennium: The Empire of the Senses* (Oliviera et al., 2003) is filled with this type of installation photography. The photographs seem to say that ultimately, art should be a kind of 'still life'. If this is related to an interest in the everyday actual experience, this format and frame is limiting and misleading.

The seeking eye in the gallery space is drawn towards anything flat, and prefers thin layers and representations of reality. However, over the years, the gallery space has turned more and more into a discursive space. Some would claim it as being a critical space for dialogue. In his book *The White Cube, the Ideology of the Gallery Space*, O'Doherty identifies cubism as the turning point that reveals both of the two parties that are part of the gallery space and the experience of art. One of these parties is the 'Eye' and the other is the 'Spectator'. The Eye and the Spectator both provide basic background to many different fields of art. One may believe that the Eye and the Spectator are

separate, but they are, in fact, in a close, but tense, relationship. "The Eye looks down on the Spectator; the Spectator thinks the Eye is out of touch with real life" (O'Doherty, 50).

In the streets, we have another example of the eye and the spectator; here, the eye cannot claim its independence from the rest of the body as in the gallery space. In public space, you depend on your body; it is there not only to manifest itself but also to relate to other people. The body's presence is important, and its physicality is obvious; and if you completely lose this interaction with the environment, you are sure to crash into something or someone. Every city and culture has its own particular character of how to move together with others and this knowledge is taught and learned through the body. Walking is a practice of the 'body-mind' that continuously reproduces both the city and the absence of Certeaus 'place'.

"To walk is to lack a place".

Together we lack a place while moving around in the streets and by our "twisting and turnings" and quick or slow encounters we create eventually a name; the City.

The walks about cities are massive and they live in our dreams and as lived and walked everyday life. Connecting the verbalized, the dreamt, and the traversed, a double relation is created; the place, the origin from which it proceeds, and the nowhere it produces, results in "the going-by". (Certeau, [1984] 2002, 103)

People in public space and in the gallery are both connected with the development of cities and the concept of modernity. Artist's studios can be found in rural and remote areas, whereas we expect the galleries to be part of the city's identity. This is one reason why the gallery space is loaded with historically determined structures; what happens there has a very specific frame and this creates a particular situation that is repeatedly produced in gallery spaces and art institutions.

Setting Up the
Performance
of *THREE*

I built the walked performance in the project entitled *THREE* around the everyday life of the city and the passing moment, with its continual and ever-moving quality. I explored the differences between the gallery space and public space. One could view these differences as resonances, not between the two places in themselves, but between a determined standard discourse and the actual lived experience. Both concepts of lived experience and abstractions exist in the gallery space and public space; they exist everywhere, but in different ways.

Smith identifies this as "the bifurcated consciousness" and she points towards the attention one can give to actualities,

that is, the actual lived experience, even while being involved in a theoretical practice, as in the production of written text, for example (Smith, 1987, 86). The actualities are always there, or as Smith puts it “there is no entry to the abstracted conceptual mode of working without passing through and making use of the concretely and immediately experienced” (1987, 86).

The concepts of the lived experience and the abstractions, (here, in the form of mediation and representation), are intertwined together in *THREE*, a performance project that was preceded by a trip to Kolkata (former Calcutta) in India.

23RD DECEMBER 2005
KOLKATA, INDIA

Moving about the city of Kolkata, it becomes possible for me to be positioned, physically, right next to someone living in the streets of Kolkata. However, normally we live worlds apart, and yet, here, we are sharing the moment around us. These shared moments are special, and realizing that the dialectics between difference and similarity are not simple, I am filled with humility and astonishment.

The performance of *THREE* was constructed around a story in which three Indian goddesses visit Gothenburg. The goddesses walk through the city from different directions to meet in the city center, at Harry Hjörne Square [6] [7] [8].

The experience of walking the streets in a city, encountering others, and eventually forming a group was the basis of the project entitled *THREE*. The initial idea came from the rhythms of the body that were experienced while moving in the city and the rhythm and movement of the gaze while walking the streets. The performance, the documentation process and the editing of the material all derived from these concerns. My aim was to invent, to add to the space, or to appropriate the space, and to enhance it by adding a story. Once familiar with the story of the Indian goddesses' visit to Gothenburg, the notion of the city becomes slightly changed. Even if the narrative is made up and the following performance is make-believe, the practice of telling stories is part of a city identity and, consequently, part of its time-space activities. “As a corollary, one can measure the importance of these signifying practices (to tell oneself legends) as practices that invent spaces” (Certeau, 107).

My own tourist trip to India and me walking the streets there urged me to reverse the situation and turn my focus to Sweden. The invented story of the Indian goddesses visiting Gothenburg



6



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became a possible way to explore my own city. The time-space of Gothenburg and Harry Hjörne Square was slightly changed by the narrative and the performance. This minimal change assures nothing, but it does open a slot in the flow of everyday life moments and adds a kind of attentiveness that I connect with body presence, not only mind presence.

In *THREE*, I am concerned with what and who fits in, and who is regarded as different. I am interested in the act of ‘attempting to fit in’, and how a person assimilates while still retaining the feeling of self. In the performance of the meeting, the three goddesses, including their walking and gazing, represent the only ‘action’. The meeting of the three is significant because in this meeting they regain their power and by being a group of people they have the possibility to confirm and support each other and mirror themselves in each other. The models were chosen because, being good friends, they already formed a group of three. It was important to make an ‘imaginative’ and a ‘real’ meeting occur at the same time.

The choice of three and the choice of goddesses have many levels of interpretation. Most of us recognize the power of three as in the power of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in Christianity. However, it can be found in most cultures. It is also found in the subculture of witches that is called Wiccan where the Maiden, the Mother, and the Crone stand for the holy three, and which is represented here by the three ages of women. It is also possible to connect three with process, as in the beginning of a process, the middle of a process and the end of a process, which is something that we can all recognize. An interesting aspect is also how, in the question of identity, the three aspects of time, that is, past, present and future are brought together.

The possibility for women to play different roles through the adaption of different goddesslike characters are found in other artists' practices, as in the art of Nancy Spero, for example “In all of her works dealing with the subject of woman, Spero has tried to subvert the notion of a single constructed definition while also attempting to rewrite a visual history that includes woman “as hero, the protagonist, the one who is not strange or the exotic or the reflection of male power” ” (Mark ed. 2007, 306).

In *THREE*, the use of the Indian goddesses is a play with identity, and especially a play with male and female power. It is also a play with disguise. The women are Swedish, in the role of Indian goddesses who are disguised as Swedes when arriving in Gothenburg. It shows one of the potentials of dress to address many identity issues simultaneously, to merge different places and times and also to mix the everyday and make-believe.

As mentioned earlier, I use a method of appropriating time-space by mixing make-believe and real space. Make-Believe is one of Erving Goffman's five basic "keys" (Goffman, [1974] 1986, 44–45) and these keys are connected with his concept of "frames" (Goffman, [1974] 1986, 7). Frames are a particular social event, and our subjective involvement in this event is a way of framing a situation and a possible way to get away from misleading concepts such as 'background' or 'setting'. My interest of these concepts goes back to the activity of observing society and the need to know if an activity is serious or unserious. In order to understand a situation we need to know quite a lot about that situation to make the distinction. The concepts of 'keys' refer to a certain tone or flavor of a 'frame'. Make-believe as a 'key' is when an activity looks real but the participants do not really expect any actual outcome from it.

The make-believe in *THREE* is of a particular kind. It is a make-believe that does not live out a fantasy life, but rather one that creates a fantasy that mimics the real. This mimicry creates an ambiguity between the real and the make-believe, which is intended.

Firstly, it has to be established that in a situation, persons are not unitary in their social identities; they have multiple identities and standpoints, which, depending on the situation and its encounters, become apparent. Therefore, complexity and ambiguity are always part of a situation on the level of daily practice. Social identities are constructed and accomplished through joint practices by everyone involved in the situation and can be called "performed or situated social identities" (Erickson, 2004, 150). In the situation and participation framework, we signal what is relevant or what is not relevant to us; for example, make-believe can be signaled as having most relevance in a situation. This signaling process has been called "contextualization" in the later works of Gumperz (Erickson, 148–149). When an artist mixes the real and the make-believe, the "footing" or "contextualization" can become a challenge for the other participants of that particular "participation framework" to understand and relate to (Erickson, 151). "Footing" is also a concept used by Goffman in his later work and means "the stance or alignment taken by participants to each other" (Erickson, 151). It is also important to remember that the situation or the "frame" comes with a multitude of definitions; it is never only one definition (Allan, 2006, 88). Therefore, one situation can be claimed as art by me as an artist and be considered as littering by someone else.

There exists a process of tension and struggle in order to perceive in what direction 'footing' will change in a situation, in that one has to notice not only the existence of 'footing' but the possibility of change in the practice of the everyday. Conformity

and the historically determined are strong and cannot be denied. However, the existence of change in this process is possible but can be both painful and unfeasible to detect (Erickson, 174).

It is possible to work with intentional make-believe, where not all of those taking part are aware of the hidden agenda behind the make-believe. This is the basis of a con-game, for example (Allan, 89). The reasons behind working with games of this sort are that they create a blur between the real and the imaginative, and by so doing, both concepts are charged with each other, without them losing their individual distinctions — you cannot think of the real without taking the imaginative into account, and vice versa. This way of working has a long history in fine art. It emerged in the seventies, and one example that I will come back to is the work of Adrian Piper. The question that this kind of art asks is: "Who is the person doing these actions?" This is very different from the questions theatre asks: "Who is the character doing these actions?" (Schechner, 2006, 158). The artist and the artwork conflate in these kinds of artwork, and this raises certain kinds of questions and discussions about ethics in the arts, and with full right. It is important to remember that it is the right of everyone involved in any of these 'cons', since they themselves choose to be involved or not, to be respected for their interpretations and for the artist to take the consequences of those interpretations. No one's standpoint can be considered less valid or be put in hierarchical order. These kinds of con games do challenge ethics, but are at the same time very precise and effective ways of opening up for a time-space action, where the hierarchical order of, for example, 'footing' can be explored.

Designing the Clothes of the Performance

In the design of the clothes, I tried to work with the relationship between assimilation and differentiation as an expression of identity in clothing. The two concepts assimilation and differentiation are taken from the concept of camouflage, where we usually think of assimilation as the method of camouflage. However, both similarity and difference are what make camouflage an idea that can be connected with mimesis and 'becoming the other'. Camouflage, seen in the light of identity, is a movement between two extreme poles. One either loses oneself by being swallowed up by one's environment i.e. total assimilation, or one withdraws oneself completely and cuts oneself off from one's environment i.e. total differentiation. Camouflage is something that takes place both inwardly and outwardly, mentally and on the surface, and I use camouflage as a concept to interpret how people dress in public space.

Both the designs and the performance were inspired by two photographs, one is of the art collective, *Chicks on Speed*, from Berlin; the other is of women working at an administration

desk, as presented in a brochure from the University of Borås [9]. A group of three is presented in an image; they have their own characters, but still connect with each other visually. The particularities of each person becomes a variation of a theme within the group. Artists and collectors have used this visual phenomenon frequently, armed with the knowledge that if you put a collection together, certain characteristics become visible, and these characteristics are invisible if you view each piece singularly (Bårtås & Ekman, 2005, 12–13). This mimetic play is connected with identity and how identity, and not only visual identity, works. The differences and the similarities become tools to identify yourself, and, at the same time, to relate to your surroundings (Bårtås & Ekman, 130).

The basic shapes of the garments come from an investigation of the relation textile shapes have to the body, from 2003, carried out in the work for the collection by *Artist Clothing* called *i* (into). The investigation involved two different relationships of the garment to the body, one named the ‘cases’ and the other one ‘bags’, which also relate to two different paradigms in pattern cutting. ‘Cases’ were connected with so-called flat constructions, and ‘bags’ were connected with draping and modeling fabric on a dress form [10] [11]. These two parameters illustrate two very different ways of both wearing and cutting material for clothes. Fashioning a jacket involves cutting material into pieces to construct a ‘body’ of cloth, whereas draping involves working with fabric in the attempt to shape it in relation to the three-dimensional shape of the body, while still keeping the character of the fabric itself. In history, the latter method was favored because of the reluctance to cut the fabric, which was rare and expensive.

When walking the streets of Gothenburg, it becomes apparent that dress code is a strong code. Denim jeans are the most obvious choice for men, women and children. The denim trousers in the project *THREE* were designed to have a very plain fit, and a fit that did not exaggerate any part of the body or person’s shape, but blends with the body’s contours. I removed all the buttons and used hidden pockets, but kept the yoke in the back in order not to lose the connotation of denim jeans completely. The jeans were designed with stripes in contrasting colors on the outside and on the inside of the legs [12]. This was done to enhance the flatness opposite to jeans more frequently worn, which are usually designed to exaggerate the shape of the body.

The denim jeans were constructed with no interlock stitching of the seams on the inside, which caused them to tear easily. This small but important detail, especially from the aspect of the feeling of wearing the clothes, enhanced the feeling of the fact that the outside was a ‘shield’ for others to see, the outside being



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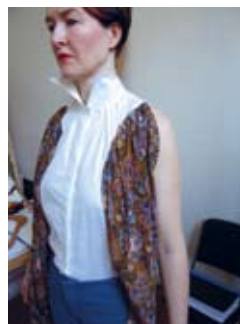
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the focus in this case, while as little attention as possible was paid to the inside [13]. This division points to the ambiguity that exists between the real and the imaginary, portrayed in *THREE*.

Another typical choice of dress, which I noticed in the streets of Gothenburg, was a dark jacket, ending just below the back. The jackets I finally decided to use were redesigned dinner jackets. I used the dinner jacket with its shaped shoulder line and chest as a reminder of the classical male body that all suits and jackets are constructed from. This was to act as a reference to the emergence of modernity through dress. The development of the suit made a huge leap into modern times in the 20th century when tailors started to use the proportions of the classical body as the ideal proportion. Previously, suits for men had been made to measure; now the body was ‘improved’ by padding and shaping the material to resemble the classical body, which meant that the suit no longer needed to be made to measure for it to have a good fit. The shape augments the chest and shoulders slightly, “to suggest a natural heroism” (Hollender, 1995, 106). This augmentation is connected with the development of the individual, the internalization of social position, and the creation of a ‘natural’ personality. This possibility of controlling and moulding the shape of the suit also made it possible to produce factory-manufactured suits. This process of controlling the shape of the dressed body started the process of mass production of clothes and is a good example of how the development of the aesthetics of dress is in a dialogue with different kinds of economies: the economy of the visual, the economy of the body and the economy of identity, as well as in dialogue with production and the monetary system.

The combination of the clothes for *THREE* ultimately created a combination of the Indian goddess and a *flâneur*, a so-called goddess/*flâneur*. The jackets, which were opened under the arms and edged with gold ribbons, were the strongest reference in the outfit to the *flâneur*. The *Flâneur* Jackets could, after this alteration, be worn by the Indian goddesses, who, with their many arms, also had to fit into the clothes [14].

The white shirt was designed to have a ‘father-killer’ collar. This kind of collar was used at the turn of the 20th century and was favored by the *flâneur*. This classic white shirt was counterbalanced by the wide sleeves of the shirt in flowing floral print silk. The sleeves are not fixed to the shape of the body but are to move as the silk material slips over the skin of the arms. It is possible for the shirt to be worn either without sleeves or long sleeved, in order to fit the Indian goddesses’ many arms [15].

7TH JANUARY 2006
SHANTI NIKETAN, INDIA

In the village of Shanti Niketan, the children wear a sari and a shawl called a stool. Girls as young as two years old wear a sari and a stool. In Shanti Niketan, the principles of wearing clothes are different from western ones. The sari and the stool have to be handled, adjusted and moved at all times to accommodate all sorts of activities. The typical western jacket, shirt, and trousers resemble a 'shell'. The clothes do not move around the body, but become a bodily sculpture of their own. This arouses ideas of functionality i.e. what we consider as practical or impractical. In the village of Shanti Niketan, practicality is not the main concern, or perhaps it is simply another kind of practicality. Here, what is practical is the mobile cloth, with its flexible rather than static quality.

The story of the project *THREE* is a story not only about Gothenburg but also about fitting in and finding your place, your sense of self and your identity. The clothes are viewed as an important part of finding a new identity, or as the merging and molding of old identities into a new one, by using clothes that are in a transitional state. Appearance and manners are important parts of our self-definition and our choices of appearances are highly affected by the social space or context that we are in (Giddens, 1997, 123). In this process the dressed body helps us sustain "a coherent sense of self-identity" (Giddens, 1991, 99). In the late modernist era, we base our identity on ourselves; there is supposedly no given frame or social setting for the individual, it has to be created. The price we pay for being 'free' and having the luxury to take on any identity is that we are then always "in the *reflective project of the self*" (Allan, 279) (author's italics). Choosing a lifestyle helps us to create a framework and a basis for our identity. By living in a free society, we are forced to choose our lifestyle; we are forced to make a 'free' choice (Giddens, 1997, 101).

Dress and appearance are corrective but also what aid us in maintaining a sense of self, reminding us of our history, and preparing us for our future. Appearance is part of the social, in that it is in between text and body, as an intermediate material (Certeau, 146). It is part of our way of interacting with other people

Coincidences

and an important part of those interactions. The idea that we are only dressing for ourselves is a very misleading idea. In most cases, we are dressing to maintain, reinforce or create a certain scenario. In creating these scenarios, we consider the setting, other people's biographies, and what kind of shared knowledge or experience might exist. Dressing is not only an exploration of the self, it is an exploration of the relations you are in.

In *THREE*, I was playing with three people since this is the smallest amount of people required to create a group, and through the fact that this group uses a dress code, the group will be enhanced in a public place. As a person, some of your personality may be sacrificed when creating a group, but at the same time interactions and social bonds will be gained. By creating a group, you are also creating kinds of non-verbal discourse, which unfold in this group.

During the performance, I was able to capture, on video, a meeting other than that of the goddesses/*flâneurs*. Three men in brown coats, brown trousers, and brown briefcases appeared and had an encounter right beside the three goddesses. The three men introduced each other and shook hands, and by so doing formed a beautiful, moving ephemeral brown sculpture. This was a lucky video shot. However, when one plays with the social in public space, coincidences are likely to occur whilst one is mimicking and merging with the real. At the moment of filming, the second group of three, with the help of their brown overcoats and brown briefcases, were creating another discourse. The coincidence of them meeting is reflected on here as a result of the performance.

The stranger or the foreigner that exists in my own inside was what I wished to discover and merge with the visual codes and norms of the city of Gothenburg. I wished for this foreigner to become a part of a social setting, not to be left alone and outside of it. This small group, which met in such a short time-span, is of an ephemeral kind, but by being less dominant, it also becomes less intimidating. It tells a story of how the personal experience and the normative forces of society, meet in everyday life.

30TH DECEMBER 2005
KOLKATA, INDIA

I imagine walking out into another world, into an unknown world. Here I find myself in a bubble of my own, a bubble built from insecurity. I experience a strong shift from the ordinary and from what I am used to. The foreign and "the other" surround me. This is

what traveling to a 'faraway' place means. What makes us want to travel, what makes us want to become a foreigner in the everyday life of others? Why get dressed in this outfit of a foreign environment? Are we not traveling all the time, moving in between the foreign and the familiar? We only feel secure and at home when the dialogue has been established and we have landed firmly. Here, what we are wearing is both what makes the distinction from the other, and, at the same time, what make us feel at home. The outside and the inside are insecure, tottering, afraid, and seeking safety and security in the cloth of the garment.

3RD JANUARY 2006
KOLKATA, INDIA

The Goddess/
Flâneur

Everyone wants something.
— Hello, Hello, Hello Madam.
I have learnt to avoid seeking eye contact in the streets, especially that of begging children. Suddenly, my gaze meets with the eyes of a small girl. She walks with a log of wood on her head. Her concentration on the task allows her gaze to be clear and open. She does not have the time to think of anything she could want from me before looking at me, and I have no time to think of anything I could want from her (for example to be left alone). Our gazes meet in an instant flash; it is a rare experience. One minute later, I pass another girl of the same age and this time I decide to look at her, in half a second her hand is stretched out as if in a reflex action or a 'begging greeting'.

The figure of the goddess/*flâneur* in the *THREE* performances is reminiscent of a 'double exposure' comprising an Indian goddess and the *flâneur*. When reflected on, this merging reveals two worlds in dialectical relationship with each other, the goddess and the *flâneur* being specifically interesting from the point of view of their specific histories with regard to the gaze. In the performance of *THREE*, I attempted to 'capture' the gaze while walking, using photography.

The *flâneur* is historically related to the street, and he and his gaze is the first form of an intellectual that walks the street

controlling his own visibility whilst freely gazing at and observing others. He is the 'detective', observant but incognito. "Poe's famous tale "The Man of the Crowd" is something like an X-ray of a detective story. It does away with all the drapery that a crime represents. Only the armature remains: the pursuer, the crowd, and an unknown man who manages to walk through London in such a way that he always remains in the middle of the crowd. This unknown man is the *flâneur*" (Benjamin, 2006, 79).

The rise of the modern city gave birth to this activity of losing oneself in a crowd and succumbing to its delights and distractions. Benjamin describes Baudelaire as the *flâneur* who observed the horrible social realities of the rising modernity but became, at the same time, intoxicated by the masses (Benjamin, 2006, 89). The *flâneur* is not merely a pedestrian, he is an artist who "catches things in flight" (Benjamin, 2006, 72). The 'man of the crowd' has no convictions as his forerunners had, therefore he is a kind of portrayer of many roles; "Flâneur, apache, dandy and rag picker" (Benjamin, 2006, 125). The role of the *flâneur* was just one of many roles, the picture Baudelaire and Benjamin gives of modernity is of a "Trauerspiel" where the 'characters' are dressed up in dark suits (Benjamin, 2006, 125). "The black suit and the frock coat not only have their political beauty as an expression of general equality, but also their poetic beauty as an expression of the public mentality: an immense cortège of undertakers — political undertakers, amorous undertakers, bourgeois undertakers. We are all attendant at some kind of funeral" (Benjamin, 2006, 105–106).

The Indian goddesses also have a relation to the gaze and appearance. In Hindu religion, the gods and goddesses are believed to never close their eyes. The whole world depends on the gods keeping their eyes open; if they do not, all light will disappear from the world (Eck, 1998, 1). In Hindu ritual, there is also the concept of *darsan*. The meaning of the word *darsan* is "seeing" and has the same meaning as worshipping, seeing and worshipping are equal (Eck, 3). For the Hindi, *darsan* concerns being seen by the god, which is why they desperately attempt to 'catch' the eyes of the gods while they are carried through the streets at festivals. The Hindi not only need to see, they need to be seen worshipping. Hinduism is a religious tradition where 'image-making' constitutes a considerable part; the sacred is seen to be present in the visible world (Eck, 10). This tradition is one that is occupied with the play of the gaze and social responses. In the performance of *THREE*, the appearance of the goddess/*flâneur* also included a strong black outline around the eyes, which made the gaze even more visual.

With regard to the *flâneur* and the Indian goddesses as references, there is, in fact, a contradiction in terms; in the way they are related to the historical development of gender and identity. However, they are also contradictory with regard to the different spaces where they have traditionally settled or are at home in. The *flâneur*, or dandy, was the first ordinary man, who was not connected with court but who worked with the potential of display in the ordinary life of the streets. He became the 'self-made man' and attracted the public by the way he dressed. He is a representative of the middle class that emerged during the turn of the century, and by way of his body and appearance, he manifested the process of industrialization and democratization (Teunissen, 2006, 196–197). He did not rely on court rituals but made interventions in the city, and by so doing could begin to climb the social and economic ladder and become recognizable. The *flâneur* studies the crowds while he walks the streets, but he is not protected, nor does he hold a stable position in the world. Another notable fact is that through this process of democratization and the introduction of the suit for men, the division of men and women, by their very appearance, became more evident. While men wore suits and became more assimilated with each other, women were still particular in their appearance and were like 'objects' who were not supposed to reflect upon the process of equalization. Anne Hollender argues that women's dress never went through a separate process of modernization but followed the development of men's dress and, because of that, the modernization of women's dress takes a lot of its features from the suit (Hollender, 153).

The *flâneur* was an important part of the street at the turn of the century, whilst the goddesses, on the other hand, are connected with their temples where the worshippers partakes in rituals, moving in a designated way in order to reach the centre of the temple, where they may finally 'see' the goddess. Their make-up and other attributes belong to their divine position, and are reliable signs that reveal who you are dealing with. The temple is not only a space to dwell, functioning as an expanded 'dress' for the goddesses, the temple space also has an economy; the sacrifices made to the goddesses, for example, animals, are taken care of and are then cooked and distributed as meals to the poor. Here, worshipping is not only a personal act but engages in an economy that concerns the whole society.

The *flâneur* uses his body and appearance to perform and make an intervention in a space that is seen as a structure of power around him, whereas the goddesses are the central figures of appearance in a space, who constitute and also mold a structure of power around them.

The combination of the *flâneur* and the goddesses has other

implications with regard to gender issues, by way of the notion of their possibly being a *flâneuse*, as in a female *flâneur*. On the one hand, bourgeois women at the turn of the century were tied to the home to a certain degree, since women 'walking the streets' connoted prostitution. In those times, women moving in public space on their own were thought of as promiscuous and unrespectable. On the other hand, working-class women moved around in the city in a freer way, having to transport themselves to workplaces in the cities and had no private sphere to flee to since their home in the slums were unpleasant and "vestigial" (Wilson, 2001, 84). In reality the female equivalent to the *flâneur* in the 19th century might have been the prostitute, both playing her role in the street, observing and experiencing it (Wilson, 85). The discourses of the time did its best to divide women, through the division of the private and the public. This division mirrored that the different classes of women were at the core of the struggle for the democratization processes that were taking place during the Industrial period in the Western world. The stricter division of women by class made it harder to initiate a process of modernization similar to the one that men had experienced, a process, which, in turn, would also have reflected on the dress and appearance of women.

Wearing,
Watching and
Clothing as
Intermediate
Material

The encounters in the street are not only encounters of gazes, but also encounters of bodies. Dress and the gaze become active parts in the encounters in public space, especially when these encounters are not accompanied by talking. In non-verbal encounters, a person's face and his or her body appearance hold the place of strongest action.

The interplay between the gaze and the form of the gestalt of the goddess/*flâneur* compete for my attention in the streets: I seek people's inner states of mind in their faces, and a person's bodily gestalt reveals a lot about this person. This double vision is active in the type of performance that blends the form of art and the everyday that I use. It causes the performances to be distinctively different from that which observers of art encounter in the gallery space. The spectator, when encountering people in a performance, is drawn into a strong social interplay. This 'demanding' social interplay can either make the spectator avoid the situation or engage in it. The freedom of being able to avoid interplay in public space is larger than in the gallery space, which can be noticed in the use of sunglasses, mobile phones and earphones. In the gallery space, you are obliged to look and be attentive, maybe not with fellow spectators, but you are obliged to look at the art, at least.

The spectator observing an art piece in a gallery can also be described as two faces that meet in an encounter, similar to the

encounter in the street. The form or the formations look back at us. Form becomes a 'face', when we think of looking at art as a relationship. In the book, *Relational Aesthetic*, Serge Daney is cited by Bourriaud in that Serge Daney claims that "all forms are a face looking at us", meaning that form "takes the place of another". Form, in an image, is a representation of desire. Form is in close relationship with the encounter, and by creating a form, you invent possible encounters. When the work catches the gaze, it starts a relationship (Bourriaud, 2002, 23).

This type of observation can also occur with dress, and when it does, a 'double faced' encounter is created. A relationship exists both with the actual face of the person wearing the clothes and with the actual outfit and the clothes themselves. I see this 'double faced' encounter as broadening the possibility of art experiences taking place in everyday settings. This 'double faced' meeting is one way of describing what is going on in an encounter of dressed bodies. Another way is to think about two people who use dress and appearance as art and encounter each other, all at the same time. This starts up a 'double encounter', where the experience of the wearing of one of the people is what the other one sees, at the same time as the other person does the same. This double action of both wearing and watching is an intriguing action that enables a dialogue and participative experience to start and take place between people.

What more can be said to be the character of clothes when they are worn, especially when they are worn 'off-stage', in public space? By turning to art history and the works of artists, especially those working with the flow of time, the momentary and public space, it is possible to find relevant examples. The artist Hélio Oiticica has, in his work, created and described a process he calls "wearing-watching" (Oiticica, 2007, 298). Oiticica created the word *Parangolés*, without a single mention of words such as 'dress', 'clothing', 'clothes' or 'worn art'. He did this to define a specifically experimental position (Oiticica, 296). Oiticica's work on the *Parangolés* was done in the sixties in collaboration with the artist Lygia Pape and the School of Samba in Brasil (Osthoff, 2005, 103–105). Oiticica was not himself from a particularly poor background, but he was drawn to the ways of living and the tactics used and explored among people of less economical means. Oiticica specifies that he is not interested in the *Parangolé* when it is wearable art as a medium in itself, but only when it is a part of a whole, which is the total art work, the work in its entirety (Oiticica, 296). This points towards an interest in particular moments and actualizations. Oiticica sees his work with the *Parangolés* as an "environment-work", an environmental time-space transformed into a totality and lived experience (Oiticica, 298). Here, he refers to wearing a work, a *Parangolé*, and by so doing, a certain work-

spectator relationship is created. He describes this as being 'wearing-watching', and it is designated as an intermediary stage in his work. The spectator not only becomes part of the work in a total environment, he also creates the work with others who wear *Parangolés* or other clothing, thereby revealing the art and the experience of the art, by watching and wearing simultaneously.

Another example from the history of art and artistic activity is the *Fluxus* movement whose members were obsessed with the idea of an avant-garde, and saw themselves as an anti-commercial and anti-art movement. This was one reason for them claiming the immaterial as the important aspect of art. In the *Fluxus* movement, performance, happenings and multiples were favored. The artist could be said to be working "between" (Stiles, 1993, 65) different kinds of media, and the art itself therefore was described as a "dialectic between media" (Stiles, 92). This allows the artwork to be able to integrate movements of bodies through space. Kinetic rhythms, process and change are all very important in the *Fluxus* movement. This fitted in with the times of the fifties and sixties, with a number of rapid changes taking place in society and the development of new technologies. "In order to reengage art in historical conditions, it had to involve the concrete material conditions of life — the body and its languages, processes, objects; and social, political and cultural institutions and practices" (Stiles, 92).

In an art context, I view dress as a medium where the art is elsewhere. The art is happening on the inside or on the outside of dress, with the clothes themselves therefore acting as an intermediate art medium. Dress never 'contains' the art; it is truly in-between but still an active part in creating this art elsewhere, or as a dialogue between mediums. Clothes are never alone. This could be said of other artistic mediums as well, but for dress the consequences are larger than for any other medium because of the reluctance of dress to be 'framed'.

In everyday life, clothing can be said to be an intermediate material, with or without any artistic qualities. As intermediate material, clothes can interfere in the social norm, at least to a certain extent. However, there is room for play here and that is where the artistic potential begins. Understanding this, you realize that by using clothes as an artistic medium based on process, the art itself immediately slips away once you begin to stare solely at the clothes themselves.

I am not following the *Fluxus* movement of searching for the immaterial art, but I am looking for a more accurate concept of dress as art instead, and that is, for me, to think of it as intermediate material, as a kind of betwixt space that is always primarily dependent on the body, its movement, the social and space. I connect this with dichotomies, that is, the idea of the

A/not A. In the flow of a continuum, and in the everyday actual experience, this type of dichotomy is not real. There is always something spilling over onto one or either side. Therefore, the dichotomy between the immaterial and material are not relevant to my projects, but it is the explorations of junctions and linkages between the immaterial and the material that are of interest. Therefore, I generally do not make a distinction between fashion and clothing. This reflects the overall concept of this PhD-project as process-based art, where the existential situation of the body-mind and the creation of meaning are crucial

Why is it important to value the creation of meaning and the intermediate aspect of dressing and clothes? As long as clothes are considered 'only clothes', and one does not make use of their full potential, someone else (within the fashion industry) creates those messages in your place.

Dress has the character of a non-leading activity, but is part of an activity that is to be carried out. By switching to the notion of clothing worn by people among other people as a truly social art form and as a part of the social and the political, it can then be worked with as an aesthetic medium that is intimately related to human experience and society. "Now clothing is quite literally at the borderline between subject and object, the individual and the cosmos. Its positioning surely accounts for its emblematic significance throughout history" (Buck-Morss, 1991, 97).

3RD JANUARY 2006
KOLKATA, INDIA

With the Kolkata streets crowded with moving people and vehicles of all sorts, encounters take on a different character than what I am used to in Sweden. The encounters are much faster and more fragmented. Encounters with a single individual are rare. Encounters move to a pulse or a rhythm. Cities themselves are often referred to as having a pulse or a rhythm. What sort of rhythm arises in relation to coming to a new place? Many rhythms are active at the same time; there is the inner and the outer rhythm, and together these create a whole, inside this rhythm; there are also clashes between many different pulses. When I first arrive in a new place, it takes some time to adjust my inner rhythm and adapt to the pulse of the place.

Rhythms



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The performance of THREE was organized in such a way that as the three models were walking from their homes, they had a time set for a meeting, and a specific meeting point at Harry Hjärne Square in the city center. This parameter led to their decision about when to leave their homes, since they had to estimate the time it took to walk. The photographer following the models had, prior to the performance, met up with them and experimented with different methods for taking the photographs while the models were walking. She decided to try and run ahead of the models in order to catch an encounter; by doing so, she became a very active part of the performance. I instructed the three goddesses/*flâneurs* to use their eyes while meeting people on the street, and when photographed, they should look into the shutter of the camera [16]. Another instruction was that if they came into contact with someone in the street, they were to act as if they were out on an everyday stroll. They were not to shield themselves off from the surroundings but were to continue walking and only stop momentarily.

I had asked two female artists to be photographers, and added myself as the third. Three of my students in fashion design at the Swedish School of Textiles, Borås, were the models. Everyone involved in the project were semi-professionals in what I asked them to do, and were likely to take an interest in the experience itself.

Early on, I had decided to work with still images and not to document the performance solely with a video camera. Video reanimates the inanimate by adding its own rhythms; these rhythms could come from various frames/fields depending on the video technique used. I realized that by trying to 'capture' or document the moment, I might find myself in a field of different types of mortifications and animations. The translation of the lived experience into an accessible medium loses, or rather changes, the type of shared moment, and the success in communicating this shared moment depends on that specific kind of mediation. I had two concerns with regard to the choice of media; the first was how the media would affect the actual performance during the performance, and the second was how I could continue the process and work with the mediated material after the performance.

Yet, it felt as though some kind of an overview was needed, and therefore I positioned one video camera in a static position at Harry Hjärne Square, overlooking the location where the goddesses/*flâneurs* were about to meet. This was also done to test whether it would be a good idea to use the video camera as a documentation method in the future. This camera's position resembles the position of a surveillance camera except that it

does not have a bird's eye view but a frontal 'waist' view of the body. This frontal view of the camera enhanced the 'stage' quality of the square. The surveillance concept of the camera later became understood as a view that is 'looking' for 'something', that is, not a neutral recording and translation of a 'theatre play' but an actual search for something emerging in front of the camera. In this case, there was also something 'captured' by the video camera as the three brown men met. Therefore, the 'surveillance camera' can be a useful metaphor in order to mediate what is 'really' happening, or, rather, the camera being utilized to capture what is not 'really' happening.

This 'looking for something to emerge' view of the camera can be turned around by staging something that the camera expects or anticipates to happen in front of it. The consequence of using photography as evidence for a certain performance having been carried out, makes it possible for this photographic evidence to be forged.

Haley Newman has explored this in her art practice and in her piece *Connotations—Performance Images* (1994–1998). In this piece, she created a whole set of documentary photographs of performances that she did, or rather that she intended to do, during the years 1994–1998. Her objective was the realization of the photograph. Sometimes it included nearly actualizing the performance, but the performance itself was never the main goal, the photograph was. "*Connotations* then, assumes the mannerisms of an archive: an institutional-looking information panel introduces the series and each photograph is accompanied by a text, which provides information such as dates and locations, all of which are entirely fictional" (Newman, 2004, 168–170). In working this way, she points to the disconnection that exists between real life experiences and the representations of them.

One instruction given to the photographers documenting the performance was to shoot according to their inner rhythm. This resulted in receiving many photographs from one photographer, and few from another, which was expected. The activity of the photographer became visually linked with the performance. The technical problem that emerged was that there were different shutter speeds on the digital cameras. Shutter speeds are different on all digital cameras; there are some faster and some slower. The delay of the shutter made it more difficult to catch the moment that reflected the inner rhythm of the photographer. When you employ digital techniques to reach a result, the technical aspect is always a big part of a work process. There are different ways of approaching this and it should not only be considered to be about reaching the highest quality or buying

the recent programs or cameras. The different qualities of the technique are, in themselves, telling a story of what happened and as I became more and more aware of this, my approach to what technique to use has also changed. After this experience, I have tried to use the easiest and most easily accessible digital media for my work. This decision is based on the affect the media I chose have on a performance or everyday life experience. When part of an experience, there is no time to set the light, for example. In my projects, self-consciousness, added by cameras, is kept to a minimum.

From the photographs taken, I made three slideshows, which were to be shown simultaneously in the gallery space. During the editing of the slideshows, I pursued the idea of different rhythms and worked with the images in order to create rhythms. At times, these rhythms clashed and sometimes they worked nicely together. The rhythm itself becomes that which recreates a presence and the living element in the meetings, and makes a connection between the performance event and the event in the gallery space. In between the rhythms of the images, it was possible to be drawn into the flow of images and to encounter something through the rhythms. This encounter with the form of the rhythms that were experienced between the three simultaneous projections in the gallery space became the first hand experience in the gallery space, and was also something I thought of as having a 'stronger' effect than the representations themselves. Using rhythms to evoke a physical feeling is a common technique especially in film-making, where intense emotions can be generated through dramatic editing. The focus on rhythm refers back to the important concept of body presence in this dissertation. Rhythm is related to time passing and the repetitions of certain sequentials divide time into comprehensible parts. In this case, rhythm also refers to interplay and interaction. Play is usually ordered around certain rhythms of actions that help the participants to be part of a 'bigger picture'. The one who decides the rhythms of any activity is also often seen as being the one in charge, the conductor being only one example.

The Textile Cube



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The process of the performance work and the preparations for the gallery show overlapped. Somewhere in the middle of that process, after the performance was over, to be more exact, I knew how to show the images. I would have three projectors displaying still images with a fragment of the video at the end, and there would be one projection on each of the three walls in the gallery space. By standing in the middle of these projections, the goddesses would walk towards you from three different directions [17]. Initially, it was my wish to have actual clothes included as

part of the show, but not on display. I envisioned a system where participants would dress up in the clothes prior to watching the slideshow. This interactivity would have reduced the amount of people that would have seen the exhibit, but would have maybe lived up to my vision of its success.

In any event, in order to show the clothes in the white cube of the gallery, I needed to do something about the white walls. I decided to create the 'textile cube'. I covered the walls with light grey drapery [18]. The draped room had a completely new air to it, and once inside, you became embedded in the space. The room also brought to mind certain associations, such as a dressing room, or a room at the undertakers. The white cube normally functions as a transformational space, that is, one that turns everything placed there into art. During the development of the spaces dedicated to showing art, the walls have acquired a great deal of sensitivity, where every little change of and disturbance to the wall's surface becomes part of the sublime experience of art. The curtain helped my audience and me to get away from the expectations and accustomed interpretations that are associated with the walls of the white cube (O'Doherty, 79–80).

I also made a decision to place incense and the flowers I had received at the opening on the floor in front of the 'goddesses', so as to enhance the story of the Indian goddesses. The opening then involved the specific activity of placing the flowers in front of the projections. The whole effect became an installation about the inanimate and the 'death' and disappearance of the moment; I found it rather interesting to note here that the point of departure for my initial interest had developed out of a feeling of presence and life in the fleeting passing encounters with people in the city.

One concept that reoccurs in my projects is stability, or the lack thereof. Here, process and result are not in a fixed position, and any of my attempts to try to fix it in either way have been futile. The dilemma of the documentation of a performance is connected with the dilemma of ambiguity. The photographs from the performance of *THREE* were not produced to be contemplated on in the sense of art, but they are studied in order to find a lead to act on, where to go next, and by moving between the two experiences of observing and performing, it is possible to get engaged in another manner than if one only observes or, on the other hand, only performs.

The ambiguity, or the fleeting character between result and process is something that causes dilemmas when exhibiting in a contemporary art or fashion context. Both fields are concerned with processes but are still hesitant to work with exhibition formats that do not include a traditional 'product' of art or fashion.

In my project, the ordinary position of the spectator, the art



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work and the artist no longer apply. New positions of the three have to be established in order to work with the ambiguity of the process and result.

The artist Adrian Piper has identified the misunderstandings and mix-up between process and result as a problem (Piper, 1996, 38). Piper makes a distinction between the creation of the objects of art, and, after creating these, her need (and the spectators') to contemplate them until they are no longer a mystery for her. This changed when she began to use the medium of communication as a vehicle for art making. She then contemplated the idea while she was working on its realization. "I became familiar with it, thought about it *during* that process. The final product had interest only insofar as it reflected what I'd been thinking about already" (Piper, 38) (author's italics).

Piper makes a distinction between conceptual art and sculpture, where sculpture would have the greatest potency and the ideas would manifest themselves after the realization. On the contrary, conceptual art would have its largest potency before realization. "What I actually manifested in the way of external realization was usually of little importance or interest to me, and it satisfied me only insofar as it reflected that internal process" (Piper, 38).

The question of result and process is not fully elaborated on here, but rather identified as a dilemma. As an artist, one works for fun (also pointed out by Piper), it is one of the privileges of being an artist. Something will be produced in the process of art making, even if only a change of the inner state of the artist. The dilemma arises in the sharing of the art, in the sharing of the reflections during the process or in the possibility of providing the spectators with tools to engage in their own reflective explorations.

Page 72–79: *Passing in Venice I*
Photograph, 2005
Photo: Kajsa G. Eriksson

Pages 80–87: *Passing in Venice II*
Performance, Photographs, 2005
Model: Kajsa G. Eriksson
Photo: Ulrika Gunnarsdotter

PASSING IN VENICE I & II

Once I attended the exhibition *la Biennale di Venezia* in Venice, Italy. I then decided to give myself an assignment; I took photographs of the people looking at art instead of the art itself. I was still a spectator, but a spectator with a double agenda. Before travelling to Venice, I had developed a technique of taking photographs of people without them knowing it. The trick is to pretend to take a photograph of something else; this is easily done at the biennial because of all the art that the people are there to view.

I realized that there are some works that are specifically designed with the spectators' interaction in mind, especially in the piece *Wave UFO*, 1999–2002, in the German Pavilion, which is the work of Tino Seghal and Mariko Mori, and also in the piece *Idiot Wind*, 2005 by the artists Galina Myznikova and Sergey Provorov from Nizhniy Novgorod, Russia. My technique of secretly taking photographs works excellent; no one sees me, and not a single person spots me taking their picture.

Back in Sweden and I am happy to look at all my pictures from Venice. There, in front of the computer screen, I notice something in one of the pictures – someone has spotted me. There she is, behind a couple that I thought I was taking a photograph of; the woman is staring at me and my camera. In the photograph, the woman's gaze was enhanced by her glasses and haircut, and there was no doubt about it, she had seen me, and I was very surprised that I hadn't spotted her in Venice. Her eyes are following me and I feel I have to do something about it. There is a woman hidden in my photographs! I have to do something; I have to return her gaze in some way. I decide to set up a performance where I can recreate the woman's gaze. I have previously discovered a wall made out of a mirror in the city center, so I set up a meeting there with a friend and a photographer. The mirrored wall enables us to look at the whole situation and be a part of it, all at the same time. It also reflects the camera 'eye' and makes the camera and the photographer part of the performance and the picture.

Her scrutinizing eyes are there in the picture. I cannot even defend myself by looking back at her. I draw her portrait from the photograph. I stuff the collar of a women's suit, causing it to stand up and from a blond wig, I cut a blond bob so that it is similar to the woman's hair cut. The collar on the suit directs the gaze forward and creates a 'shield' on either side of the face. The hair also works as a shield and 'gaze director'.

The suit is also designed with black fabric inserted into the back of the jacket and the trousers, creating a visual 'crack' in the suit. This crack creates a sensation that the back of the body is a place of vulnerability that not only correlates to but also opposes the luring, and at the same time, scrutinizing look of her eyes. In Sweden the tale is told that in the woods lives a creature called "skogsrå" which is a beautiful woman who lures men deep into the woods with her enchanting gaze and beauty. The only way to distinguish her from a "real" woman is the crack or opening which is found on her back.

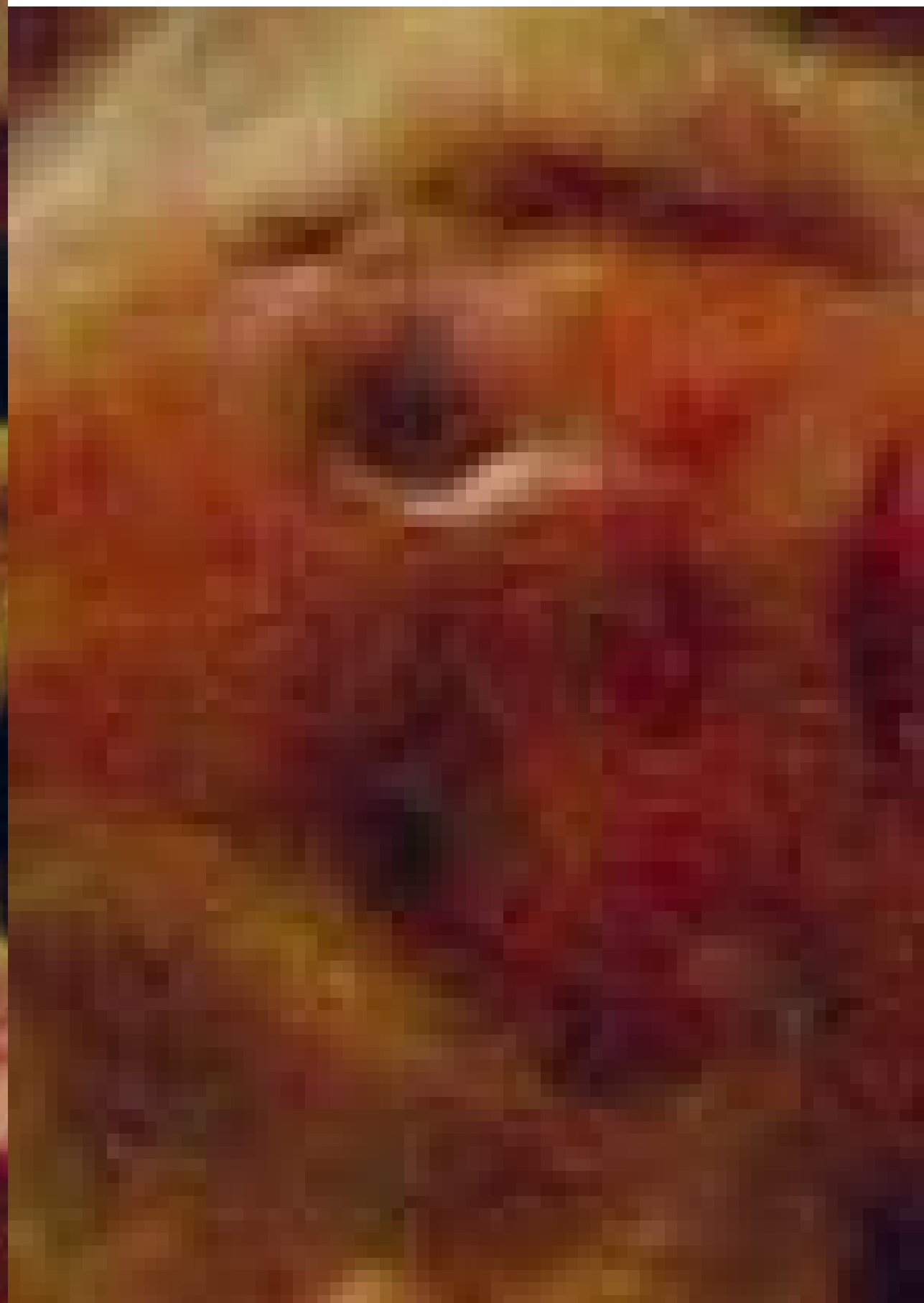
On my way home, I walk into a store and I come across a round large mirror. I decide to make a brooch from the mirror and start wearing it.

4th August 2005, Venice, Italy
30th October 2005, Gothenburg, Sweden

















Talking

Phone booth

Following my instruction, D changes the water in the vases, replaces the empty bottle of orange juice, adds a pack of Carltons, a *Time* magazine with O.J. Simpson on the cover, two new postcards, a comb, matches. He refuses, however, to set up the tape recorder. His report:

"Arrival at 2:45 P.M. Nobody looks at me, maybe because it would be invasive. They don't seem to ignore me but choose to leave me to my own little space. People can be polite, more polite than curious, even. It's surprising that people are no longer interested by this booth. In a way, those who don't look are more interesting. I am apprehensive but maybe passers-by are going to be nicer to me than I expect. More generous to me than I am to them, because I have an obligation to be kind and friendly whereas they don't. I am still amazed by those who don't come up to the booth to see what's happening. I wonder what I have to do to attract them. Maybe if there were a hanged man or something."

D leaves at 4 P.M. The "Comments" sheet is full. Someone also taped their own "Comments" sheet, which reads:

Great, except you should replace sunflower seeds for the cigarettes! I stopped smoking on cardiologist's demand but caved in when I found these Winstons and took one! [illegible signature]+son, Truckers.

Sophie Calle, *Double Game*, 2007, p. 270

5TH OCTOBER 2007
ISTANBUL, TURKEY

I am walking on the famous pedestrian street Istiklal Caddesi, located in the Beyoğlu District in Istanbul. I cannot concentrate on the people around me; I have to be fully focused on not getting run over and find my way in the space around me. I am looking at everything, except people, in order to find my way; I look at the houses, sculpture, or other landmarks. Even when I become more accustomed to the place, I still do not feel at home. Instead, I look into the windows of shops, in order to escape the situation. I am not comfortable enough to look at people's faces or bodies, but suddenly I see two women, one with a head scarf,

one without, and they are walking together with a ten-year-old girl. The girl laughs and smiles at me, and suddenly I have seen these people for real, from their heads to their feet; I have taken them inside of me.

The *Mirror Brooch* consists of a round mirror, 75 mm (3 inches) in diameter, and has a pin glued to the back. It is made without any decorative detail [19]. When the mirror is attached to the body, it becomes decorative, of course. Mirrors have a long history of use as decorative elements and have been worn not only as attachments on clothing or on the body and as magical aspects of clothing. The many different sides and interpretations of the mirror, and above all the fascination the mirror holds, indicate the multifarious ways in which the mirror functions.

The *Mirror Brooch* is, of course, not the first of its kind. I have seen mirrors as part of rings, where the reflective surface is then worn on your hand. Mirrors and reflective surfaces are also an integral component of wrist watches and watch cases. I have even seen brooches that contain mirrors. Mirrors as a part of clothing and jewellery is an ancient phenomenon. However, I have never seen anything quite like the *Mirror Brooch* only a number of mirrors in other shape and sizes, and attached to other places on the body than the chest. A common example would be mirrored sunglasses. This is an interesting phenomenon since the person wearing the reflective glass does not reveal his or her own eyes, which results in the mirror having a more aggressive position on the body. Not surprisingly, we connect the wearing of mirrored sunglasses with soldiers, pilots and others engaged in elaborate display and forceful interactions.

As part of my work, I have been wearing the *Mirror Brooch* for some time. While wearing the brooch, I have received many passing comments. The *Mirror Brooch* has provoked many types of reactions, and not only positive ones. Some people react very negatively when they see themselves in the mirror. Some conduct a short, but very intense, analysis of why I wear it. The brooch has also provoked many questions. Examples of comments about the *Mirror Brooch* are:

- Is it an instrument?
- Is it for protection?

Here are some examples of verbal reactions that I recorded by taking notes as soon as possible after the comment was made. These notes do not, of course, constitute complete documentation but simply reproduce what was actually said, leaving out the non-verbal communication and gestures that

The *Mirror Brooch* and Engagement in Public Space



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relate to the words uttered. (All conversations were taking place in Sweden):

At ICA Toppen supermarket:

A man working as the cashier of a small grocery store says to me while I am paying for groceries:

—Ah, different people will be displayed on the brooch. Well, you can't say it's handsome. I like it! Meaning he could not flatter himself, because, at that point, he was the one who was visible in the mirror.

At the Swedish School of Textiles:

Today, I am wearing the *Mirror Brooch* indoors. At a meeting with four students, all four of them react to the mirror's effect saying they feel confused by seeing their reflection from time to time, and seeing someone else's at other times. I realize I only need to breathe in order to slightly change the mirror's position.

At the University of Gothenburg:

I am wearing the *Mirror Brooch* at a seminar and am waiting outside a seminar room. A female fellow doctoral student exclaims while looking and pointing at the brooch:

—That's so cruel!

In the street:

A guy at a falafel grill notices the *Mirror Brooch* from afar.

He asks:

—Did you come up with the idea of this yourself?

—Is it a way to meet single guys? Not me, of course, I'm a bit too old.

Walking along 'Vasagatan', an avenue in Gothenburg, a man shouts to me from a very long distance as I pass. He exclaims:

—The sun!

He points towards my *Mirror Brooch* and looks ecstatic. It makes me happy.

I am passing two men on the sidewalk. One says to the other:

—Here comes the mirror girl!

On a tram:

A young teenage girl with a purple and black Mohawk hair cut, short and bleached on the sides and with skulls on her shoes; she is hanging out with her friends on the tram. She reacts instantaneously to the *Mirror Brooch*,

—Oh, a mirror! (She then looks at herself in it)

On the number eleven tram, a man in his fifties makes a comment about the *Mirror Brooch*.

—I can see you have a mirror there, is it supposed to repel people or is it for protection?

I ask him what his first thought was regarding the mirror. He answers “that the mirror repels everything you don’t want”.

These comments illustrate the usual spectrum of comments that might occur when wearing the *Mirror Brooch*. By the conscious wearing of the *Mirror Brooch*, I am positioning this piece of work of art in a ‘slot’ or a time-space that is made up of different kinds of communication in everyday life. Dress or anything worn is a non-verbal medium of communication, as is the *Mirror Brooch*, and has its greatest effect before conversations take place. However, individuals’ own stories are highly influential as identity markers and can overshadow clothing, but there are certain moments when individual’s stories about themselves and their lives are not at play and one example of this is in public space. This is where dress and body language may have the potential to gain in strength and become a communicative tool in large groups, and, within the flow of people.

There are specific places where talk lingers in the air between people. One of these locations is, for example, when people are standing in a crowd waiting for the bus. We may feel inclined to speak to those around us but have decided that we will not and instead read a paper, listen to music, or talk on the phone to others. A certain way of dressing and a certain kind of clothing may provoke the talking and the activities going on and may eventually bring about a comment and even lead to a conversation. While standing and waiting for a bus, we are forced to become more available and accessible to each other as strangers. This can be experienced as a threat or an opportunity, depending on the situation, and there are many ways to regain inaccessibility. Dress can work in the same manner; it can not only make us visible but also more accessible to others in public space. What can be experienced as difficult in the wearing of the *Mirror Brooch* is that it makes you more accessible and available to strangers in public space. Therefore, it is demanding for its spectators as well as for its wearer(s). Visibility, invisibility, accessibility and inaccessibility are therefore connected.

Michael Warner, in his book *Publics and Counterpublics*, connects strangers to an public space, or anything else public. “A public is always in excess of its known social basis. It must be more than a list of one’s friends, it must include strangers” (Warner, 2002, 74).

This idea of the stranger is also active as you experience a public event, a public speech being one example. We experience

the public speech in two ways “as addressed to us and as addressed to strangers” (Warner, 77). Any public speech works with the dichotomy of those who hear it, not only hear the speech, but ‘hear’ it through the lens of participation; of being one amongst many strangers who listen to it. Therefore public space can bring about a feeling of sharing and participation, as well as alienation.

In verbal communication, the idea of communication flowing as messages (preferably verbal), from one recipient or another, has to be revisited. To understand how non-verbal communication merges with the verbal, we might look into simpler forms of verbal communication.

In the very basic speech that ‘a greeting’ is made up of, we use non-replies. This is not a reply but a reactive response, and the reaction and response is not based on what the other person is saying but on the interaction at hand. Interactive conversation does not need to include speech; it can consist of gestures, appearances, manners, and more.

A: “Hello.”

B: “Hello.”

The reason for this apparent license is that the second greeting is not a reply to the first; both are reactive responses to the sudden availability of the participants to each other, and the point of performing these little rituals is not to solicit a reply, or reply to a solicitation, but to enact an emotion that attests to the pleasure produced by the contact. (Goffman, 1981, 47)

When we use clothing as a communicative medium, we are not putting forth questions and answers but we are dressing in response to a specific situation. The situation and the context are therefore included in the conversation. In studying the response, it is possible to spot the connection between speech and clothing.

Respondents can coerce a variety of objects and events in the current scene into a statement which now can be responded to.

A: [Enters wearing new hat]

B: [Shaking head] “No, I don’t like it.”

(Goffman, 1981, 47)

Usually, social situations provide a high level of both anxiety and comfort. The tendency to attempt to turn social situations into

ones that are more comfortable, or to avoid them altogether, is prevalent in social activity. The use of drugs and alcohol is an example of a method people use to transform social scenes or conversations so that they become less boring or embarrassing. Another way of adding interest to a situation of interaction is through what one wears. “Just as witticism may do honour to the conversational moment, so the wearing of new or special clothing, the serving of rare or costly food, and the use of perishable flowers can draw attention to the unique value of a wider social occasion.” (Goffman, 1972, 134)

After having worn the *Mirror Brooch* for some time, I realized that the passing comments that I had received could be categorized. The passing comments are examples of the ‘pseudo-comment’ as in “pseudo-conversations” (Goffman, 1972, 132), where one uses stylized gestures, such as non-verbal greetings. The first subtle form of this non-verbal commentary is the glance. It is relatively easy to notice whether someone notices what you are wearing. The second non-verbal form is the thumbs up or thumbs down. The glance and hand gestures are judgmental and can quickly slip into the third categorization; a verbal pronouncement in the form of a comment shouted out from the window of a car. These are two examples of comments that were shouted out from the window of a car at me in the States, and then the equivalent comment was shouted from a car in Sweden during performances.

—Halloween is over!
—Påskan är över! (Easter is over)

The ‘positive comment’ can be a positive experience, but it can also act as a judgment that may not feel positive at all. Positive feedback on a person’s appearance is used in social interaction with friends and family and sometimes acts as a social lubricant. This type of critique on appearance can also apply to strangers in certain situations. The ‘questioning comment’ is another type and generally comes from someone who is interested but does not understand.

I find it fascinating how a part of a person’s dress, in this case the *Mirror Brooch*, can provoke such strong feelings that a verbal statement has to be made. The comments that interest me most are those that state the obvious. These comments are, I believe, directly connected with the situation and the environment where the event takes place and are reactionary responses.

For some time, while living in Berlin, I would wear *Jagad* (the Swedish word for Chased), a red skirt with two holes cut-out



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above the hem. This skirt had been part of an artwork from 2000 [20]. At one point, a man in the street saw me, pointed with his finger at the holes and then cried out (happily) Löcher! (German for holes) Later, in Sweden, my three-year-old niece had almost the same reaction. She pointed at the holes, actually putting her finger through one, and exclaimed “Håll!” (Swedish for holes). These reactions work as interactions with what I am wearing. The ‘passing comment’ can be seen as a confirmation and acknowledgement of what I am wearing, almost like a verbal reflection. In the use of talk and lingering talk as part of an art experience of the dressed body, it is not what is actually said or the production of questions and answers that is of prime importance, but the production of mutual joy in that shared situation.

A “focused gathering” features a specific group of people gathered together for a certain occasion; an “unfocused gathering” would then be the interaction that occurs in a public venue, in the street, or on a tram, for example (Goffman, 1972, 133–134). At times, there is no clear demarcation between the two types of gatherings and activities that occur in a ‘focused gathering’ and these can usually be found in an ‘unfocused gathering’ as well, but are expressed differently or go by a different name.

Individuals in ‘unfocused gatherings’ can be said to be less self-conscious. This may depend on the ability of a participant to interact, especially in focused interaction of a spoken kind, such as a research seminar for example. Unfocused interactions do not require the participants to exhibit as much self-adjustment and control as focused interactions (Goffman, 1972, 134).

Perhaps comments that state the obvious appeal to me because they reflect an interaction that is at work on a level that is, at that particular moment, less self-conscious on both parts. By sharing the enjoyment of what is being worn, it could be the case, at times, that both the wearer and the watcher are feeling less self-conscious at that particular moment and quite the contrary to general and common beliefs, the notion of self-consciousness here is not about dressing in a certain way or not but is a question of inclusion and exclusion.

It is safe to say that clothing is part of conversation, or, rather, that there is no way to make a clear distinction between non-verbal and verbal communication. Neither is it possible to make a clear-cut demarcation between statement and response. The idea of ‘statement-response’ as the basis for conversation can be questioned, too. There are so many complications that occur in talk, that the word ‘statement’ in the pairing of statement and response is not appropriate. A more useful term for our

basic conversation would therefore be “reference-response” (Goffman, 1981, 50). Defining talk as a conversation might also be misleading; interaction might be a better choice, since it better illustrates the complexity that exists in this kind of communication (Goffman, 1981, 48–50).

Another word for ‘reference-response’ is social response and it is usually seen as one of the fundamental activities of our social lives and of our society as a whole. Furthermore, social response is the smallest phenomenon that is found in a society and is the foundation for the building up of systems, structures, strata and levels of power. It is important to recognize the difference between a response and a non-response, and also that it has nothing to do with being kind or not. Even a fight between enemies can be considered an example of social response. The reverse of social response is, therefore, to be indifferent and ignorant (Asplund, 1987, 50). Social interactions are not only important for us as individuals but are also important for our society as a whole. In science-fiction literature and films, writers often elaborate on the basic interactions between humans in order to present us with a society dissimilar to that which we are familiar with. In the utopia where basic social responses are controlled or monitored, the society is usually depicted as a dystopia. Utopias and dystopias in fiction are also usually expressed in the outfits worn by the people of that society. For example, in Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale* (1985) women wear striped, white and red clothes and in Orwell’s *Nineteen Eightyfour* ([1949] 1984) the only clothes that are allowed are dungarees.

The *Mirror Brooch*, when it is intentionally worn to create interactions, can be called a reference, and, in some instances, a response. The purpose of the *Mirror Brooch* is that it creates and provokes reactions and social responses between people who have never met before. This provocation and response is important to me because it shows how public space is open to new formations of people sharing something they would not have otherwise shared if they had stayed in an environment inhabited only by familiar people. I see the wearing of the *Mirror Brooch* as a method of enhancing the ‘public’ in public space. I also find it intriguing that the mirror, so often viewed as the representation of narcissism and individuality, can also create social response. This might be due to the character of the mirror as a phenomenon that is connected with both a fragmented and organizational gaze. The mirror confuses, disrupts and disorients but still holds the familiar, and is also the double in whose confessions we trust. Mirrors are used both as instruments and for tricks; yet we still believe in its capacity to reassure us everyday that everything is normal.

Dress can also help us to move more flexibly from one situation to another, from private to public space, from an informal to a formal situation and vice versa, and help us to express the identity that we need in a variety of situations. This is called “contextual flexibility” (Kaiser, 1998, 583). Contextual flexibility has been studied in relation to the social psychology of clothing and has revealed itself in the “identity talk” of many different groups of people (Kaiser, 583). Identity talk is when people construct and negotiate their personal identities by sharing experiences through conversation, story telling, or by distancing themselves from certain identities. European/American identity talk often describes favorite articles of clothing as “those that move them freely from one context to another” (Kaiser, 584). It is this kind of clothing that allows us flexibility “and we are likely to appreciate this ability to “become” freely and move fluidly from one situation to the next” (Kaiser, 285-286). It is interesting to note that ‘contextual flexibility’ is least mentioned in European/American heterosexual male identity talk, especially in regard to those males who are not as immersed in the world of style. Those who experiment the most with style, mix and match, and do-it-yourself, i.e. women, ethnic minorities, gays and lesbians, and working-class youth, are those who have the most to gain from new boundaries and aesthetics (Kaiser, 586).

People are, to many different degrees, and in different ways, engaged in the social side of life that surrounds us, and relate differently to it. Dressing is a way of engaging in the social side of life surrounding us. One reason for engaging in the social side of life could be a person’s high sense of “self-monitoring” (Kaiser, 202). People have different levels of self-monitoring, and “high self-monitors” are prone to care a great deal about what other people think, and also prepare well in advance for new situations in order to make the best impression (Kaiser, 202). “Low self-monitors” are not likely to have developed an elaborate repertoire of self-presentational skills (Kaiser, 202). The biggest difference between high- and low-monitors seems to be amongst males, whereas women tend to emphasize appearance as an integral part of socialization (Kaiser, 203). I see ‘high self-monitoring’ as being connected with social responses and dress. If you are a high self-monitoring person, you probably have an idea of how you come across to other people. You may also be aware that you can change that perception intentionally and also what problems will arise when you change. Hence, the idea of using dress and appearance as a means for social response may come easier to women, ethnic minorities, gays, lesbians and working-class youth, than for European/American heterosexual males. Consideration to, and engagement in, social responses and ultimately an engagement in public space is an important factor when

designing my projects, in all its aspects, and *The Mirror Brooch* is an example of this.

After having worn the *Mirror Brooch* for a long time, I have come to the conclusion that the main difference in people's reactions to it is the amount of times the response is verbal. The *Mirror Brooch* has become a reference and subject for comment especially by men. I frequently get comments concerning the brooch from men I have never met before. Occasionally, women comment on it as well, but for the most part they have a tendency to use it, to correct their lipstick by means of it or to just look at themselves in it. There have been times when men have also looked in the mirror, but usually they just grin goofily and seem to regret it. The *Mirror Brooch* is the same shape and size as a mirrored compact that many women carry in their handbags to check their make-up. This might be one reason for why women feel relaxed enough to come up to me to use the mirror, even if I have never met them before. I have attempted to understand why the brooch reveals this different gendered behavior. Naturally, people do not react exclusively to the *Mirror Brooch* itself, they react to it in relation to me, a woman in her forties. I am not a tall man with a beard. If I was, perhaps the reaction would be much different, and this should be taken into account. The main conclusion is that men and women behave and react differently in public space. This might be an obvious statement, but it is seldom reflected on, except when the sexualized gazes of men, which women feel in public space, is a matter for discussion.

Historically, in western societies, women have been viewed as a problem for cities. The predicament of women entering the public domain of a city is not only a western phenomenon but it is a phenomenon that has been well-documented in the west. Women were thought to need protection in the city. A 19th century bourgeois woman needed to be chaperoned in public in order not to be mistaken for a prostitute and to keep up the appearance of respectability and honor for her husband and family. The city or metropolis was seen to be dangerous because there was a mixture of people from different classes or, in other words, there were no clear demarcations of class boundaries visible in the streets. However, it was divisions into roles and the restrictions that were imposed on women that maintained the boundaries between the different classes of society.

It had been established that the city could be seen as dangerous for women and their families, but the opposite was also true. A woman, in the shape of a prostitute, was a dangerous threat (the threat of the fallen woman) to the metropolis. Prostitution was looked upon as a degradation of society and a

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major risk to all. Social engineering provided some ideas on how to monitor prostitutes, but surveillance of this kind was criticized due to the fact that the working-class women who frequented the streets or had to cross the city in order to maintain employment could easily be mistaken for prostitutes. Women were divided into either the respectable or into the 'easy' and unrespectable category, and those not viewed as respectable could easily be seen or treated as prostitutes. This division of women in the 19th century is well known, and at this point, it is interesting to look at who had access to public space and, in which ways could 'public' space function for women (Wilson, 2001, 72–73).

Today, we do not point to women as the problem or as being dangerous for cities. We view this as uncivilized and belonging to an older time. However, the city and the streets are pointed to as being a dangerous place and a problem for women. This attitude remains a part of our society even if Swedish studies show that young men are more in danger in the Swedish streets than women. Women may not feel as comfortable in the streets as men. Women have a tendency to look out for themselves more and are also wary of approaching strangers. To this day, when women find themselves in areas of the city that are thought to be 'unsafe', they adjust their clothing in an attempt to look more 'proper'.

Public space is sexualized and filled with power games; engaging in it has certain consequences. Clothing is a tool that women (and men) have and use to handle this space. A young woman who I met in Istanbul related that she and her friends kept head scarves in their bags while out partying. At the end of the evening, when walking home, they could put on a scarf and would less likely be stopped by the police and checked to see if they had been drinking.

Historically, morale has been highly connected with clothing and dress, which again shows what a political medium dress is, spreading both into the private and the public sectors. With our clothes, we might be communicating the private in the public and the public might be communicated in the private. The character of clothes is such that it trespasses on the boundaries between the private and the public, which come about as a result of our daily entrances and exits, when we move in and out of public space, where we wear the clothes and carry them with us. The displacement of an object from a person's private space, such as the hand mirror, into the public space, might challenge our gendered manners.

The reactions I get from women when wearing the *Mirror Brooch* are less verbal than the reactions I get from men. The brooch garners as much attention from women as from men, but women usually favor looking at it, or using it as a corrective tool,

rather than giving a verbal response. This has led me to consider who it is that makes their voice heard in public space, and who does not.

The question here is why do so many strange men in the street start conversations about the *Mirror Brooch* when I wear it? One reason is connected with the fact that I, as a woman, am wearing the brooch; in contemporary society, women must always be ready to receive comments on their appearance. For some reason, women must always be ready to change “ground” or have the “ground” changed for them (Goffman, 1981, 125). This might be done by using nice remarks or not so nice remarks about their appearance. As I know, most women have experienced that it is safe to say that the experience of being an object of approving attention can be very painful because what is not shown is that your position as a participant, and merely a participant, is shifted in favor of becoming the object of appraisal. This experience is painful because it makes you become an object instead of a participant, and still, it is hard to fend off the situation because someone is, on the surface, anyway, saying something nice to you.

I return (again) to the phenomenon and concept of the *flâneur*. The *flâneur*, as the embodiment of the ‘male gaze’, has been representing man’s visual and voyeuristic mastery over women; he takes visual possession of the street and the city (Wilson, 79). One could also add that he achieves this not only through his gaze but also through his voice in that he uses appraisal and critique. By looking more carefully at the *flâneur* and his development, one will find that he is also a person without a job, a loiterer, and that he does not necessarily feel a part of society; he is a rather alienated character. There are two different kinds of *flâneurs* presented in feminist writing. One is connected with bourgeois ideology, and is presented as articulating and producing masculine sexuality, enjoying the freedom to look, appraise and possess (Pollock, 1988, 67). The other presentation of the *flâneur* is connected with roles in public space that are less rigid and stale. Here, public space is more porous and has potential for women who want to appropriate the space of the city (Wilson, 83). This view of the *flâneur* gives him quite a different character. For Walter Benjamin, the *flâneur* expresses a more generalized insecurity and diseased consciousness. According to him, the metropolis is not so much a place where the lines between the ruling and the ruled are clear and established, but a labyrinth for everyone, if you enter it, to get lost in (Benjamin, 2002, 338).

The over-used adjective ‘fragmentary’ is appropriate here, because what distinguishes metropolitan life from rural existence

is the continual brushing against strangers and the experience of observing bits of the ‘stories’ men and women carry with them, without ever knowing their conclusions, so that life ceases to form itself into continuous narrative but becomes instead a series of anecdotes, dreamlike, insubstantial or ambiguous. Meaning is obscure, committed emotion cedes to irony and detachment. The fragmentary and incomplete nature of urban experience generates melancholy: a sense of nostalgia, of loss of lives never known, of experiences that can only be guessed at (Wilson, 86).

Here, the *flâneur* is not only melancholic and economically insecure, he is also sexually insecure. The labyrinth creates a feeling of hesitation, and not a feeling of being impatient about reaching one’s goals. This, in turn, points to another characteristic of the *flâneur*: male impotence (Wilson, 87). The *flâneur* is caught in the eternal walk and the constant resurrection of the new; he perpetually has to deal with boredom, in one way or another. This paints another picture of the *flâneur*, that is as someone who feels rather lost in urban space and is continually trying to understand what is going on around him. Wilson points to Benjamin likening the *flâneur* to “the idler whom Socrates engaged as his partner in discussion in the Athenian market place...Only there is no longer a Socrates and so he remains unengaged” (Wilson, 87). This comparison of the *flâneur* to the unaccompanied idler struck me in relation to my experiences and conversations with the men who engaged with me to speak about the *Mirror Brooch*. When the conversation digresses into weary questions pertaining to the meaning of the *Mirror Brooch*, it is as though the person is making an attempt to understand, in a deeper way, what is happening around him.

On other occasions, the men’s commentaries have been based on suggestions of how to improve the *Mirror Brooch*, and these fall into the category of appraisal or critique. Finally, there are the men who give off the vibe that they want to flirt but then quickly deviate to ask insecure questions or make comments about the meaning or function of the *Mirror Brooch*.

There are three different types of passing comments by men, which I addressed earlier. There are the quick and spontaneous responses, which do not feel so charged with dominance, if these are not degrading comments, of course. There are reflective comments, i.e. those that start out as a half attempt at flirting but then move into becoming a reflection on the *Mirror Brooch* and its function. The third is the more validating and opinionated reflection that either offers appraisal or negative feedback. These opinionated comments are the ones that can, at times, cause me to feel uncomfortable in a play of power and dominance.

However, wearing the *Mirror Brooch* as a piece of art places

the comments it receives in a different context. The difference between wearing the brooch as a fashionable piece, and wearing it as art depends largely on what intention and awareness the comments that it might provoke have. My experience has been that the *Mirror Brooch* can act to fend off opinionated comments about one's appearance, because once the comment is made about the *Mirror Brooch*, it can be responded to in a conscious and prepared way, making the interaction into a reflection of the actual situation at hand. The *Mirror Brooch* addresses what it is that can be commented on in one's appearance by its obvious way of searching for attention. I wear other extravagant clothes that could arouse comments, but the *Mirror Brooch* always overshadows them. In some conversations I have had with men, they have compared the *Mirror Brooch* with a shield, buckle or a piece of armor. The *Mirror Brooch* seems to bring out the commenting *flâneur* into the open.

The *Mirror Brooch* also works in ways other than in relation to the passing comment, but always in relation to some kind of reflection. On sunny days, the *Mirror Brooch* becomes a reflector for the light and this reflection projects itself onto all architectural and natural surfaces that are passed while walking. The reflection becomes a roving dot in front of you, and is sensitive to every move you make. It is as though you have a visual companion accompanying you on your walk. This brings me to the connection of the *Mirror Brooch* with the Lacanian story of the sardine can. The *Mirror Brooch* is an example of the double-sided nature of the gaze. The 'gaze' is in contrast to the 'look' placed in-between and in the world and does not belong to one subject. One person is being looked at, but at the same time, the person who is looking is a part of another picture, and has a sense of being watched; this is what Lacan calls "the gaze" (Foster, 1996, 138). Lacan challenges the old mastery of representation, the privilege of the subject in both sight and self-consciousness, and therefore goes further than both Sartre and Mearly-Ponty (Foster, 138–139). An anecdote originally written by Lacan, and cited by Hal Foster, impressed me in the early stages of my artistic practice. During the process of creating the *Mirror Brooch*, I reflected upon it once more, "Lacan mortifies this subject in the famous anecdote of the sardine can that, afloat on the sea and aglint in the sun, seems to look at the young Lacan in the fishing boat, "at the level of the point of light, the point at which everything that looks at me is situated" " (Foster, 139).

Here the gaze is turned back on itself and is not only holding its object under scrutiny, it is also being scrutinized and by that the subject status is turned into that of an object. The *Mirror Brooch*, when looked at from a long distance, does not



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only reflect your face, it also looks back at you [21]. The object becomes subject and the subject object. This subject/object position relates to the concept of watching/wearing presented earlier. This double position of subject and object is interesting from the standpoint of women since women have to tackle the ambivalence that arises in relation to their position as subjects and objects in their everyday lives.

Looking at the possibility of dress worn in public space to be regarded as art, the relationship between the experience of everyday life and the experience of art has to be reviewed. First we have to establish that art is seen as an experience rather than as a physical object. This distinction is made by choosing human conditions as the origin of art, and not art for art's sake alone. Either we look at the experience of art as something that is part of the experience of everyday life or we choose to make a clear distinction between the experiences of art and that of the everyday (Dewey, [1934] 2005, 5). This may sound self-explanatory, but it comes with consequences that might not be that obvious. To see art as part of the experience of everyday life presupposes that an experience of art can happen in the ordinary stream of life, outside any kind of art institution. This also presupposes that the experiences of art inside the institutions are challenged. This may be rather more provocative and the incitements that such a challenge may produce are connected with the protection of the art system and its economies. The compartmentalization of the institutions of modern society is one reason why fine art today is defined as that which is shown in its institutions. The history of capitalism explains the development of museums and institutions "as the proper home for works of art, and in the promotion of the idea that they are apart from the common life" (Dewey, 7). The capitalist system produces the *nouveaux riches* and this group has always felt the need to surround themselves with fine art as a way to heighten their cultural status. Nations, regions and cities feel the need to invest in art in order to show their identity as culturally interested and not merely occupied with material wealth (Dewey, 7).

This division of art and common life not only separates art and everyday life but also separates the artist from everyday life, and, ultimately, this division prevents art from having any meaning except that of being self-referential or referring to art history. This brings us back to the tensions between artists and their relations to the economic system that they are part of.

Instead of exhibiting the *Mirror Brooch* I decided to sell it, or give it away, in order for other people to have a first hand experience and by that also extend the performance of wearing it. In some

ways, this decision was difficult to make since it would challenge my own preconception of a contemporary artist. At the same time, however, it felt it was an interesting thing to do since it would position my work even more in an ambiguous zone between fine art and fashion design. I worked with the *Mirror Brooch* as a multiple and therefore worked on a package for the *Mirror Brooch* in order to frame it in a way that did not reveal its concept on an entirely visual level, but rather on an interactive one. By selling the *Mirror Brooch*, and also giving it away, I could create a larger audience and, at the same time, maintain the important real life experience.

I have perceived that it is easier to present the *Mirror Brooch* as an artwork than the performances, and, in this case, as a multiple. The *Mirror Brooch* is, quite simply, easier to 'package' than the performances, both in an art and in a design context. I have been reflecting around this and I have come to compare the concept of experience and the concept of consumption in today's society. Firstly we are supposedly moving into an economy concerned with 'experience as commodity'. Secondly, we are 'consuming' our way through every phase of our lives, as we shop for every new identity required. Commercials are inculcating this culture every day. The question is if there is any difference between experiencing and consuming today? We are not only well-trained 'shoppers', we are also well-trained in connecting our shopping with the experiences of our lives. In today's culture of 'shopping' it feels important to further explore how we, in a common and shared effort, can offer resistance to individualistic consumerism. However, I also feel inclined to use the possibilities in this shopping culture in order to act on it from the inside, instead of commenting on it from the outside. The more I contemplate on this dilemma, the more it becomes clear that what I do is in close reciprocity with society. I cite Adrian Piper once more in order to make this point clear. "This drives me to the conclusion that, like everyone else, I am a paradigm of this society. This society's treatment of me shows me what I am, and in the products of my labor I reveal the nature of society, whether I intend to or not" (Piper, 1996, 40).

First of all, mirrors produce the double, and in a face-to-face interaction the double becomes something to play with. The double is both part of narcissism and the image of oneself but it is also connected with the uncanny nature of the double, representing that which is different from us, but still familiar. We trust the mirror to reveal reality and yet it never does, rather the opposite. The mirror image is reflective of a world of its own, and behind the looking-glass there is another world. If the mirror would produce a complete reflection, the reflection would be a

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closed system and would not have openings or possibilities for any transformations. Instead, a new person appears in the mirror, one that it is possible to have a conversation with, without getting caught in a narcissistic loop. The mirror presents a difference, not a copy; it presents transformation and not stratification (Leich, 2006, 130).

The mirror image has been worked with by many artists: Cindy Sherman, Claude Cahun and Franscesca Woodman, to name but a few. They all engage in different kinds of self-portraits.

Claude Cahun, for example, plays with self-presentation in order to create and control self-representation. Cahun's appearances and self-presentation are part of her art and artistic practice, "Her day-to-day clothing, hairstyling, make-up and poses are also part of her creative activity" (Doy, 2007, 83). Cahun's way of escaping the symbolic system is her way of changing appearance whilst still being well aware of all the layers of the masks. Her self-portraits constantly reinvent Claude Cahun "as a multi-faceted subject in control of her own image" (Doy, 1998, 119). As well as her appearance, her photographs are unclassifiable. They are never presented in a 'pure' format; instead, they take from all kinds of traditions, such as snapshots, studio photography, conventional self-portraits, fine art photography or mass reproducible photography (Doy, 2007, 85). At the time of Cahun's work, photographic genres were not yet established. In spite of that, her methodological approach of using the photographic medium feels suitable for her artistic practice at large. Both her self-representations and her mediums elude categorization, and this reflects her appearance, which is "neither male nor female, old/young, butch/femme" (Doy, 2007, 85).

When discussing self-portraits, including photographic self-portraits, it is important to remember that mirrors are a very important tool in this activity. All self-portraits are related to the mirror; it is the basic tool for making a self-portrait. It is possible to say that mirrors are gendered material, and the outcome of wearing the *Mirror Brooch* may not then be that surprising. From the outset, an important view of the *Mirror Brooch* is by means of the photograph in which the camera lense is shown in the mirror while capturing it in a photograph [22]. The wearer of the *Mirror Brooch* is in control of the self-representation through the self-presentation by revealing the medium that is producing the image. The *Mirror Brooch* also reveals the loop of interaction between the camera and person. To photograph the *Mirror Brooch* is basically like putting up two mirrors opposite one another and expecting them to interact. Documentation of the face-to-face interaction created by the *Mirror Brooch* is therefore not an easy task. During an intense period of my art education, I painted solely self-

portraits. A mirror was then an important part of the equipment (often borrowed from the toilet of the art school). The mirror is also a significant tool in the adaptation and development of garments. I constantly use a full-length mirror in my studio to explore self-presentation and to try out shapes of cloth in relation to the body [23]. I also use the mirror while teaching in order to try and capture the elusive moment of the dressed body in motion [24].

I would like to come back to the two artists Cindy Sherman and Claude Cahun and look at the way Cindy Sherman works, and then put this in relation to Claude Cahun's working methods. I suppose that Cindy Sherman uses a mirror when she is staging herself in the photographs. By so doing, she has a longer and more intense relationship with the mirror than with the camera. Once she pushes the self-timer, it is only a matter of the technique inside of the camera. Her techniques are highly controlled. When taking the photographs, she is very aware of what result she is after and wishes to produce. As it seems, she has the actual encounter between her photographs and the spectator in mind while taking them (Kline, 1998, 79). It may be said that Cindy Sherman calls photography to question more than she actually calls identity to question, even if it might look as though she is engaged in a masquerade where she tries out different roles. The work of Cindy Sherman revolves around the moment of presentation of her photographs, and for her it is not important that she, herself, is involved in that presentation. Cindy Sherman is an artist that makes her work the one and only thing that we as spectators are supposed to communicate with. The art stands and talks for itself.

Claude Cahun, on the other hand, does not, in the first place, work alone; she works with her friend and partner Marcel Moore in creating her *Autoportraits*. Her work and life seem to merge so that one could conclude from the stories told about her entering cafes and from her appearance and manner that this would make Breton leave his favorite cafe (Kline, 70). Cahun challenged the homophobic side of the Surrealist movement, especially Breton's homophobic tendencies. Cahun also used the mirror in many different ways; she used it as a tool and it is also represented in her images.

Cahun seems to mix life and art and if one compares this with Cindy Sherman, it looks as though Cindy Sherman is careful to keep those two spaces apart. In the case of Claude Cahun, one can wonder if she is taking the photographs with an audience as spectator in mind. She was part of the Surrealist movement, so I do think she was considering a spectator, but that she seemed to mix the wish to communicate with the audience with her use of the *Autoportraits* as a means for self-exploration. Her photographic work seems to oscillate between the private and the public. Many



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of her self-portraits can be seen as semi-private, since she would give them away to friends. One can conclude that Cahun did not make a strong division between herself and her audience.

Cindy Sherman does not mix the activity of self-exploration (the dialogue with oneself) and communication with the audience. In simpler terms one could say that Cindy Sherman's work is orientated towards result and presentation, whereas Claude Cahun is oriented towards process and self-exploration.

The content of the works of these two artists may seem to match on the surface, but if we examine them more carefully, they are really dealing with different kinds of meanings and content too. In the photographs of Claude Cahun, it is possible to detect the artist and an individual within the disguises; there is a reflective individual reflecting over the complexity of the self (Kline, 68). Cindy Sherman's work is fascinating because of many things, but one thing that is impossible to understand is that her own body can lend itself to such an amount of different characters. The artist or 'herself' is never present in the photographs; the subject presented is the mask covering an empty void and this is what she presents to us as spectators. In her later work, her body is evacuated from the images altogether and, instead, she uses fake body parts to 'stage' her images, making her even more in control of them. Cindy Sherman turns away from the world and holds her photographs up to us as a deflective shield, whereas Claude Cahun is present in the world in that she uses her many masks, and also tests them out in front of our very eyes. Therefore, Claude Cahun puts herself out there and makes herself visible, (despite the masquerade) on every new picture, whereas Cindy Sherman conveys a void. Claude Cahun's pictures could therefore be said to reflect rather than deflect. Cahun wants, through her art, to be part of the world, whilst Cindy Sherman chooses to be reserved in the position she takes and has found an effective way of protecting and defending herself (Kline, 80).

What makes Cindy Sherman such a great artist is her complete concern and hundred percent focus on the art/spectator relationship. She does not put herself in between the art and the spectator; the spectator has to reflect on the deflection of the photographs, both in terms of content and in a formal way. The post-modern consciousness and fear of the void in relation to one's own identity and the use of photographic techniques as part of creating that schism and fear are being presented to us to reflect upon.

Claude Cahun's way of working leads to a more complex situation to have control of, where the control over the artwork is loosened as the result of a process of self-exploration and self-reflection that also mix and merge with the spectator's

reflection(s). This reflective mode of working, that is, mixing the reflections of the artist and the spectator and making the art more of a tool for these reflections to take place is what I want to happen in my work. Having control over the art/spectator relationship is therefore sacrificed and makes the artwork more about the reflections around something in particular than this something being or becoming a piece of art. From my point of view, and as an artistic researcher, I regard Claude Cahun as being mostly engaged in exploring at the same time as she makes her art and makes the spectator her co-explorer, if she or he is willing to do so, whereas Cindy Sherman seems to produce a result and is effective in making the spectator explore her or himself but doing it alone without any interaction with the artist. It is the difference between contemplating after the art object is produced or contemplating during the process of exploration in a communication oriented art work (Piper, 38).

With regard to this difference between the two artists, I think that both Claude Cahun and Cindy Sherman would make excellent artistic researchers, although in two different ways. Cindy Sherman's orientation towards manifestation and the solitary reflection of the spectator is a kind of artistic research with the medium of photography as its end result, whereas the reflective work of Cahun is significant by way of its mixture of formats, such as performance in everyday life, photography, collage, mixed media and text.

In the process leading up to the *Mirror Brooch*, I did one photographic assignment and one performance called *Passing in Venice I and II*. Here, every step and result that emerged in the process was part of the art experience and of the exploring. All manifestations and representations are turned into a constant reflective process. It is not a completely uncontrolled venture, but what is being controlled can differ as seen in the example of Cahun and Sherman. The control here lies in keeping the creative process moving and staying in an explorative mode, which can be achieved both by the artist and the spectator. The spectator's challenge is to engage in an exploration that is less controlled and established than in the contemplation of art.

In the example of the *Passing in Venice I*, I explored relations and encounters in public space by taking photographs of the spectators encountering the art at *la Biennale di Venezia*, the 51st. International Art Exhibition in Venice. In the photographs taken there, I found only one person looking back at me and from finding this person in the photographs I proceeded by designing and setting up a performance and photo shoot in front of a mirrored wall in downtown Gothenburg. The photographic outcome of the performance created different kinds of

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Experience,
Hidden Spectators
and Obscure
Public Art



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ambiguities of the relationship between the photographer, the model and also the viewer of the actual photo shoot.

The uncertainties of the relationships between the viewer, the artist and the figures depicted have been investigated by means of art history. One of the most prominent examples of this is *Las Meninas* (Spanish for the Maids of Honor). This was painted by Diego Velázquez in 1656 and can now be found in the *Museo del Prado* in Madrid [25]. This painting is all about relationships and seeing and being seen. It depicts *Infanta*, the Spanish royal couple's child and the Spanish royal court of that time, and thus, it is a typical example of painting ordered by a royal family. However, it is also a self-portrait of the artist, which means that a mirror must have been used at some point in order to make the painting. There is also a mirror represented in the painting. This hangs on the back wall of the Madrid palace and in the reflection one sees the royal couple.

At this point in time, the *Infanta* was the only child of King Philip IV and Mariana of Austria, who he had married in 1649. By way of the disposition of the painting and specifically when the couple in the mirror is discovered, it is possible, as a viewer, to take the place of the royal couple and enter into the reciprocal encounter between them and their child. The painting is dramatized in a way that at this point it is possible to become someone else, that is, the parent of a loved child. In this way, the painter offers the viewer transformation of identity through empathy.

The painting actually offers more than this encounter and relationship. The amazing power of this painting is that it offers its viewer a diversity of different and particular artistic experiences. For example, the painting was intended for the royal couple and when they stood as viewers they could enter into a reciprocal encounter with their daughter and see her being encased by their gazes. This is the actual personal use of, and relationship to, the *Las Meninas*. At the same time, it is a self-portrait of Velázquez and as such it represents his close relationship and bond with the royal family. However, it also represents the development of painting from being a craft into becoming an art form. An anonymous viewer can feel observed and noticed by the painter and maybe flattered by being depicted, even though it is not possible to see what the painter is painting.

The *Las Meninas* is said to be the most analyzed of works in Western painting and one analysis is the one by Michel Foucault. In his analysis he mentions the passer-by of the painting: "That space where the king and his wife hold sway belongs equally well to the artist and the spectator: in the depths of the mirror

there could also appear – there ought to appear – the anonymous face of the passer-by and that of Velázquez” (Foucault, [1966] 2009, 16–17).

This is interesting with regard to the way we view this painting in the modern era. Modern life is significant because of the status of the passer-by. The anonymous passer-by is part of the creation of the phenomenon of alienation typical of urban life. The exchangeable and unexchangeable spectator of the painting is related to how we make sense and meaning out of it. At the end of the Foucault’s chapter on *Las Meninas*, he talks about these different kinds of relationships and how they give different meanings to it as a representation. Here the painting is described to be set free when it is detached from the exclusive relation that was ‘impeding’ it (Foucault, [1966] 2009, 18). By freeing the representation of the particular and unexchangeable spectator, Foucault is in effect not only freeing the image of the royal couple but of any other particular relationship to it. This is the course of development of the passer-by in public space. The unexchangeable spectator belongs to the classical age, whereas the exchangeable spectator belongs to the modern (and postmodern) age. That is why, when we think about art and its production and distribution, we relate, not to anyone in particular, but to an anonymous group of people: the audience.

In the work with the *Mirror Brooch* and its focus on relation, art as everyday experience brings back the unexchangeable spectator. The interaction becomes somewhat secretive and less overt, which make it an ambiguous encounter and obscure public art.



A SCREAMING OUTFIT

Once I did a performance alone, using the Transformer jacket. It was done during an observation walk, in a part of Gothenburg that the research group “Interventions” was exploring. At first I wore the jacket folded and when we entered an open space in between buildings at the top of a hill, without warning, I unfolded the jacket, and once the flags were attached, I strode towards the harbor nearby and initiated the sound of a very loud siren. The sound overtook all the conversation in the group for this specific amount of time and I could, for once, completely dominate the group.

At the indoor meeting together with the group, right after the performance, I, for once, did not feel anxiety about being quiet and not presenting ideas to the group that day. Instead, I felt relaxed and had a renewed feeling of my place within the group dynamic. I had a sense of freedom, the freedom to be quiet, lean back, and to act as more of an observer of others within the group.

23rd October 2007, Otterhällan, Gothenburg, Sweden



Transformer

I am a Transformer
I Transform
Everything can be transformed
to the way you want it to be

Once I transformed so many things
I could not remember what was transformed or not
I transform right now.

I look at something and then I change it
Would you like to have something changed?
Chorus: Transformers, Transformers, Transformers
That's who we are

Lyrics: Fredric Gunve

Music: Pontus HW Gunve, Hit and Run Studios

Screaming

The design of the performance *Transformers*, and the Transformer Jackets, evolved from reflections around high visibility in public space. I started off thinking about waving in public, either waving hello, good bye, or from sheer excitement. Waving with textile materials has been, and still remains, a way to communicate over great distances, when verbal contact is not possible. As the name indicates, the Transformer Jackets are about the ability to change, in this case from low visibility and assimilation into the surroundings, to high visibility and differentiation from the surroundings. My intention was for the jackets to become a device, where you can react and transform more rapidly and in the moment, without having to change clothes. The jackets became an instrument of camouflage, and by making small adaptations to the jackets one could transform from grand display to being hidden and vice versa. High visibility comes with the effect of inhabiting more space and maximizing an extroverted movement. The Transformer jackets move from private to public, from introverted to extroverted, and from the uniqueness of the individual to the commonplace.

An image, which together with the song *Transformer*, was the impulse for the work, was a photograph of a political rally in Turkey from a morning newspaper [26]. In the photograph, masses of people wave flags for Turkey and the AKP party. Two features caught my interest: one was the sheer amount of flags and volume of textiles that were used in this demonstration (nearly every single person is waving a flag), and the second was the proliferation of women, most of them wearing headscarves. The Transformer Jacket was designed to either conceal the person

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Jackets and the
Performances

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wearing it or to demand attention with brightly colored material and flags.

The sketching, draping and shaping of the jackets came from the initial idea of waving with textiles, and also from the movement upwards and outwards. I started the draping process with sleeves that were cut on the bias from the shoulder. The shape I was seeking was connected with flying and the shape of a wing. In the end, the silhouette was most similar to that of a rocket. The shape involves a shoulder yoke and the sleeves joined to it by means of a raglan cut. This creates freedom of movement for the arms. The shape of the folded jacket resembles a cocoon, and the wing-like forms, attached to the shoulders, can be worn down or buttoned to the hood, creating an enclosed, somewhat Arabic silhouette. The jackets are unisex parkas, with two large pockets that you can see and ten pockets that are hidden. At this point in the process, the title I was considering was “Transformers: A Make Them Wave Back collection”.

The levels of assimilation and differentiation were achieved by the use of many pockets. Ten out of the twelve pockets contain a piece of vibrant silk fabric [27] [28]. Making use of the pockets in this way came from the idea of moving from inner concealment to outer revelation. In a typical garment, this could be illustrated by a silk lining that spills over to the outside. The idea of using the colored silk material was thought to represent that which comes from the inside, such as feelings, ideas, or opinions. Underneath the chin, the front of the jacket was elongated and lined with red shiny silk satin. You could either choose to wear this red fabric in or out, and it became a representation of a tongue.

I connected the jackets with the creation of sounds in public space; sounds either generated by people speaking to a crowd, or by causing some sort of noise. I imagined how a person, prior to a speech, may use a chair or stool to stand on in order to become more visual, before speaking. I reflected on the fact that before speaking in a larger group of people, it is necessary to demand attention; this demand is usually made by whistling, clapping, or generating any other sort of loud noise. I connected this noise-making with the attention-getting of flags waving. The final elements on the jackets were two detachable flags on the back. The flags were made out of bamboo sticks and silk satin. I also designed a satchel for the flags, so that they would be integrated into the jacket. The flags, which were in red, white, and animal print, are meant to be carried when not worn. The connotations that these jackets carry are many, and are meant to be ambiguous and very sensitive to contextual and subjective interpretation.

In a very practical sense, I design tools for performances, and multiples to be worn as an outer layer, i.e.: jackets and perhaps

in the future, umbrellas, hats, caps, mittens, and shoes. i.e. the types of clothes that are the most visible in public space, or, in other words, garments that make up a human being's outer shell.

I have been asked if the jacket can be seen as some kind of prop or a departure from the idea of a garment. It is true that I wish to connect clothes with the surrounding environment, but it can still be working as a true garment as well, as I have been wearing the Transformer Jacket throughout the autumn of 2007, during the winter, and well into the spring of 2008, almost on a daily basis. In most cases, the jacket has been worn folded with the flags hidden, but because it was used unfolded in performances on several occasions with the flags showing, its possibilities existed and made a difference in wearing it in its folded state. My perception is different because I know something about the garment, which other people don't. Here, the garment becomes the container of a secret possibility.

The performances with the Transformers Jackets are related to the creation of sound. When the jacket is folded, it is metaphorically whispering, and when it is unfolded, it is screaming. It should also be noted that during the performances, the folded jackets have provoked whispers from bystanders, and screaming or shouting when the jackets are unfolded. Explicit or implicit sounds were part of all the *Transformers* performances, however on two occasions a siren was added to the garments, in order to amplify the unfolding of the garments. Both of these performances were done close to and in relation to the sea and the harbor of Gothenburg.

The metaphor that is commonly applied to sound and clothing is 'a screaming outfit' or 'loud clothing'. The other metaphor used, not only in relation to clothing, but also between sound and fashion is that of 'the last scream', in German '*die letzte shríee*', in Spanish '*el último grito*' and in Swedish '*sista skriket*'. Both in German, Spanish and Swedish, the term means to be dressed in the latest fashion. Here, the term fashion is used to mean the 'avant-garde', what goes against the predominant norm.

In the system of fashion, it is required that you include reactions toward a predominant style. We are used to call this either the 'avant-garde' or, for example, a 'sub-culture'. These reactions could be categorized as "ego-screaming" (Kaiser, 1998, 462). This is exemplified by the attempt to create shock value, but above all, to demand attention. Ego-screaming is not a reaction with the purpose of approval or disapproval, but rather for the sake of being noticed (Kaiser, 462). This ego differentiation can be more powerful than class differentiation and flourished throughout the 1980s. Ego screaming is a demarcation from a former strategy of class differentiation, thus ego-screaming had a tendency to

create new "collective egos" (Kaiser, 463), which can be called sub-cultures. In my work, I am interested in this combination of the individual ego and the shaping of groups.

Another understanding of screaming is of something that escapes the textual, discourse and the symbolic order. The cry and the scream, from pleasure or from pain, is connected by Certeau to the body and is countered by the instrumentality of "the scriptural economy", or the different strata of discourses (Certeau, [1984] 2002, 150). Clothing is, as we have seen, a tool that is part of these rewritings and remakes of the symbolic code. Certeau places the cry as the only phenomenon that can escape the inscriptions written by the social systems (149). The last scream is also connected with death and being close to that which is outside the discourse, and close to the body and the real. Clothes are a tool for the symbolic, and at the same time in such a close relationship to the actual body, a body that we cannot reach but can only live.

Perhaps at the extreme limits of these tireless inscriptions, or perforating them with lapses, there remains only the cry: it escapes, it escapes them. From the first to the last cry, something else breaks out with them, the body's difference, alternately *in-fans* and ill-bred, intolerable in the child, the possessed, the madman or the sick — a lack of "good manners", like the howling of the baby in *Jeanne Dielman* or that of the vice-consul in *India-Song*. (Certeau, 147–148) (author's italics)

The design of the performances for *Transformers* was different from *THREE*, which was dominated by the preconceived arrangement of a very elaborate performance in both time and space. In *Transformers*, the only tool needed for the performance was one or all of the three jackets, and an idea of where and when to do the performance. Due to the fact that a performance could be decided and carried out immediately, the freedom and spontaneity of relating to the situation at hand became much greater.

The first performance was done in Karlskrona, Sweden, and there, I was the sole jacket wearer. For the next performance at Tensta konsthall (art hall), Stockholm, two additional jackets were produced and we were three people wearing them. For the first time the performance was presented with sound, in this instance composed by Pontus HW Gunve.

Additional performances began with invitations to a performance festival: *Pep talk is all you need* and then the exhibition *Artist Clothing* at Tensta konsthall, but was not limited by this. The performances continued without any invitations

offering to be part of exhibitions and took place in a workshop with students, as work within a research project, and in different locales of interest. As the performances were being executed the difference between the performances in the street which were done uninvited and the performances done in different art contexts became apparent. Below is a list of the performances in chronological order and with short commentary:

Transformers: We are leaving you now, Karlskrona, Sweden. I wore the Transformer jacket while waiting at a bus stop in the city centre of Karlskrona. When the jacket was unfolded, I waved goodbye with a white handkerchief to the people in the buses leaving.

Transformers: Goodbye, Tensta konsthall, Stockholm. Performance wearing the Transformer Jackets at the opening of the Artist Clothing show. Transformer music attached to the jackets.

Transformers: Gerlesborg School of Fine Art, Bohuslän, Sweden. A workshop ends with a performance at the Gerlesborg Art School. The workshop explored non-verbal encounters, using textiles as a medium and material. Throughout the workshop we had discussions regarding the student's experience at the school. It emerged from the discussions that the students were upset about how the cars sped past them, as they walked the twenty minutes on the road in the countryside to get to the school's different departments. They felt, and they told stories, that people living in the area did not accept or respect them, and they thought this attitude was revealed when the cars sped by, taking up all the space in the road. On the last day of the workshop, we decided to construct flags and parade on this country road. The flags were installed as markers along the road and when cars passed by, we all stopped and waved hello.

Transformers: Manhattan, New York City. Three of us walked from the west side to the east side of Manhattan, following Grand Street and wearing the Transformer jackets. One man gave thumbs up; one took a photograph; one asked us why we were doing what we were doing; children laughed; many couples tried hard not to look; the word "ninjas" was whispered when we walked through Chinatown; the wind played with the silk organza; a guy shouted from his car "Halloween is over" a woman stroked the silk scarves and asked if they belonged to a

magician; when we reached Hudson River a man leaned out of the car and shouted "freedom fighters". After a while, when not wearing the flags up, it felt as though some part of our body was missing.

Transformers: Södra Älvstranden, Gothenburg, Sweden. We walked from the opera house to the culture centre at Röda Sten, following the waterfront. No one asked us anything; we met very few people, so we talked to each other; when the ferry passed we waved to it; we found two excellent hidden places for drinking and hanging out; we found a pier with dead fish, birds eating the fish and a guy watching all this from his car using a binoculars; first it rained and then it got cold; we found a spray painted yellow swastika crossed out with red spray paint; a man on a bike waved hello to us; the silk organza dragged in the wet dirty streets.

As a result of doing the *Transformers* performance several times I felt most happy about the ones in Gerlesborg, Manhattan NYC and Södra Älvstranden. They were all done without any invitation, and here the photographer was an integrated part of the performances. A result stemming from these performances were series of photographic images, and these photographs were eventually translated into posters, banners, and scarves.

Exploring Self
and the
Environment
Through
Performance

The two forces underlying any artistic work are the tensions that arise between self-expression and self-discovery. When non-professionals engage in artistic activity, self-discovery and the therapeutic side of art is often stressed, whereas for the artist the manifestation and self-expression is what is focused on. This is a balance for every artist since both manifestation and self-experimentation are a part of one's process and work. Artists have always worked as the revisionist in their own work, attempting to present it in a way that they thought was fit, while the art historians have tried to open this box filled with shadows to try and unveil the hidden mysteries of the work, the practice, and the artist herself/himself.

A difference between the performance of *THREE* and the *Transformers* performances, was that in *Transformers*, I chose to be part of the performance and to wear the clothing myself. I wished to act as an integral part of the performance and to be embedded in it, not simply observing it but experiencing it. At the same time, I diminished the documentation process by asking only one person to join us and to take as many pictures as possible and thereby also be included in the performance. Through my self-involvement and the inclusion of the photographer in the performance, the distinctions between the

artist, artwork, and spectator became blurred.

The models for the *THREE* performances told me that they had no inhibition about walking through the city dressed in the clothes during the performance. However, they did feel odd while taking the tram and walking home after the performance. They reported that they felt that as though they were not themselves. During the performance they had easily accepted the idea of being somehow protected and shielded by the role that they were asked to take on. On their way home, their role was absent, except for the role of themselves, which should always be natural and not be mistaken for something that is faked.

I was acknowledged in connection with this experience, by the stylist and fashion show director Emma Fälth. Fälth related that it was essential to give special attention to new and inexperienced models in fashion shows, by doing their hair and make-up with extra care. She related that this had to be done in order for the models to feel more comfortable in their 'role' on the catwalk. A model from the *THREE* performance commented that she felt concerned about the fact that people could not tell if she was dressed up by someone else, or if the clothes and make-up was of her own choosing. This illustrates the opportunity of an ambiguity or confusion of whether a role is an integrated part of a person, or if it is being played.

In the performances, I am not entering into a role, as much as I am dressing for the part. I allow the clothes to perform. My own role in the performance feels like a dialectic oscillation. When wearing the clothes, I feel protected by knowing that they do the 'acting'. I can relax, meet people, and yet the action of the garments exists at the same time. It is a way to become less self-conscious. The clothes and I are one, and yet remain operating separately. One of the reasons for this more relaxed sensation is that I do not have to play the role of my 'natural' self. Instead, I am free to invent new conditions for any given situation.

I experience the reactions around me and through them realize and experience the effects that the clothes have. In so doing, I feel passive and active, visible and invisible, in a constant flow of events, and in the moment. The performance is both framed by me, and yet operating in the flow of a continuum. The clothes work as a frame, or as a condition for circumstances to emerge.

My own role, and that of others who wear the clothes, is ambiguous. The combination of being 'yourself' and protected, and at the same time being what you are wearing, is part of a role. This role fluctuates and changes between different performances. The performance of *THREE* was an experience of role playing, whereas when I was performing with the Transformer Jacket in Karlskrona, I was far less in a role [29]. At Tensta konsthall [30],



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we were playing a role much more than we were in the streets of New York and much much more than we were at Södra Älvstranden in Gothenburg. The ambiguities regarding the position of the subject wearing the clothes affect those viewing the performance and also the quality of the encounters, especially if people engage and for example talk with us. The context, the people surrounding us, and their behavior creates the way in which we chose to enter or not enter into different roles.

At Tensta konsthall, the performance was advertised in the exhibition catalogue. The spectators, therefore, knew the time, title, and location for the performance. This arrangement created an unintentional division between the performers and the spectators. The spectators were playing their role of an audience so well that there could be no ambiguous encounters. The performance still worked, but rather as a distinction to the atmosphere of the exhibition in the room. The Transformer sound that accompanied us broke the soft and contemplative feeling of the exhibition. Prior to the start of the performance we were standing outside the art hall waiting, and for a short time in this public square of Tensta, the performance actually worked. It worked because our small group of people was for a short time ambiguous in regard to which context we belonged to. The experience at Tensta konsthall confirmed my reasoning in adhering to public space as the space for the performances in the future.

My observations of being inside the clothing while performing, have led me to the conclusion that, not only do the clothes work as a mask, but as a porous mask. A mask protects and covers the wearer, the difference here being that the face is exposed. When a mask covers your face, the magic of it is that you become the mask to the utmost. This becoming can be frightening, because as one falls into the role the mask exhibits, people respond to the mask and that response defines who you are. In my work, there is not a complete masking; but rather a double-faced act where both of the acts are multi-layered.

Within the ambivalence of not knowing if you are talking to the art or the artist; the artist assumes two roles which make the entire encounter ambiguous. There is a hidden agenda in the 'everyday-like performances' that I engage in. The performers and especially I as the artist, have a special interest in what may happen. This special interest, and the clothing itself, create a distance between the performance and the people in the street. This distance does not result in the encounters and meetings less likely to happen, but rather allows the performer more availability to engage in an encounter. There is a subject and object jumble, or more succinctly, a subject-object ambiguity.

As a female artist, the idea of turning oneself into an object feels threatening, but intentionally making oneself into an object is more of liberation than a negative experience. There is a difference between being objectified and making oneself into an object (Eriksson, 2003, 91). When wearing the Transformer jackets and ‘playing my role’ in the performance, if someone approaches and speaks to me they are, in effect, ‘subjectifying’ me, a kind of status modification. In my performances, I do not attempt to take away the opportunity for anyone to break the ‘spell’ of my role. I try to create situations where it actually happens. The ambiguities that a status modification creates, in this case a blurring of subject and object status, creates a space of possible actions ‘out of character’.

It is surprising how easy most people enter a role, if they are asked. All that is required is to be extremely clear what is expected from them, and remove all doubt or insecurity of what their purpose is. People are usually more than ready to participate, and I read this eagerness to be given a role as coming from the allure of, for a limited time, the burden of the ‘natural’ self-conscious self being removed (Pacteau, 1994, 185).⁴

In the ambiguous assimilation of the artist and the artwork, the spectator also becomes a part of the artist, and the art. It is very difficult to experience this type of ambiguity in a gallery space or art institution. Public space is a far better place for art with these kinds of ambitions, as the roles are not as defined within the spectator, art and artist relationship. What the art institution and the white cube achieve is the casting of people and objects into specific roles, so that the movement between them is less present.

The idea that to become more ‘oneself’, there is ‘essence’ that must be reached on the inside and brought forth to appear on the outside is too simple to apply to any idea of identity. Again, using the *flâneur* as a point of reflection, we can see that he is the first one in history to become ‘himself’, a ‘natural’ self. He became one with his identity and his clothing, in the spirit of the thought and philosophy of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, which was very influential at the time (Teunissen, 2006, 199). We are all committed to the project and work of becoming ‘ourselves’. We may feel more comfortable to think that we only working with that which comes from the inside, which is then is naturally expressed on the outside, but our appearance is always part of a masquerade connected to the environment.

Here, I come back to the example of the *Parangolés* which was mentioned in *Walking*, the worn art by the Brazilian artist Helio Oiticica. The *Parangolés*, while worn, seems to have the ability to be absent from the body, the experience of the

⁴ From Jean Baudrillard, *L'autre par lui-même* — Habilitation (Paris, 1987), p.80, translated by Francette Pacteau: “But there is above all, in the subject itself, the passion to be object, to become object — enigmatic desire whose consequences we have hardly evaluated, in all the domains, political, esthetic, sexual — lost as we are in the illusion of the subject, of its will and of its representation”

individual self, and move the experience outwards towards the environment and others. In a text concerning a show of Oiticica’s work at the Museum of Fine Arts, in Houston, (2007), Johannes Birringer describes wearing one of the *Parangolés*, which has been re-created for the show. He is stunned to find that the *Parangolés* are stiff and labyrinthical to wear; he had expected them to engage in sensorial feelings of the body and that the garment would have worked on the body making it dance, as silk does when passing directly over the skin resulting in an erotic and self-absorptive awareness. Instead, the *Parangolés* turn awareness to the outside. Birringer has a feeling that his body is elsewhere, while he animates the material and colours for others around him. The *Parangolés* cause him to move in an outwardly way, directing him to what is around him, rather than to sensorial feelings in his body. The body transgresses and becomes part of a specific circumstance, rather than directed towards itself; “the corporeal processes here are indeterminate” (Birringer, 2007, 44). Here, Oiticica’s work causes the energy of the wearer to disperse as in a dance. The connection with dance is clear through the energy that moves towards fragmentation and the blending (becoming) of the body with the environment. “These energies can never be analyzed precisely or computed. At the same time, as with all strong relational art, the environment can respond to these energies, sustaining and enhancing the displacement of bodies from the subjective to the objective realm of experience” (Birringer, 44–45).

I have experienced a similar effect when wearing the Transformer Jacket, a movement from a focused and individual subjective position, to one less self-aware and directed outwards to the environment and other people. It is important for the way I think and perceive my work that this movement goes through the medium of the clothes, the different colors and materials.

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PERFORMANCE IN NEW YORK CITY,
ALONG GRAND STREET

The unfolding and folding of the jacket becomes a way to breathe within the space, of way of relating to people, buildings, and narratives found there. We react to the wind, catching it when it blows, playing with it. The reactions from people are not only in relation to the jackets themselves, they also depend whether we walk in a line or a shape, who leads, and our movements in relation to the pavement and depending on which quarters we are in.

The *Transformer* project was always intended to be a group performance, and yet I have experimented with the Transformer jackets on my own several times. Transformations in a group and performing the transformation alone present two different sets of results. Interaction with the people around you is a larger part of the performance when you are on your own and feel more vulnerable. This vulnerable position affects people in different ways. The different locations where the performances are carried out also affects the extent to which the group becomes more activated outwardly than inwardly. Performing alone, in groups, and with different people, in different places, and at different times has created a varying set of experiences, images, and narratives.

An example of location affecting the group is the performance which took place at Södra Älvstranden in Gothenburg. We walked from the Opera House to the cultural centre at Röda Sten, and on that long two-hour walk on a cold and rainy day, there were not many people sharing the streets with us. Instead, the transformation we undertook reflected the environment; we used the transformation to share the experience of the environment we were in, commenting on it by folding or unfolding our jackets on different occasions. This walk was far away from the 'modern city' with their cafés, boulevards and squares (Massey, 1994, 233).

When designing the jackets, I was acutely aware of the type of public space we usually think of, the city with its squares, stations and parks. After this Södra Älvstranden performance, I became aware of other spaces in the city. Charged with other energies, the paths and streets along the harbor in Gothenburg are hidden and abandoned spaces. These places are less influenced by the idea of the shared space, but are also less influenced by specific kinds of commercial forces, like billboards, shop signs, and window displays. Instead, these spaces are exposed to different interests and the mainly invisible power structures connected with ownership of, and claim to, property and real estate.

During the performance at Älvstranden, we focused on ourselves as a group operating within the spaces that we passed, rather than encounters with people. During the performances, it is possible to discover more about the varying social climate of a place, when there are less people around; the environment itself becomes more important than the few citizens moving within it. The *Transformer* performances were designed to act and react in relation to the environment and that environment changes every time the performances are done in a new space-time, giving new sets of experiences. The connection between performance and belonging is what is at play here. The performance and the environment are porous to each other, and actually have a hand in creating each other. Through the physical act of walking,

and especially with the addition of an intentional performance piece, you learn a great deal about the space and about yourself within that space. "It also privileges the idea not of reading the environment, as though its meaning were there and simply waiting to be deciphered, but, rather of giving meaning to the environment by collective or individual behavior. "Belonging" to a place can therefore be understood as an aspect of territorialization, and out of that "belonging" a sense of identity might be forged" (Leich, 2006, 182).

The Transformer Jackets can re-act on the environment, which is acting on you. The opportunity of assimilation and camouflage offered by the folded jacket is a way of becoming less open to communication, while the unfolded jacket opens the way to becoming a highly visible active person, one more accessible for communication. The performances should be seen in the light of an act carried out in relation to identity issues and the concept of belonging in the global city ruled by capitalism. Here, inward identity projects eventually push you so far that eventually the inwards line becomes an outwardly directed projectile.

The relationship between identity and engagement in public space are of interest here. We regard involvement as an inward feeling, but Goffman tells us that "involvement must and does rely on some kind of outward expression" (1966, 37). The inward and outward are, therefore, connected. Involvement is connected to engagement. Involvement hints to the individual at being caught up, while engagement pertains to a relationship to others or the environment.

Instead of using the terms body language or non-verbal communication, Goffman chooses "body idiom" and "involvement idiom", meaning that we are engaged with one another in communication, even if there are no words uttered (1966, 33). Goffman describes these bodily appearances and personal acts by referring to "dress, bearing, movement and position, sound level, physical gestures such as waving or saluting, facial decorations, and broad emotional expression" (1966, 33). Society both regulates these communications and is formed from them. The fact that involvement idiom is a conventionalized discourse, and also a normative one (Goffman, 1966, 35), provides us with the possibility to work on a micro level with issues of norm. Involvement idiom could be seen as a minor and insignificant break from norms in the larger sense, but what is not taken in account is a person's self empowerment, after having taken the position of being in charge, even if she or he is turned against in other readings of the situation.

Ultimately involvement and engagement are connected, and so are experience and action. As with the camouflage system

of fashion, which is used as method of hiding, and as part of a larger scheme; one where the perception and use of proprieties are a camouflage system itself and functions as a part of the normative in society. Our society does not entirely generate norms by regulation from the outside, but has more and more become about the individual internalizing this process. Although an individual can stop talking, he cannot stop communicating through body idioms; he must say either the right thing or the wrong thing. One cannot say nothing. Paradoxically, the way in which one is permitted to give away the least amount of information about oneself is to fit in and act like persons are expected to act. "The fact that information about self can be held back in this way is one motive for maintaining the proprieties" (Goffman, 1966, 35).

Common reactions to explicit and 'loud' dressing in society, is a regulative kind. Passing comments of a negative kind were activated by the unfolding of the Transformer jackets, as in NYC when a man rolled down his window and screamed, "Halloween is over!". Reactions I have received from fashion designers, young and old, who are familiar with provocative dress have been that even if the comments were highly negative, they are also the exact response they wished to convey. My interpretation, and what I base the development of my performances on, is that even if you risk negative feedback there is also a production in the normative system, usually well camouflaged, but laid open for everyone to see. By intentionally provoking reactions one may feel more empowered. Clothing is a medium that is usually employed in these matters.

The interpretation and results of the *Transformers* performances vary a great deal in every instance. Therefore, the performance experience becomes not only an activity of production and presentation, but also one of exploration. The more varied the reflections are, the more interesting the experience. The clothing and performances are designed to jumpstart reflections, and is one way that clothing can be a foremost medium for art in public space. Ambiguity is key in this regard, for if it were totally clear where we come from, and what we are doing, there would be no need for any audience to reflect on what they have encountered. Locating this ambiguity is, at times, difficult in relation to the possibilities within a certain circumstance. To wear the jackets in close proximity to an art school like Gerlesborg does not create this ambiguity; here a certain kind of added action is needed (as in the physicality of the group waving to people in cars). When the performance was done in New York City, it was obvious that in particular areas, where tourists were rare in the environment and the locals were less exposed to spectacular activities, like

film shoots, the people reacted more to our performance and also embraced it in a curious way. When we passed the centre of Manhattan, the reactions were different; a couple dressed in chic black wool suits commented to each other that "it must be a kind of art project" (which it was), but that reflection also became a hindrance to a more of active part of the experience. They acted as well behaved as art spectators, who just happened to be in the street, when it was just this, the art — spectator division, that I was specifically attempting to avoid.

There are many parameters to take in account regarding the decision-making that goes into the performances. To create an openness and engagement of the participants within the design of the performance is important, and to open up communication by differentiation, and to provoke a will to explore.

Encounters in Public Space

Public space is not a given and stable structure. Just as the 'white cube' transforms through history, so does public space. In order to transform public space into a place for art and artistic activities, we need to investigate it further and look at its development over time. Earlier, I mentioned the focused and unfocused gathering; unfocused gatherings are characterized by the presence of people in the same space, while focused gatherings add a communication license or activity shared amongst the group members. A focused group, focused by any means, can include and exclude other people, the unfocused gathering is more porous, but also has its own rules of behavior. In these two groups, there are different rules at hand. In a unfocused group it is, for example, permissible to stare at people and display what one thinks by facial expressions, Goffman calls this the "hate-stare" (1966, 83). The hate-stare is an obvious way of showing superiority, or power, in this type of gathering; another way to exert power is to treat other people as if they were not there, this can also be accomplished with the use of the eyes, by treating others as objects not worthy of a glance (Goffman, 1966, 83).

The more courteous way of treating each other in public space, is to use what Goffman calls "civil inattention" (1966, 84). Civil inattention is a balancing act between giving a fellow person just enough visual notice to show that his or her presence has been acknowledged, while not looking too closely, or with scrutiny, which may lead to the feeling that he or she is a target or under threat. Civil inattention is reciprocal, and can be seen in encounters where people meet in the street. It is permissible to look at the person straight on until a certain distance is reached, and when the sides of which one is passing the other have been established. When the actual meeting occurs, the eyes are cast downwards in "a kind of dimming of lights" (Goffman, 1966, 84). This is a basic and minimal interpersonal ritual in our society, but

without it, walking the streets would be a surreal experience. Engaging in civil inattention is a means of demonstrating that one is neither a threat, nor has any fear of humanity. It is a mutual communicative activity and is usually a strong indicator of the reality of a situation. If a person would walk the street with staring or rapidly moving eyes, you would most probably look around to see if there is anything in the area that you need to avoid or pay attention to. When planning actions in public space, these are the sorts of human behaviors that you must take into consideration and be prepared to work with. Certain aspects of these behaviors are more relevant. The closer you are to people the more obligated they feel to act or to attend to the mannerisms of civil inattention; while when further away they are they are more inclined to feel free to look or stare.

Civil inattention is an interesting method in the study of the show of the minimal amount of courtesy and respect in our public spaces; it is revealed in such minor and subtle mannerisms that we engage in it without any conscious thought. Civil inattention is a way to treat people as participants, and this is tested if someone new enters the group, especially one who is of a different social status, or has a very divergent physical appearance (Goffman, 1966, 86). Many people regard themselves as having a good character when able to act nonchalant when a famous person appears in public space. We teach our children that they are not supposed to stare at the physically handicapped. This practice of not paying the courtesy of civil inattention is a non-verbal way to communicate to someone that they are not a participant, and not part of the group.

In the 1960's, Goffman noticed a change in the behavior of people in public space. The use of fans and parasols were, at that time, a way of playing with and stealing glances. He describes the change that led to this as if the "elasticity of communication" has lessened (Goffman, 1966, 85). Fifty years later; we are still in the process of change. Reliance on motor vehicles instead of walking, the compression of people in the cities, and new wearable technologies are bound to change the way that public space is used and experienced.

A set of dilemmas comes with working within the tradition of visual art, in regard to the design of the performances. At times, it is unclear if my goal is an image, a *tableaux vivant* in public space, or the relational situation itself, which also shows in a tension between presentation and exploration. I experience this tension while working, and my sketching is done both on an aesthetic level and on a relational level. I have both a desire to work with appearances to create moments of *tableaux vivants* in public space, and working with the flow of time and the relational

Lived Experience

aspects related to "social sculpture", explored and used by Joseph Beuys (Bishop, 2005, 104). The combination of the aesthetic and the relational can, at times, be very tricky, because judgment becomes dependant on which of the aspects you choose as your main goal. As a further complication, I wish to be part of the work myself, I want to be embedded in the work, and therefore loose the vantage point where I can control the aesthetic image.

Clothes themselves are a set of controlling tools, and by designing them I exert a certain amount of control in relation to the situation. I also design the performances, and in so doing I do not attempt to dominate the flow of actions, but to work with arrangements that make participation in the project relaxed. If I ask anyone to wear garments that I have designed, I am very clear as to what the rules are. This clarity may lead to potential freedoms within the sets of rules.

It is not known exactly where this tension between the *tableaux vivant* and the relations in public space will lead, but I anticipate that when other spaces and different modes of time-space, are explored, alternative ways of working will emerge. It is important to realize that any making of a *tableaux vivant* in the city, or elsewhere, must be interesting for the participants wearing the clothes, not from the interest of a viewer or spectator at first hand. There is a certain enjoyment and pleasure in creating *tableaux vivants*, or living pictures, with others, and results in the creation of new narratives among the participants. I view these narratives as self-empowering and self-exploratory, but coming from experiences together with other people. Feelings, such as pleasure (or annoyance), are key factors when working with involvement and engagement.

Previously I have characterized Oiticica's ideas about watching/ wearing in relation to the *Parangolés*. Oiticica regarded the *Parangolés* as the work that led him to understand the relationship between a work of art and its audience and to discover the "vivência" (simply stated, a total life experience) (Bishop, 64). It is quite clear that by creating the *Parangolés*, he took a large leap in regard to defining his idea about participation, and not only participation per se but the idea of the lived experience as a crucial part of the work of art. Art as part of a lived experience is demanding, in that it is expected that both the artist and the spectator engage in the art as part of life, and in situations which blur the boundaries between art and life.

During the large retrospective show of Oiticica's work at Tate Modern in the 2007 the *Parangolés* had to be remade in order to keep with Helios initial intention of actually wearing the clothes (Birringer, 38). The original *Parangolés* were, by that time, too

valuable to be used and worn. They were treated as museum artifacts, and thereby withdrawn from the intermediate quality of worn clothing.

Oiticica's ideas break with the usual concept of art as a mainly visual art. By engaging the total lived experience all senses were activated and became important, the whole experience was of value and, what is most interesting, art moved from being centered on representation, objects, and space, towards experience, relations and time. In my work, this relation to time is crucial, as well as the realization that it is not the object that is important, but the way it is lived by the spectator. Oiticica worked with this idea without abandoning the use of materials, making the art immaterial, nor did he abandon the visual and aesthetic. Instead, he viewed the two, the material and the relational, as inseparable and needing each other in the *vivência*. Therefore, actual physical transformations are important in Oiticica's work, not only the mental.

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NEW YORK CITY

The pink silk spilling out from the front of my Transformer Jacket is caught by the wind and covers my face. For a few seconds, I see only pink light and feel the sensuous feeling of the soft silk against my face.

When unfolding and folding the Transformer jackets we help one other. One works on another person's jacket, while another one assists them. This inward activity creates a sensuous feeling and a co-dependence among us as a group.

The Neo-Concretist artists of Brazil were aware that when they changed matter, they did not only change the mind or the perception of people, but changed the entire self; the person would be drawn into self-transcendence and self-revelation that connected art as significant to the real world. The Brazilian artists can be said to have taken playfulness seriously. Playing with and engaging the body in different sensorial experiments, being either inward or outward interventions, was important, as was the conditional aspect of the matter of objects, and other parts of their visible works. They were just one piece in the "conditioned-unconditioned relationship in the ongoing understanding of the works" (Oiticica, 296).

The conditioned—unconditioned relationship is the basis for

Oiticica's work "continuous contact between the spectator and the work" (Oiticica, 296). Experience, which does not entirely aim towards a change in perception, or of ideas, that is unconditional, is a way to keep the playfulness and fun in art, and integrate 'fun' into the real world. Frequently, *Neo-Concretism* has been connected to immaterial art or the striving for an immaterial art, but the artists perceived the conditioned and the unconditioned always as a duality and related it to *vivência*, a total life experience, and to a holistic approach. With that in mind, for the *Neo-Concretists* the immaterial and the material were seen as an inseparable pair, because of the notion of the lived experience. The British critic, Guy Brett, wrote in detail about this Brazilian avant-garde and he carefully followed the work of the artist Lygia Clark. He noted that:

Some commentators associate the development of modern vision with the Renaissance perfection and later dissemination of the camera obscura, the dark room cut off from the world, which enabled the world to be represented and known in a way whose effect was to sunder the act of seeing from the physical body of the observer, to decorporealize vision. The result was to separate the knower from the known, subject from object. Clark's work questions this separation. (Brett, 1994)

These Brazilian artists are pointing towards a western culture standstill in regard to the ideas of the body and mind, between the sensory and the intellectual. They believed in the energy in people and between people and they believed in the possibility of making use of these energies to accomplish transformation and to keep the freedom. To believe in people's energy and their will to change, transform and explore are crucial for my work. I do not employ methods of scaring or shocking people into change and transformation. My methods are instead engaged in luring participants and an audience into exploration, play and transformation.

Fashion helps. You're supposed to be dirty now. If you're clean, you make a target of yourself. People think you're showing off, trying to be better than they are. Among the younger kids, being clean is a great way to start a fight. Cory won't let us stay dirty here in the neighborhood, but we all have filthy clothes to wear outside the walls. Even inside, my brothers throw dirt on themselves as soon as they get away from the house. It's better than getting beaten up all the time.

Octavia E Butler, *Parable of the Sower*, 1995, p. 16

"The appearance 'thing'", which is the title of this chapter, is a quote from Carol Hanish, an American feminist and civil rights worker (Hanish 1998 see Schechner 2006, 161). She is the author of the essay with the famous title "*Personal is Political*", written in 1969. Many have made their own interpretations of "the personal is political" and Dorothy E. Smith's definition, being part of that era, defines it like this: "This equation locates an oppression invading our most intimate relationships, the immediate particularities of our lives, the power relations between persons" (1987, 211).

What is groundbreaking in the acknowledgement that personal problems are political problems is the connection between personal everyday experience, feelings, and discourse. This was accomplished through group meetings where women were able to talk about their problems from personal experience and then together attempted to understand them in a political sense, Hanish calls these meetings; "political therapy" (Hanish, [1969] revised 2009). In Hanish's experience, turning the personal political results in her becoming one of "other people". She can no longer make a division between her theories and everyday life, nor divide women (in this case) into repressed women and liberated women. "I've been forced to take off the rose colored glasses and face the awful truth about how grim my life really is as a woman. I am getting a gut understanding of everything as opposed to the esoteric, intellectual understandings and *noblesse oblige* feelings I had in "other people's" struggles" (Hanish, [1969] revised 2009) (authors' italics).

My own understanding of "the personal is political" is not to claim my own personal problems and feelings as political per se. The power of taking intimate relationships and historical determination and connecting them to each other lies in the conviction that our experience of everyday life is where both theory and (political) action can be shaped.

Hanish was part of the protest at the Miss America pageant in Atlantic City in 1968, and where the famous 'bra burning' took

Bonus

The Appearance 'Thing'

place. The whole protest started with the discussions of 'the appearance issue' among women. The discussions centered on "comfort, fashion dictates and how beauty competition divides women" (Hanish 1998 see Schechner 2006, 161). Not only bras were burned that day, but also other 'instruments of female torture', which included high heels, nylons, garter belts, girdles, hair curlers, false eye-lashes, make-up and Playboy and Good Housekeeping magazines. "After all, what is really beneath this "appearance thing" is male prerogative and control. It's not only about sexual attractiveness vs. comfort; it's about power..." (Hanish 1998 see Schechner 2006, 161).

Connecting power to the appearance 'thing' is an intriguing concept. However, there have been many misunderstandings regarding these issues that have led to a disempowered and scattered feminist movement. Dress and appearance lends itself to both oppression and empowerment which makes clothes an easy target. The reason for the burnings was that if women could get rid of the utensils of oppression; the oppression would disappear. The 'burnings' were done both on a material and symbolic level.

In western culture, the following notion applies: an individual believes that there is the choice of being oppressed or not through one's choice of dress. The individual is alone, responsible, and stuck in the historically determined, and, at the same time, fully liable. In other parts of the world, as in the example of Iran given here, we find another twist on the power of dress. Here, dress and appearance is used to implement oppression by the authorities of that society. The chador is an example of oppression through dress, and especially in the way it is worn. A chador is not a cut garment, but is a large piece of heavy linen that has been dyed black, which is the heaviest dye. This heavy piece of fabric is not held together by anything else than the woman balancing it on her head and holding it together with one hand. The weight of the textile material on her head and, at all times having to hold it together under her chin causes the woman be one handed, and therefore handicapped. The chador represents that a garment can be an effective way to completely control a woman's body. It also reveals that oppression and power, for the most part, is not about the aesthetic of a garment, but the exact way in which it is being worn. The covering of the hair or the wearing of a headscarf, a *hijab*, is the basic element of a woman's clothing in Iran and in other Muslim countries. However, in Iran, you can be arrested and put to jail if you wear a 'bad hijab', which is a woman wearing a colorful headscarf, showing a little bit of hair and wearing make-up (Harrison, 2007). Wearing a *hijab* is therefore not enough; it is how you wear it that counts. Here, make-up and dress is used as a way to act against

oppression as much as dress and appearance is used as a way to exercise power. It can be described as an example of “reverse discourse” (Entwistle, 2001, 41). In this case, certain women in Iran choose to make the *hijab* into an adornment, by wearing a shiny and colorfully-printed headscarf, instead of the intended ‘cover-up’. By doing so, they reverse the act of oppression by using the same kind of garment, but which is slightly different and differently styled.

Dress and appearance play ambiguous roles in the theories that concern power relations in society. Either they are presented as being completely and utterly powerful forces or they are disregarded altogether. “Thus the dressed body is a fleshy, phenomenological entity that is so much part of our experience of the social world, so thoroughly embedded within the micro-dynamics of social order, as to be entirely taken for granted” (Entwistle, 36). Dress and appearance is always tied to the moment of living it, this is its strength and its weakness.

We create and sustain the social order, as well as appear as the social order. Any public activity does not only state that it exists, it also propagates. The performances that are used in this work are a kind of propaganda. “Run it up the flagpole and see who salutes. Put on a show and see who shows up” (Warner, 2002, 114). The performance is not merely entertainment and a show; it is also part of the activity that creates the very space and situation it is part of. During the course of my project, I used different concepts and words to describe the spaces where the performances take place, ultimately deciding on *shared situations*. I prefer the word situation rather than dialogue, encounter, or interaction, for example. This is due to the fact that a ‘situation’ is a way to describe an open group of people, where the boundaries are porous and less rigid. A situation also includes those observing the interaction or dialogue taking place.

Dress and appearance, amongst other phenomena, play a part in the concept of performativity, but in this particular project, they are the basic material that the performances I conduct use to explore shared situations. It is important to acknowledge the performative aspect in the initial state of the entrance into a situation of exploration, and how, at this stage, we are dependent on our own subjective position and subjective reflections. “The standpoint of women situates the inquirer in the site of her bodily existence and in the local actualities of her working world. It is a standpoint that positions inquiry but has no specific content” (Smith, 1990, 28). Thus, the starting point is in the experience, as it is.

The reason why performance works to initialize shared situations aimed at explorations, is that any act, intended or not,

conscious or unconscious, is performative. Judith Butler’s idea of the performative is that it is constituted, in that it is not the subject that performs the ‘I’, it is the discursive that performs through the performative act and causes the ‘I’ to be possible. The discursive as power and authorization not only works on the subject but works through it (Butler, 1993, 225). This is the performative that is constantly active in any situation. Furthermore, the performative determines so much, that most of the time it has, from the very beginning, already determined what can be done, changed, or discovered as a result in a situation. This is partly the reason for some of the criticism of Butler’s theory. Butler believes the body is what is re-enacting, especially within the norms of sexual identity. Butler acknowledges the body and materiality as part of the subject, but tells us it is constructed by discourse and nothing else. The discourse, in her view, is what comes first. This viewpoint has been argued against from a left feminist perspective, by Gen Doy, among others, and from the viewpoint of dialectical materialism. The critique Doy posts suggests that by engaging a subject constructed by discourse only, the artist can only create passive reflections, not new representations (1998, 109). Any use of the body would be a reflection of the discourse, and there would be no room for anything that does not fit into the prevailing discourse.

The difference and the connection between the performative, as thought of by Butler, and the performative act as in a performance within art practice, is the backdrop to my argument. In this relationship, it is impossible to escape the performative act in any everyday situation. We negotiate the character of our obligatory performance, in order to become the ‘I’ that the discursive enables us. Butler’s ideas are understandably groundbreaking since they overthrow the idea of a naturally created gender, and afford the possibility to dispose of the dichotomy of A/not A in gender. Since this dichotomy is far from disappearing in society, she shows us how it is constructed and performed.

The performance in art practice is intentional performance, and as such it is an assignment, something which obviously is ruled by instructions. She cites the example of drag, which she regards as intentional performance, a way of repeating the symbolic, and reveals the “command” in the sign of man or woman (Butler, 1993, 237). This exposes the heterosexual regimes and their failure to establish and control their ideals (Butler, 1993, 237). This also illustrates that it is possible to expose a regime without causing the regime to vanish; still, this tactic can be used in explorations and in raising engagement.

The idea of the body where the struggles of power (and

knowledge) is carried out has been argued by Foucault (1980, 57–58). This is clear through his historical examples of ‘discursive practices’. Here, ‘discourse’ is used to mean a system of boundaries that decides what is possible or impossible in a given situation (Allen, 2006, 295). Foucault also introduces the idea of the “docile body” as the link between a body that can be analyzed and a body that can be useful and manipulated (1979, 138). In my work, I tend to avoid references to Foucault, despite the fact that discourse positions the body as its ‘case’ in the exercise of power. My reason for not referring to Foucault is that he manages to avoid some important questions about the body: its materiality outside of language and representation, for example (Entwistle, 42). Instead, I have turned to Smith’s writings to a great extent. I have found that Smith’s methods include the body and its lived experiences as the centre of power, and here, the struggles of power integrate with the textual relations that a person is having. These similarities, but also differences have intrigued me, and compelled me to make a small comparison between the thoughts and concepts of Foucault and Smith.

There is something deceiving about the theories of Foucault which make them seem universal, complete, and impossible to argue. From the standpoint of my artistic practice, his concept of the discursive and its deep connection to text, and language, becomes problematic. The visual and the non-verbal are, when studying these phenomena through the concept of discourse, placed in an inferior position in relation to anything textual.

On the contrary, Smith talks about actual living individuals, women in particular, and their relationship to discourse and knowledge: “From this standpoint, we know the everyday world through the particularities of our local practices and activities, in the actual places of our work and the actual time it takes. In making the everyday world problematic we also problematize the everyday localized practices of the objectified forms of knowledge organizing our everyday world” (Smith, 1990, 28).

Sometimes, Smith also provides case stories of historical persons, such as the one of Virginia Wolf and how the writings of her suicide by the bibliographer Quentin Bell implicate the reader in the objectification of Wolf’s ‘psychiatric problems’. Here, however, she is involved with the actual life of Wolf and attempts to show how the text of her life is re-created, away from the actual lived experience of Wolf (Smith, 1990, 177–196).

The second reason that I avoid discursive theories is of a philosophical nature. I find that there is a clash between those systems that are said to be fundamental, such as discourse, and the body which is particular and the actual. Discourse is not supposed to be actual and particular; it is presented as the system that governs talk and also ‘creates’ the one who is talking.

It is so fundamental that it is impossible to step outside of it, and, at the same time, discourse is said to be played out from the inside of everyone’s bodies. I find this contradictory; how can discourse be an abstract, fundamental, basic underlying structure and, at the same time, be particular and actual in every shared situation? This reflects back on the system of fashion, where trends are experienced as dictatorship or personal choices and experiences. My view on fashion is that it is not an underlying structure, it is a cultural creation based in real life experiences and relations, but as a mass effect its ‘propaganda’ character turns into dictatorship.

Foucault’s work and especially his theories on the concept of discourse are certainly important, especially in feminist and gender studies. However, there has also been an extensive critique from feminists and fashion theory, regarding the theories of Foucault, especially in relation to practice, individuality and subjective experience. Smith, for example, criticizes Foucault’s theories by advocating the subjective experience.

Power and knowledge are not linked in some mystical conjunction such as that enunciated by Michel Foucault. What we call “power” is always a mobilization of people’s concerted activities. If facticity, if objective knowledge, is a form of power, it arises in the distinctive concerting of people’s activities that breaks knowledge from the active experiencing of subjects and from the dialogic of activity or talk that brings before us a known-in-common object. The knowing of participants is captured in the objectified knowledge mediating ruling. Objectified knowledge, as we engage with it, subdues, discounts, and disqualifies our various interests, perspectives, angles, and experience, and what we might have to say speaking from them. (Smith, 1990, 79–80)

Another feminist voice that discusses Foucault’s work is Lois McNay. She criticizes Foucault of “gender blindness” (McNay, 1992, 47). However, she acknowledges the influence and help that Foucault’s work has had on gender studies especially that of erasing essentialist views on women’s bodies (McNay, 31). On the down side, the idea of the ‘docile body’ has a counter effect in that it “has the effect of pushing women back into this position of passivity and silence” (McNay, 47). McNay criticizes the neglect of viewing the individual as an active agent and not only as body (9). The later writings of Foucault, comprise a counterbalance to the theories of the ‘docile body’; he moves towards an understanding of a ‘self’ (McNay, 4). Here, power can also be judged positively and it broadens notions of a “process

of active self-fashioning” (McNay, 4).

Discourse theory can be a good theory to base studies of fashion and gender on, since the latter are found in fashion texts, magazines, blogs and “organizational strategies of management” (Entwistle, 40). However, the theory fails when it comes to the practice of dress: “while useful in some respects, particularly for textual analysis, is problematic for a study of dress as a situated bodily practice” (Entwistle, 40).

Raising consciousness about discursive practices can be used as an amazing utensil. However, it can also work against a fully committed engagement in the moment. My point here is that discourse is not a satisfactory theoretical concept when the ambition is to create an engagement in a shared situation.

Through the use of performance, I am able to enter the world through the visible and notable, and by adding art, or make-believe, it is possible to expose a situation. I do not use the word reveal, but expose. Revealing implies layers of meaning, while exposure is a metaphor from the photographic process, where sensitive paper is exposed to light and certain images and meanings occur, but as a result of that process can also fade and diminish.

My work has moved away from a discussion of the boundaries that exist between fashion design and contemporary art, and is situated in a wider field, where art, fashion, and the social meet. Since the understanding of the visible in fashion and fine art varies a great deal, the visible becomes even more differentiated when moving into the social sciences. My reading of Smith’s sociological writings is from the standpoint of an artist/designer, and I make use of my understanding of them in a way that suits my own line of exploration. I have been digesting her writings by comparing them with my practice, and early on I felt recognition in how she enters a situation and focuses on life experience.

One of the problems of using Smith’s writings is that we think differently about the visual. Smith believes that as a sociologist today one can not rely on the visual in regard to social inquiries, as was done by ethnographers in early times. She states that it is only possible to rely on the visual in earlier and simpler forms of society, when all transactions carried out were visible (Smith, 1987, 92). In the complexity of society today, the ruling apparatus, relations, and transactions are, indeed, invisible. My opinion differs from Smith in that I do think it is possible to use and play with the visual and that it is also possible to challenge, in some respects, the invisible side of society. I envision performances that are part of the exploration, and that move between the visible and the invisible. Discoveries are made within mandatory discourse and the ambiguity of the visual.

Performances allow for the specificity of starting in a particular place and at a particular time, and involve both the physical and the social. To begin an exploration with a performance, and to use performative activity in the process of exploration, means that one does not begin with abstract concepts or ideas, nor does one make use of a map or a formula. Smith expresses the connection between the social and the bodily mode in the following way: “The abstracted conceptual mode of ruling exists in and depends upon a world known immediately and directly in the bodily mode” (1987, 81). One starts in the conditioned and through the body specific in that situation, a possibility of play is created. The connection that I argue for is the one between appearance, body, and social order. These relations are not simple or elementary, but nonetheless interesting.

The possibility to work and explore on the microscopic level of society is elaborated upon in the work of and the dissertation by Sopowan Boonnimitra. Her dissertation *Lak-ka-pid-lak-ka-perd*, explores contemporary urban conditions and space. She is particularly interested in how space is re-imagined in relation to the presence of homosexuals, in particular Thai homosexuals. Her dissertation also includes artistic work, for example; *Feel it like home* (still images) (2003–2004), *Are you local?* (video art) (2004) and *Lak-ka-pid-lak-ka-perd: the Bangkok Invisible Landscape Project* (art exhibitions, film competition, seminars) (2005).

Boonnimitra’s work rests upon the questions of how the body is in a central position in a system of power and control. Thus, she is bound to mention appearances. She uses the example of Parinya Kiatbutsaba’s body, who is a transvestite or a *katoey* boxer. “For me, Parinya, who became famous for his make-up and hair band, and antics such as kissing his opponent at the end each fight, has raised a lot of questions in terms of the degree to which the body of the individual subject could interrupt the dominant ideology, and blurring the boundaries between public and private space” (Boonnimitra, 2006, 11).

She views the body as the place where power and the process of normalization take place, following Butler and Foucault (Boonnimitra, 2006, 75). Interestingly, she problematizes the Western understanding of body, sex and gender by introducing the philosophy of Theravada Buddhism, which is practiced by most in Thailand. In doing so, she is able to move into interesting eastern concepts such as ‘face’, meaning the appearance that you show in public. According to Boonnimitra, ‘face’ is not connected to the inner self as in the Western idea of a person’s exterior or identity; instead, the idea of ‘face’ depends on time, locations, and relationships with other people. It does not revolve

around a personal centre, but is floating, transformable, and transitory (Boonnimitra, 2006, 88).

Boonnimitra looks at the dominant male heterosexual culture in Thailand, through the habits and rules that concern the body; for example, what the body is allowed to touch or which spaces it is allowed to enter. This is called *Kalatesa* and it is basically dress, manner, and language that ensure a smooth relationship between hierarchies, as well as with space. As a kind of social lubricant, both for better and worse, it helps to make vast amounts of people share small spaces, smoothing over conflicts and inequalities at the same time.

Boonnimitra's own interest in the body and its relation to power had its beginnings in the reading of Foucault (2006, 75). She has adopted Foucault's thinking mechanics in her research and she especially acknowledges his study of discursive practices, but has balanced the discursive with particular Thai philosophical concepts. She finds it necessary to locate her investigation thoroughly in the Thai context and not adopt Western concepts too easily, or running the risk of universalizing, therefore reducing her own reading (Boonnimitra, 2006, 80).

My own readings and use of the concepts of Butler and Foucault are even more hesitant. I have avoided a consistent use of the theoretical works of both Foucault and Butler, not necessarily because I disagree with them, but because I am testing methods which require other types of theories. Feminist art and theory has been helpful in this regard, in this chapter I have especially referred to Smith. I find that these theories have balanced the prevailing dominating discourses and have given me a platform for my own practice and further reflections.

Dress is a "situated bodily practice" that is characterized by both matter and process (Entwistle, 34). Process; the 'social' or 'communicative' body, and material; the 'physical' body and dress are related in such a manner that ambiguities are created. These ambiguities are my interest and challenge. I have come to cherish them, and, through this study, I have come to conceptualize and think of the flow of a continuum and materiality⁵ in a new way. Previously, I have pictured two opposite forces coexisting: process on the one hand and material on the other. As I have seriously entered the dilemmas of my artistic work, I have come to a new conclusion.

We are constantly living in the experience of two processes. The first is the visible physical process; we age and everything around us is constantly changing. The second process goes on in our mind, our imaginative mind, and consists of the creating and re-creating of memories and possible futures, flows of thoughts, feelings and experiences. Therefore, process is movement and

Valuing
Ambiguities

⁵ Here, the word material and materiality are used in the meaning of physical matter and the corporeal.

a constant flow, which is our whole being. "Being is not only "in" time, but is through (by means of, by virtue of) time. In essence, being is time. {Or else: Being is essentially to-be.}" (Castoriadis, 1997b, 3)

We cannot enter and leave a process; it is continuous and this is what gives hope for innovation, change, and a better world. Here, I use the word 'process' in the connotation of everything that changes continuously, rather than a particular art practice as in for example 'process based art'.

Castoriadis uses the term "magma" of social imaginary significations to explain how *new* meaning can emerge in the social-historical domain (Castoriadis, 1997b, 7). Both the historical and the creation of new meanings point to the constant flow of the "magma". The movement is important, not the 'magma' as 'idea', 'subject' or 'thing' (Castoriadis, 1997b, 8). Castoriadis explains: "We have to recognize that the social-historical field is irreducible to the traditional types of being, that we observe here the works, the creation of what I call the *social imaginary*, or the *instituting society* (as opposed to the instituted society)" (1997b, 8) (author's italics). When using the ing-form *instituting*, he points towards a view where the processes of onstream creating and imagining are the force of society. Being or process is a vast chaotic 'sea', where the physical and material of any kind are small islands in a massive force of change. Process is reality, where our physical bodies and material creations are necessary in order to navigate and exist in this constant flow. This does not make physical reality less important or valid; on the contrary, our physical and material creations are the only way to make our way and to orientate ourselves in the stream of constant change. Castoriadis writes that we have no choice other than to be creative and use our imagination to deal with matter, and naturally also forms and formats (1997b, 13). He connects being, time, and creation in a fundamental way. If something is truly determined, meaning it will stay the same for ever, this is the opposite of process; "Time is then sheer repetition, if not of "events", then of the instantaneous of laws. It is a question of life and death, so to speak" (Castoriadis, 1997b, 4). He continues and emphasizes the ambiguity and mystery that we face, and that constantly challenge science: "From an ultimate point of view, the question "What is it, in what we know, that comes from the observer (from us), and what is it that comes from what there is?" is, and will forever remain, undecidable" (Castoriadis, 1997b, 4).

Flow and process cannot be denied nor forgotten, but there are different ways to engage in and through processes. My project has been an exploration into ways of engaging in artistic work that is characterized by process-oriented public art. I have discovered that the dressed body can embody the

mystical relationship between matter and process, based on the assumptions of dress as a marker of the boundary between the individual and society (Entwistle, 37). 'Frames' and 'formats' are not reality; instead, framing is an ongoing process that should be challenged. Frames, programs, and formats can never be one hundred percent accurate in relation to the 'magma' of social imaginary significations; they need a repeated creative alteration. There is a need for on-going evaluations of accuracy and usefulness. I find artistic research to be an important factor in the on-stream evaluations and challenging of programs and formats. Consequently, I find that my practice of artistic research should strive to show, reflect, and study, through its methods and results, the indecisive relationship between process and matter.

Through the process of conducting artistic research I have felt a need to push my artistic practice further than exhibiting in the institutions of art. Therefore, I have introduced ideas on how performance can become part of an exploration. This has led me to the idea of the *performing exploration*, which is not an investigation into the existing, but an exploration aimed at opening up of a particular shared situation. This idea is a 'future research question' and it aims at the exploration of process and matter in public space.

Schechner claims that performance has at least seven functions: to entertain, to make something beautiful, to mark or change identity, to make or foster community, to heal, to teach, to persuade or convince, to deal with the sacred and/or the demonic (2006, 46). In this context, it does not feel too far-fetched to claim that performance could function as an exploration.

My proposal pertains to a process of explorations into the social, where the starting point is a presentation, and the continuation of it is a reflection, a reaction, and unremitting presentations and transformations. Put simply, my process of exploration uses clothing, performance, and the performative in an attempt to reduce the impact of the structural biases of power, without a previously decided goal or manifesto, but through the use of ambiguity and play.

I find this combination of 'performer/explorer into the social world' a possible role for future fashion designer/artists. There are already many examples of different kinds of interdisciplinary intervention projects. Here, however, the focus is on the contribution that fashion design, dress and appearance as artistic mediums can make.

The ideas surrounding the use of performance to initiate and lead a process of exploration came into being during my work with the Transformer Jackets, detailed in the track Screaming. Initial concepts have been solidified after reflecting on the

Performing
Explorations

performances in which the Transformer Jackets were used. For example, by wearing and transforming the jackets, the wearers' relationship to the space and to other people changes, and the experience can both be reflected on and further played with.

The first experience I had that inspired the performing exploration was when I worked with a performance in 2008, at the Gerlesborg School of Fine Art, situated on the west coast of Sweden. I began the workshop with a lecture, in which I incorporated the *Transformers* performance for the students. In the workshop, we used the method of draping each other with basic shapes of textiles. During several brief indoor performances, I invited the students to experiment with clothing as a performative, dialogical, and non-verbal tool. As the discussions progressed, the students came up with the idea of a performance where they would walk along the road, in fact, the same road they walked to school each day, marking it with flags that they had created. Waving hello to the drivers passing by was inspired by the *Transformers* performances, which I had presented to them in the lecture. However, on the whole, the students were the inventors of this event.

The students had acted on a very sensitive situation in that particular area, a situation I was not aware of. I discovered after the performance was over that there was a conflict between the students and the local people living in the area. This was exposed to me as a story directly after the performance, and this story was, naturally, told from the student's point of view. The story and the performance could be a point of departure for an exploration of the public spaces and relations in that specific area; this need not necessarily lead to a resolution of the conflict, but could act as an exploration into the invisible and visible state of relations. After further work, new performances could be carried out, allowing the students to expose stories from other involved parties. As you visualize the act, the invisible, which you touch upon through the visual performing act, emerges as stories, actions, or coincidences.

Performance is, in itself, a paradox between process and matter. Dress and appearance might be one and the same in my performances, the wearer may even be the same, but the concrete time-space sequence and shared situation is never the same. "Even though every "thing" is exactly the same, each event in which the "thing" participates is different. The uniqueness of an event does not depend on its materiality solely but also on its interactivity – and the interactivity is always in flux... Thus, ironically, performances resist that which produces them" (Schechner, 2006, 30).

Using Schechner's terminology, the kinds of performances that I conduct are a mixture of "make-believe" and "make-belief" performances. We acknowledge that anything "make-believe" is not for real, whereas we are supposed to believe in "make-belief" performances when they are 'staged' in front of, for example, the media. The performance of politicians in front of the camera is one example of "make-belief" (Schechner, 2006, 42–43). My performances can sometimes be understood as performance art by people in the streets, but can also, during the same performance, become 'invisible' and claim to 'be real'. A constant consideration I make in the planning of the performances is that the boundaries between performance and performativity should stay blurred and preferably increase in blurriness. This is a strategy to expose the "make-belief" and performativity in everyday life.

In developing a performing exploration, I have been inspired by contemporary fashion and art projects, and by certain theoretical models and practices from the field of sociology. For example, my reading of Smith has caused me to want to make a leap into the social and to create a mixture of fashion, art, and exploration into the social world. How then can one think of a performing exploration in theory? And how can it be used in a shared situation? The leaps between sociology, art, and design are not without complications. Moreover, researchers in sociology are, of course, not united in their views on visibility and social life as performance. For example, Smith criticizes Goffman's aim at the everyday as an object of study, or in Goffman's terms, the aim at the everyday as a frame of study, a way of 'sectioning off' and of 'looking at' (Smith, 1987, 115). Smith is against the methods used by Goffman, and others, which constitute the everyday world as a phenomenon of investigation, and that seals off the everyday world as a discrete phenomenon within the sociological universe. Smith claims that Goffman, in allowing the features and processes of the everyday world to be visible as appearances, organizes a domain of inquiry to be treated as internally coherent and descriptively comprehensive (Smith, 1987, 90). Smith points to the problem of singularly looking at a 'frame' of the everyday world, thus divorcing the everyday world of experiences from the larger, social, and economic relations that constitute its distinctive character (Smith, 1987, 90). Goffman uses theatrical terms such as 'stage', 'regions', and 'settings'. From the film and art world, he uses the term 'frames'. Smith is critical of these terms since they segregate a portion of everyday life, while veiling the 'cutter'. In my use of the performance as an exploration into the everyday world, I see the point in constituting the visible. The visible causes a reaction, which is either a desirable reaction or a repellant one.

The 'making of a scene' is the genesis of a dialogue, since it provides something to react to. In creating a 'scene', I consider it less static than using the terms by Goffman and, since it's a mixture of make-believe and make-belief, results in it becoming dynamic. Created 'scenes' are off-stage performances, which implies that the 'scene' can be transformed during the process. It is important to note that the exploration begins and continues with the scene, but does not end there.

Any given shared situation is delimited by engagement and attention of varying kinds, and therefore their delimitations are porous and shifting (Erickson, [2004] (2008), 147), and based on "mutual engagement in attention" (Erickson, 147). By using the word 'scene', I do not intend it to be read as a 'sealing off tool' or a 'looking at tool', but as a description of the creation of a situation that is porous and can shift through acts of participation.

In performance, you start with a presentation; this is a presentation that provides a platform in the form of a 'figure' and that can allow for play. By experimenting with the time-space sequences of performance processes, new ideas can emerge in regard to how a performing exploration can be executed. The process of a performance can be conceptualized, and this can be useful in experiment and development of performing explorations. In simple terms, the process of a performance could be described as consisting of preparations, the actual performance, and the aftermath (Schechner, 2006, 225). In my case, this would be; the preparations, sketching and the design of garments and performances; the actual performances carried out at a certain time and place; and the aftermath including the editing of images, reflections, and new activities.

The 'cool down phase' that precedes the aftermath are of specific interest. Cool-down relates to warm-up, it is the cool-down phase that brings the participants "back to daily life" (Schechner, 2006, 245). Any performance includes cool down phases; these are the times participants get together afterwards, maybe eat and drink together, and discuss what has just happened (Schechner, 2006, 246). The performance may not even be totally over; you may still be dressed and appear as if you were still doing the performance...which you are! In the case of using dress and appearance as basic utensils for the performances, the actual boundaries of art and everyday life are blurred, and this is precisely the point. Again, this is something that can be elaborated upon in future research projects involving performing explorations.

The afterlife of a performance is the aftermath (Schechner, 2006, 246). A performance has both a short-term impact and

long-term after effects; “leaving traces in the bodies of the performers and participants spectators, in archives, and in traditions” (Schechner, 2006, 225). In my case, the archives include the garments, and this makes it possible to partly reconstruct the performance by actually trying on the clothes. My interest in creating small productions, like the Mirror Brooch, is a way to continue a performative process and use the aftermath in order to trigger new performance experiences.

Memories create stories and storytelling. These stories might become results that can be continuously reworked into the performing explorations. Critical responses are a great way to start processes of new work and to also transform the performance into an exploration. Memories and responses become stories, which become ‘word of mouth’ and, in this way, a performance can live, travel, and be presented to other people who were not present initially.

Aftermath, seen from the perspective of fashion design is interesting. In fashion, the aftermath of a fashion show or performance is both a disappointment and a great opportunity. I have always felt a sense of excitement when working with dress and appearance in the field of fashion because of the implications and meanings they have in the social world. However, it is disappointing when the rules of fashion have prevented or interfered with the explorative process of fashion design. Unfortunately, the process of reflection normally ceases immediately after the presentation of a collection, and the work swiftly moves into the production of a new collection, causing fashion design to be mainly concerned with constant change, unending new styles, and consumption. On the positive side, in the aftermath of the fashion performance, the traditions of fashion design forces limits on the production and consumption. Once distributed, however, the clothing and adornments have the unique possibility to ‘carry’ another potential performance. Even the consumption of clothes can become an aftermath, if the person dressed in the clothes makes a connection to the initial performance, and goes on to use the clothes to create a performance in her or his own everyday life. The more difficult it is to buy the clothes from the show, for economical or distributional reasons, the more it causes the show to become more ‘closed’ and a staged world of its own. The production and distribution of garments can actually be thought of as an aftermath of a fashion show/performance, and can be a very typical kind of aftermath related to fashion design, in that the garment can be used as an ‘archive’ that can be ignited and filled with life again. Naturally, fashion companies use the aftermath of a show, by making the wearer feel fashionable. My point here is that this moment is rarely

reflected on as having the possibility to create contemporary art and fashion, and is only regarded as a selling cue. In regard to performing explorations, the aftermath of fashion shows comes in the form of produced garments and ‘multiples’ and this can extend both the performance and the explorations of contemporary fashion design.

___fi (*fabrics interseason*) can be used as an example of extended performances in everyday life using the aftermath of their fashion shows. Although I may only be able to read about their shows or performance, I can find and also afford their clothes. My experiences of wearing their clothes become part of their work. By wearing their clothes in another environment, I become part of the play and investigation that they are engaged in, adding something new and particular to their work. ___fi label is sometimes called avant-garde or high-end fashion, but they actually engage in a play with contemporary discourses and practices in art, popular culture, music, and the theoretical fields of their interest. They dwell in an experimental field, rather than a field mainly concerned with the economic side of fashion, as their work is neither focused on luxury or mass consumption (Widman, 2006, 35).

Yet democratization has shown us that there are no prevailing ideas and conventions we would consider unchangeable and hence have to submit to. By introducing fashion as propaganda for changeable conventions, restraints, and claims of society, and by questioning the constant maintenance of normality, ___fabrics interseason creates emancipated fashion. Their clothes become accessories to self-empowerment and subvert normality to the extent that one can hit the streets wearing them to demonstrate for a change in preconditions. (Widman, 68)

Dress is a particular medium that makes it possible to move meaning in space and time. The production and distribution of garments which are connected to a performance (the fashion show) is a unique possibility to evolve fashion design into new domains. In my case, the performing explorations present an option in the future to work with fashion design without falling back into the traditions of fashion as a means of consumption.

In my practice of fashion, both the feministic and performance art are included. The art of the seventies, especially feministic art and performance art, has also had an influence on the idea of performing explorations. One example is the group *Kanonklubben (Canon club)* from Denmark, who made “an attempt to incorporate performance and experimental art

practices into the staid academic environment” (Mark ed. 2007, 230). The group wished to work with art that was determined by situations, and, within that frame, allow as many activities as possible to emerge to “create a domicile at the Academy for ideas and debate” (Mark ed. 230). The group *Kanonklubben* acted both in the academic institution they were a part of, while also experimenting with art activity that moved into the social domain and into the community — by way of their experiences making art. They started their activity by gathering a pool of money, with contributions from fourteen people, to buy a Super 8 camera. The name *Kanonklubben* actually comes from the brand of the camera (Mark ed. 138).

Kanonklubben created the first feminist group exhibition in Denmark in 1970; it was called *Damenbilder* (Images of Women) and was built around issues of women being stereotyped, both in images and in life. The exhibition even pre-dated the well-known *Womenhouse* exhibition in Los Angeles in 1972 (Mark ed. 139). The show consisted of photographs, but also included tableaus, which were sometimes carried out into public space. One example of the latter was *The Hooker*, where all the female members of *Kanonklubben* took turns dressing up as prostitutes to spend one hour sitting in a store window at night (Mark ed. 139).

The Wedding Cake was an elaborate project that included turning a whole building into a wedding cake. The three projects *The Tunics*, *The Camp*, and *The Red Party* included the making and wearing of red tunics, and subsequently living together for several days. This three-stage event ended with a party where everyone paid a fee to either purchase or rent a red tunic before entering the party (Mark ed. 230). Everything was documented with their super 8 camera (Bloom, 2007, 138–139).

The group eventually split up by forces from within as well as from the outside. For an exhibition in Oslo, Norway, two men were singled out by the curators and invited to the Young Biennial at Kunstnerernes Hus (The Artists’ House), while the rest of the group was not invited. This resulted in the money that the two artists had received for their expenses being used for buying tickets for the group and some other people to go to Oslo, as the art itself. This is known as *Osloturen* (The Oslo Trip) (Bloom, 140). *Osloturen* became the turning point for the group in that the conflicts between being an artist, activist, or politician proved to be too hard to overcome.

Most of the work by *Kanonklubben* had a clear activist or political aim (Mark ed. 317). Both ___fi and *Kanonklubben* connect social issues to art and design in the process of art-making. Both of these groups also feature dress and adornment as an integral part of their practice. They also focus on working in groups consisting of friends and family. *Kanonklubben* can be

said to have aimed for a completely open structure back in 1968, whereas ___fi works in a small group and collaborates with many different people for their shows and performances.

In the dissertation *Fashion-Able: Activism and Engaged Fashion Design* by Otto von Busch, (2008), he proposes a new role for the fashion designer, that of “the hactivist” (50). The projects that Busch includes in his dissertation are explorations into the new roles of fashion designers and how activism is seemingly a new path in fashion design. This is a very interesting and useful new role, and one that is slowly being integrated into the fashion system. In activist design, discourse and statements are significant design tools. This is made evident through the use of manifestos, design “cookbooks” and other instructions, all of which are utensils that can be used to create this highly participatory design (Busch, 92).

The role of the fashion designer/artist proposed in this dissertation is that of an explorer into the social order and, at the same time, an investigator into the role of the designer/artist as a performer.

Through my projects thus far, I have mainly been claiming body space and investigating the possibility to use ‘propaganda’ against normality. I have added repetitive walking and I am considering adding other activities, either by hooking into activities already carried out in a particular space, or by adding designed activities. In the example of the *Transformers*, I used repetition, but I only repeated the wearing of the Transformer Jackets in new settings. My aim is now to remain in a space for a longer period of time, and when using walking as a method, to do it repeatedly in the same space.

My interest in spaces has also shifted during this process. Previously, I was mainly concerned with cities (the bigger the better) and public spaces such as streets and squares. The Manhattan performance was essential in order to experience this fully. In retrospect, my interests have been geared towards the type of public space that we think of as a representation of public space. Recently, I have noted another space to explore, i.e. the public spaces that surround our living spaces. This is a space traditionally occupied by women, whereas the streets have been traditionally ‘owned’ by men. My attitude concerning public squares and streets has shifted to a position of questioning the ‘public’ of these spaces. These spaces are filled with advertisements and presentations by corporations and institutions, whilst the people in these places are less and less engaged in their physical space, since digital technology has become more and more mobile. In contrast to this, the area surrounding our homes is a transformative space between private

and public living; such spaces raise questions about the common, the private, and ownership.

Public art is usually geared towards a broader popular audience. A new generation of public art has come into being, where interdisciplinary collaborations are more the rule than the exception. Simultaneously, the roles of today's designers and artists are in transition. These roles can be found in a continuum, where the starting-point is in the private field of the artist as an "experiencer", who never hits a larger audience or the media, to continue with the artist as a "reporter", who shows and presents her or his work. Then there is the artist as an "analyst" and presumably parts of artistic research are found here. The most public role of the artist/designer is that of the "activist" who might use public debate and media to make certain messages come across to a larger public (Lacy, 1995, 174–177).

These roles are of course not fixed; most artists move on a daily basis between these different roles. However, by using this schematic arrangement, I find my own work mainly traveling between the artist as an experiencer and the artist as an analyst, including the artist as a reporter to some extent. I am critically reflecting on the relationship between subjective experience and (textual) discourse and, therefore not intentionally focusing on public discourse or public debate per se. Therefore I would not label my work as an artist as 'activist' based on the misapprehensions it could lead to. Instead, I view the explorations in performing exploration as an investigative role of the artist/designer that fits into social development and artistic research. I consider the idea of performing explorations to be one part of the search for new roles and genres for fashion designers and artists that are appropriate to our time. There is great potential in making more use of the role of the fashion designer. In my experience the role of the fashion designer as an explorer into the social has been undervalued in fashion design traditions and its curriculums.

The documentation of the performances in this PhD project, or in any actualizations, is the initial dilemma, as described in the previous three tracks. This dilemma is connected to the expectations of the outcome of a performance, and the expectations of the documentation taking part in the visual economy. In many cases, the destination of the work determines the methods and mediums used for documentation.

I have realized that the dilemma of documentation, together with its participation and circulation in a visual economy, is not only of a technical or even professional character, but more of a personal and philosophical nature and also deeply hidden in my artistic work.

The Limitations and Possibilities of Documentation Methods Used in Relation to Performances

Choosing performance and the performative as an artistic field, or choosing a 'live' situation, not as a material, but as the main medium and focus, brings about this dilemma. The field of performance work, or studies in performance work, cannot be considered an enclosed field. The studies of, and in, performance dissolves or questions boundaries, whether they are the boundaries of one's own field, or private and public boundaries, for example.

But what is performance studies, conceptually speaking? Can performance studies be described? Performance studies is "inter" – in between. It is intergeneric, interdisciplinary, intercultural – and therefore inherently unstable. Performance studies resists or rejects definition. As a discipline, PS cannot be mapped effectively because it transgresses boundaries, it goes where it is not expected to be. It is inherently "in-between" and therefore cannot be pinned down or located exactly. This indecision (if that's what it is) or multidirectionality drives some people crazy. For others, it's the pungent and defining flavor of the meat. (Schechner, 1998, 360)

In performance work such as this, factors such as the unconditioned, the use of coincidences, and the unpredictability within the work process itself are typical. Over all, these factors create the instability that I consider a necessary source for movement, transformation, and excitement in the work process.

In the book *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance*, Peggy Phelan states that the essence of a performance event is its occurrence one time only (Phelan, 1993, 146). This is to point out the impossibility of repeating a performance exactly, or to represent it fully, no matter how it is done or in what medium. "Performance only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, [or] documented" (Phelan, 146). From the experiences of conducting the performance work that has been described in this dissertation, Phelan's comment succinctly describes my immediate feelings about the relationship of performance and actualization to documentation. However, this realization has not helped me to 'solve my dilemma', nor has it stopped me from documenting performances, even if the latter has created a feeling of uneasiness.

Phelan continues by stating that performances are independent of mass reproduction, whether technological, economic, or linguistic. This appears as overconfidence in the characters of the performances. I consider this statement by Phelan to reveal a desire for characters, which is something that is

attractive to many artists working with performance.

In his article *Untranslatable Remnants: the Performance and its Documents* (2009), Josh Schwebel points to another problem connected with performances and actualizations. This is when a performance becomes isolated through its reluctance in being documented and saved for the future, and when this causes us to be incapacitated and unable to communicate with the former events. In a previous chapter of this track, I identified the problems of isolating, or ‘framing’, an event, argued by Dorothy E. Smith. The idea of the untranslatable performance also anticipates an ‘original’, so pure that it cannot be affected by anything, or communicated by anyone. This idea goes against what has been argued earlier about relations and structures.

Every day life and actualizations are certainly different from representation and discourse, but they are not in a dialectical relationship. Any discourse is always part of, and present, in an actualization. By looking at the actualization of a representation, we enter another realm: the realm of memory and loss.

Phelan introduces a very useful idea when she states “Performance’s being, like the ontology of subjectivity proposed here, becomes itself through disappearance” (Phelan, 146). To work with performance as an artistic medium is to work with presence, but never without non-presence or disappearance. The performance does not begin with its presence, moving into its non-presence. From the beginning, as early as in the planning, the performance is about its inevitable disappearance.

Phelan argues, and here I agree completely with her, that any documentation changes the event it is documenting, and that any documentation technology used also changes the event. Phelan proposes that a possible way to represent performance is by “writing toward disappearance” (Phelan, 148). She continues: “the challenge raised by the ontological claims of performance for writing is to re-mark again the performative possibilities of writing itself” (Phelan, 148). My interpretation of ‘writing toward disappearance’ is what I have been exploring and experimenting with throughout the three different projects of this dissertation, and my aim is to continue exploring this. It is a concept most valuable to any process based art, because it opens up new ideas and views concerning artistic results, which is also of importance in artistic research.

Josh Schwebel has used Peggy Phelan’s initial points to enlarge upon the question of possible documentation of a performance. Schwebel focuses on disappearance and the non-presence introduced by Phelan. He also considers not only the ‘loss’ of performance but also a larger variety of experimentation with

documentations. Schwebel is open for new ideas, rather than accepting limiting forms, such as writings, witness testimonies, or any other forms of reproduction, such as photographic or video reproduction.

Instead of considering the performance document to be a totalization or a representation, let us think of documentation under the rubric of translation. This reconfigures the relation of performance to document as one of migration and change, rather than opposition or substitution. Thinking of the document as a translation of the event allows for a distance and movement from the event, but also acknowledges a filiation to the singular original. (Schwebel, 2009, 5)

Schwebel continues to state that proposing documentation as translation is not enough. In doing so, the documentation becomes a question of the memory of an event and the re-telling of it, that is, a prolific act. The process of translation is not only an act of remembering; the connection goes two ways. Dialogically, the translation of an event also helps us to remember, and keeps us connected to the event or performance. We are affected by remembering. Remembering is a complex process and not always without pain, but nonetheless necessary. Translations are both truthful and fictive; the question is not if there are limits to our truthfulness or creativity in translation, but rather when and how a dialogue is created, and when and how the connection with what has disappeared appears.

Barthes proposes that ‘reading’ is a kind of ‘writing’, and the source of pleasure and bliss comes from what is done with the text, not the text itself. “The *brio* of the text (without which, after all, there is no text) is its *will to bliss*: just where it exceeds demand, transcends prattle, and whereby it attempts to overflow, to break through the constraint of adjectives — which are those doors of language through which the ideological and the imaginary come flowing in” (Barthes, 1975, 13–14) (author’s italics).

Any translation is an art of loss, but this art of loss is connected to the art of pleasure and ‘bliss’. Josh Schwebel proposes a documentation that is sensitive to the art of loss and is sensitive to allowing the performance to disappear. He continues: “This would be a document that permits and encourages the withdrawal of the event” (Schwebel, 6). Any encounter with a documentation of a performance also testifies an absence of that event. The disappearance of the event, the performance, is a loss; not only are we losing it, we didn’t even make it, we missed it altogether. The situation created is both one of recognition and a relation with the “Other” (Schwebel, 6), creating a double absence and

therefore a double mourning. In *Walking*, the mourning of the moment is the character that the exhibition finally assumes. The grey drapery surrounding the gallery space, the search for the moment of encounter, the passing gaze, and the obvious distance and otherness that was the result, is reflective of a mourning that cannot be completed. "...and indeed the Other remains infinitely Other to me" (Schwebel, 6).

In an example of a double absence, I cannot enter the documentation and relive it exactly. The documentations tell me that I am absent in the documentation, I am absent in the event, and the event is absent in the present.

Schwebel points to Derrida and the idea of the "Spectre", a 'spectre' that haunts us, a visible invisible that we are in relation to (Schwebel, 6). I have found the idea of a 'spectre' useful but I have not dealt with Derrida's concept. In my interpretation of the 'spectre', the actual activity of being haunted by a spectre, a ghost is what I have found valuable.

The mourning of an event, and the loss and the documentation in the form of a spectre is certainly not dead and without creativity; the spectre scourges me and causes me to react or act. In *Talking*, I discovered a woman staring at me from a photograph I had taken in Venice. I did find her gaze haunting and it inspired me to create an outfit in answer to it. My obsession with her gaze led me to create the performance of *Passing in Venice II*, and eventually this activity and obsession led to the creation of the multiple *Mirror Brooch*. This is an example on how loss and absence does not necessarily have to be a stale situation, but can prove to have great potential.

Schwebel proposes that "the task of the document is to create a site for mourning that loss" (6). The haunting spectre, mourning and grief, is what documentation can, at times, offer. This 'site for mourning that loss' is not, as it might sound, a negative thing, but very useful. Without the possibility to mourn, we are lost in grieving that goes on for ever. Only with the spectre, the ghost of our desired event, of a haunting relation to the past, is moving on possible. The position and movement is the key here; "the document is thus a position beyond the self so that we may be in relation to the event — to encounter the event, to repay its borrowed time, and to let it disappear" (Schwebel, 6). Being haunted by a translation allows for the possibility of transformations. We need the translation in order to establish a relationship and dialogue to what it is that haunts us.

Instability, movement, or transformation, is connected to breaking the boundaries of one's own emotions. The process

of this transformation involves taking emotions seriously, and, thus, entering into 'subjectification'. Through a process of transformation of this kind, is it possible to move into creativity. Acquiring a successful documentation process should allow movement. The process should allow to be touched and to touch and to function as a dialogue in motion. A successful documentation process should feel like entering a process of becoming. Becoming is never complete, it continues and has the possibility to transform into creative processes.

In the field of psychoanalysis, the connection and dialogue that can move through the spectres of the documentations can be seen as a double projection, both as transference and as counter transference. The therapist uses transference in order to provoke the patient to unconsciously project onto the therapist, the patient is also a creator in that s/he creates a counter transference, where the patient manages to evoke response in the therapist and causes her/him to unconsciously project onto the patient. Counter transference is usually considered to be an unwanted occurrence in psychoanalysis, but it is also argued to be a useful tool in the interpretative act by the therapist (Young, 1994, 58). This counter transference as a projective identification, i.e. that which is elicited in the therapist by that which the patient creates. Young calls this projective identification an "evocative knowledge" (Young, 55). He is careful to make a division between didactic knowledge as that which is imparted, and evocative knowledge as that which is elicited and brought forth (Young, 53).

This dissertation is an example of 'evocative' knowledge rather than 'didactic' knowledge. Its claim to knowledge lies in the dialogue which takes place between different translations, and works in a chain reaction, rather than in a completed and conclusive translation or interpretation. I have come to understand both art and knowledge as a projection that goes two ways: a projection that is able to move through time and space with the aid of spectres; and being haunted by spectres is an emotional enterprise that affects the inner and the outer.

To base ontology on the haunted, and the dialogue between both subjects/subjects, subjects/objects, and vice versa, is evocative. Through transference, counter transference, and the unconscious at work in double projections, the dialogue becomes more of a translation than an interpretation, and therefore also becomes a creation. To work as a designer/artist/researcher in this motional and emotional field of actualization is to work with constant loss, and to refine an art where moments of mourning are performed over and over again. The ghost will never truly hold my hand, but as I shape my hand as if I am holding the ghost's hand, I perform,

or experience, a moment of pleasure. Even in a performance of disappearance, I can move again, and the ghost can be mine. An audience of any art must employ their projective capacity and dialogical skill.

Results are important, or in other words, the choices one makes when creating functioning documentation that performs the disappearance, creates a new performative moment, and motion of mourning are important. The process is the motion, and only the process can save us from eternal mourning. In the absence of process, we are caught in a lifeless wake, which gives neither rest nor pleasure. Documentation is a monument in motion, an unstable frozen frame, and art is that which haunts us from the other side.

In my work, I have attempted to carefully wade through the dilemma of documentation by experimenting with different media. I have realized that it is not the type of media used that is of importance, but the dialogue that is created. To use Phelan's words once more: "the challenges raised by the ontological claims of performance for writing is to re-mark again the performative possibilities of writing itself" (Phelan, 148). Upon conceiving of the dissertation as a form of documentation in an artistic process, and a knowledge process, is it possible to actualize the performative energy of the work that is carried through? Is it possible to mediate the performative aspect of the discourses and formats used in order to engage the reader of the dissertation into renewed translations, writings, or actions? My conclusion is that it is possible to work with the writing, images, and the design of the dissertation in a way that will 'haunt' the user of the dissertation.

The discourses and formats used in this work have been guided by the idea of the 'itinerary' and an undetermined open artistic process. This has originated in a diversity of 'voices' that have been carefully staged in the dissertation through consideration of formats and mediums. This staging has also been carried out in the choices of images and in a conscious exaggeration of style when writing, but mainly the staging has been carried out in the process of graphic design that has created a variety of 'entrances' into the material.

Traditions of art and science, and their frames and formats, are different, but by 'performing' different discourses through a diverse collection of voices, the dissertation becomes a collage of performed discourses that are being 'equalized' through the consistent realization of their 'staging'. This has been my way of addressing the dilemma of the dichotomy between science and art.

The 'staging' of the dissertation is done in order to make

A Performed
Extinction of a
Dichotomy

the dissertation part of an ongoing effect of other processes and to make it useful. My hope lies in that it will be haunting and useful to new interpretations and translations. The results of this dissertation, therefore, lie partly in the future, and can not be fully understood prior to its entry into circulation (which in practice is the case even in other kinds of research).

I set out to question formats and preconditioned traditions of presentation in fashion design and fine art, and have landed in a reflection over engagement in public space. Through artistic research, I have come to develop new particular formats that are more useful to my practice; these are given as examples in this dissertation. These examples are not necessarily useful to other designer/artists in themselves as prototypes, but as examples of the processes of status modification that have been developed throughout my practice.

The questioning of formats and frames is important in all fields of action, not only in the fields of art. Stale formats and predetermined frames for both results and processes give rise to ideas of purity and conclusiveness, not only pure art and design, but pure thoughts and pure ways of doing things. Innovation and artistic processes are not only connected with movement, gesture and feeling, but also with ideology.

There are those who want a text (an art, a painting) without a shadow, without the "dominant ideology"; but this is to want a text without fecundity, without productivity, a sterile text (see the myth of the Woman without a Shadow). The text needs its shadow: this shadow is *a bit* of ideology, *a bit* of representation, *a bit* of subject: ghosts, pockets, traces, necessary clouds: subversion must produce its own chiaroscuro. (Barthes, 1975, 32) (author's italics)

If pureness and conclusive results are sought too intensely, the consequence might be an unanimated and less innovative artistic process. A fearless approach to transformation and the impure is not only an aesthetic choice, it is also ethical. If formats and traditions are not questioned and subject to innovation, the pitfall of disengagement arises, resulting in people accepting an institutionalized process of democracy, rather than a living process of democracy. Therefore, the use of animated processes needs to be brought to the forefront, so as to uphold individual and group engagement, which democracy is indebted to for its existence.

Through the shifting of roles, relations and standpoints, performative practices can act as preludes to new patterns

of thought. This is the proposition I make for future work and a reflection that I have made on the performing explorations outlined in this chapter.

This is an investigation into a new role for the fashion designer and contemporary artist, a role that does not accept being the 'glazing on the cake'. Thus, the artistic role in my project is fundamentally different from that of the typical artist and fashion designer; this role could not cope without the competence of both.

The question of identity and the question of boundaries are issues that are in focus in a society characterized by the emphasis on communication. This will undoubtedly cause designers and artists to move into completely new areas, and I believe that these artists will not be willing to accept their practices being institutionalized or historized. These new roles are defined by the trespassing of 'trades', and are inevitably based in interdisciplinary collaborations. This PhD project strives for inclusion in a contemporary field of public art and design. A field in which the way we look at the everyday, at relations, and at society has changed. A field in which attention is guided into new directions, and where art is created in the bodies and senses of the observers and participants.

In the examples of my artistic work, I combine the living form, that is, the dressed body and social space, as my basic mediums. Through these choices, the experience of art can move in the time and space of everyday life and constantly find new forms and spaces for its existence. The conclusions I have drawn from working with, both in practice and in theory, the idea of the dressed body as fine art has produced particular kinds of consequences and knowledge. This process has not produced the answers to the exact relationship between fashion and contemporary art, but has, instead, shifted my art practice and research into ideological and ethical questions concerning where art can be found and how art can be defined. Who owns the right to claim art, both as experience and practice? To claim the dressed body as art is therefore an ideological choice, which moves art to the people and everyday life. This creates a messy, impure, but nevertheless interesting, engaging, and fun art form.

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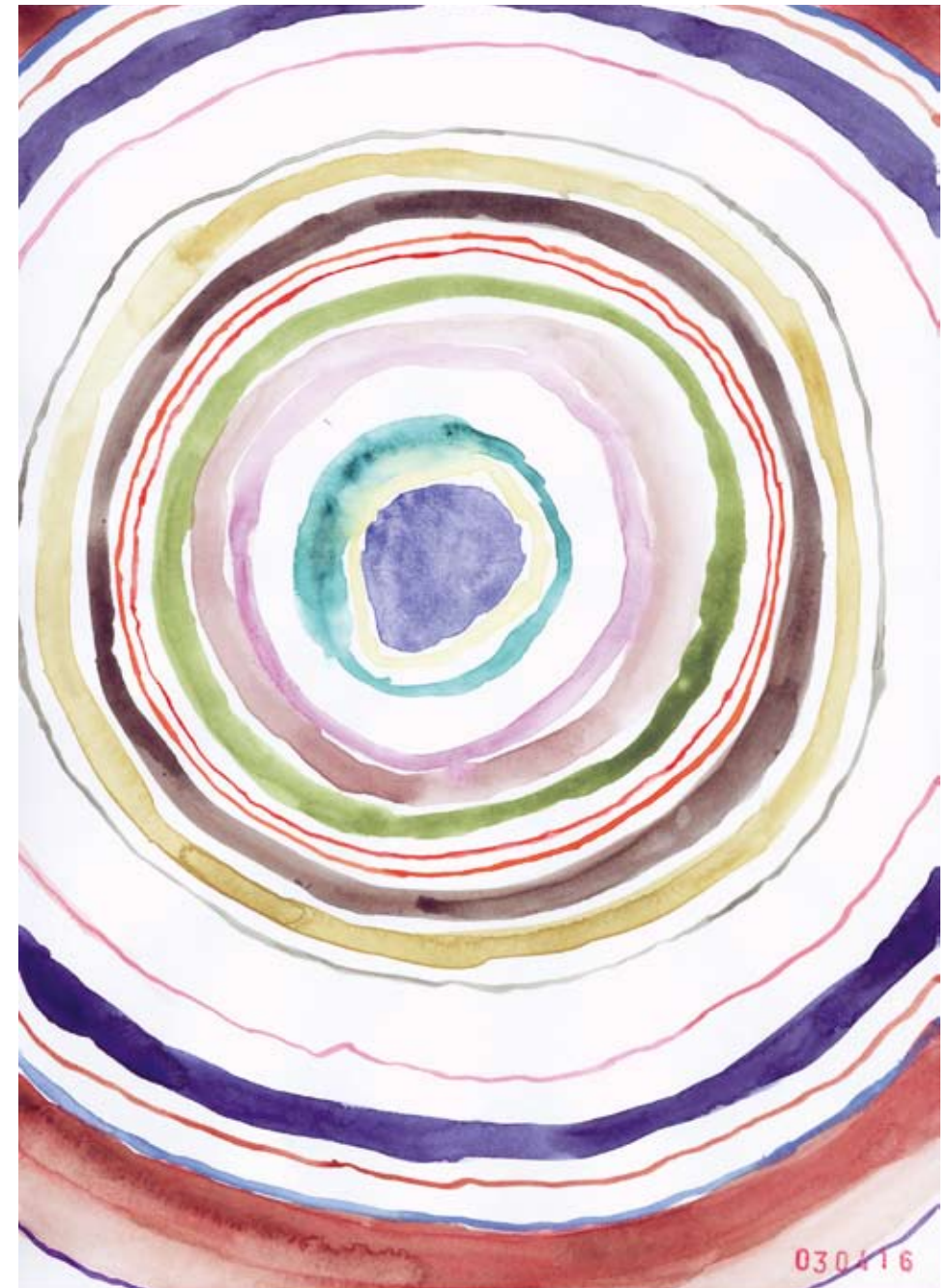
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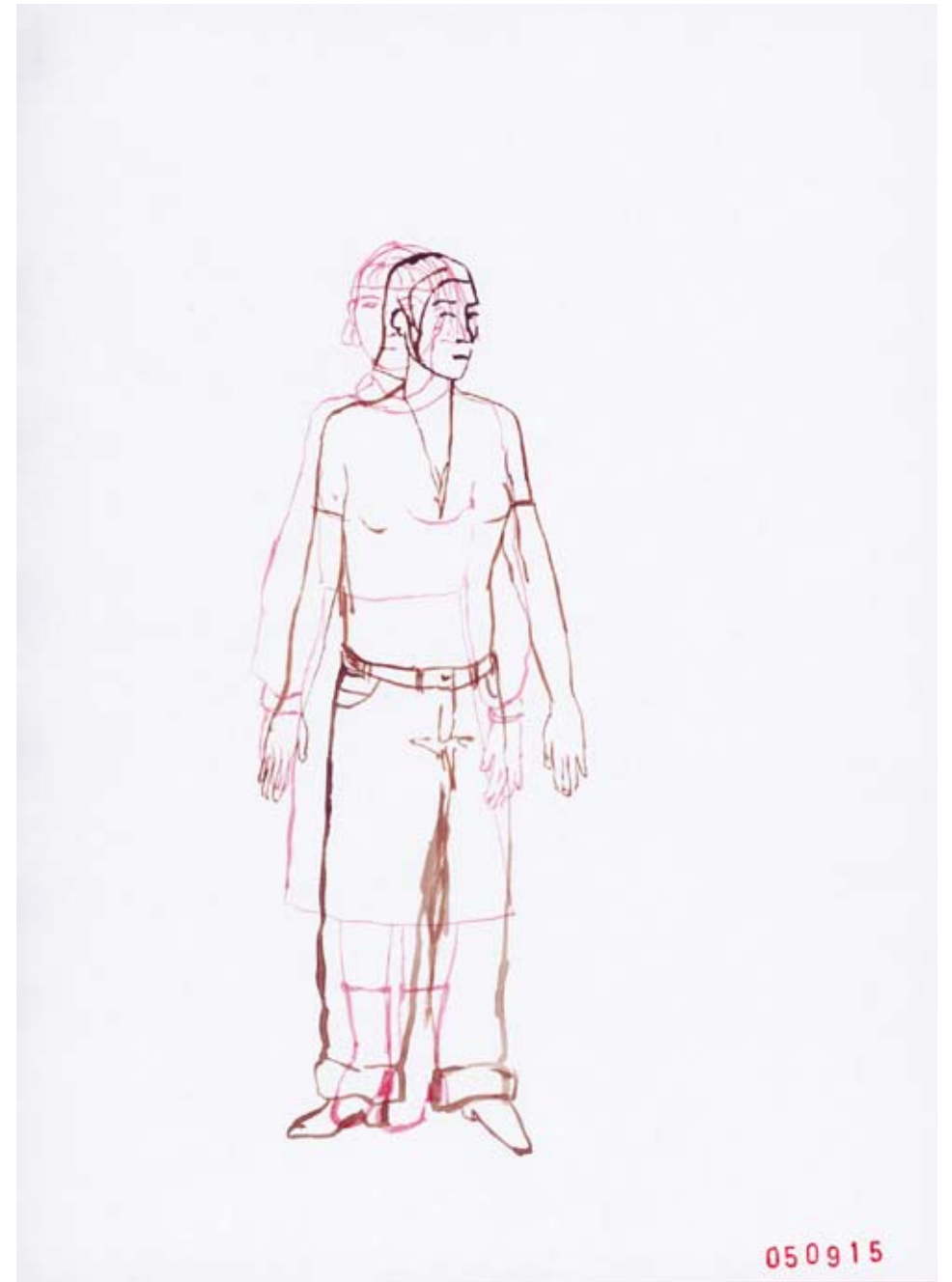
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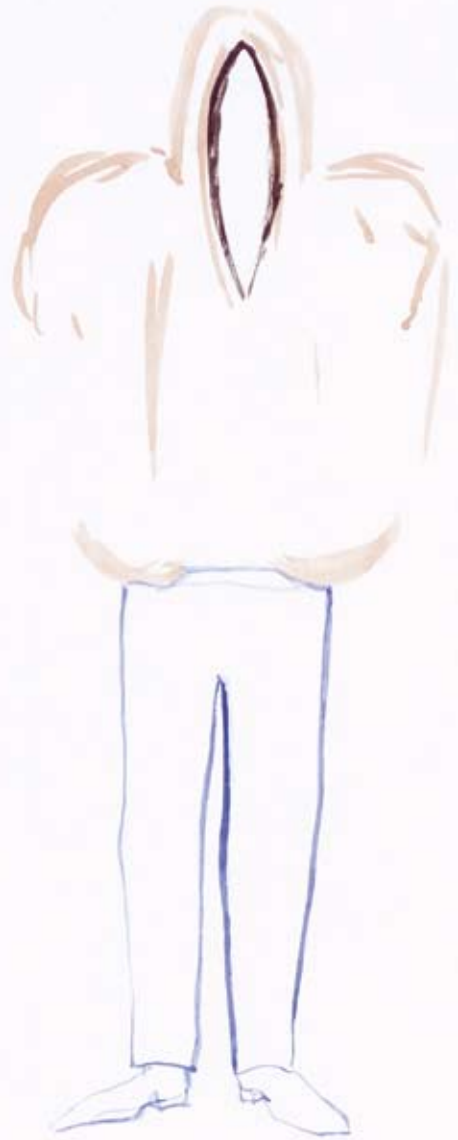




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