

Amelia Bywater

[I.] Salvage

[VI] Doubling

Down the middle

I read of an artwork that was made of the fat (solidified oil) of a whale, distilled into an object and put back into the ocean. I was thinking of the water displaced by this (surrogate) object: it's negligible, but it continued a story, purpose, cycle. The weight, volume, and presence of a dot (congealed), within a huge field of information, taking space, displacing, pushing something else to the side. Forms that influence other forms. Certain and reproducible. Grease and saltwater. An archive of an event and no-longer-present body (displaced) that had been massive and destroyed (reconstituted) for trade, for exchange, and consumption. Reclaiming the fat (body) from one economy and, with new cultural value, 'freeing' it [return for a dead animal] into another. Body rendered into fatty mass, becoming commodity; distinct economies sharing an investment in the assignation of categories. Value and bodies, constantly circulating, in limitless movement.

[II.] Skin / words

the image is split

Language makes tracks (Lyn Hejinian).

...is a sentence that you have written over and over. Repeatedly pinched or pulled into the body. A language that is materially constituted, scratching (excoriating), carving out a course or flow of experience – a relationship bound up in past and future – touched by

that which continually marks us.

Translations onto the skin – in www.womenandperformance.org
Hypatia Vourloumis writes Ten Theses on Touch or Writing Touch, touch as language as gesture as performance of tactility, conflict, sensing, desire – calling (speaking) to the need for touch. Her attending to a haptic language appears as a testing of boundaries, or spaces of bordering; understandings of language or discursive gesture that come from the body, the place where something starts (skin is always so continual) (open or vulnerable), and extending out.

Split, the double back
of the head

Expressing language in its tangibility, its tactile interaction of bodies, is also to say something of the potentiality of intangibility, (not only a full spilling out into touch, but a pull and push, resistance and consent) – describing something not-yet-articulated. Vourloumis writes touch as language, written (performed) as contingent, always in relation to – relating to an other. In her ten theses a sensing body forms the basis for both language and the haptic; touch is both the way to accept, or the way to not-allow, in the fact of touching – not always evidenced in marking – but in both articulation and non-articulation, a disordering of dominant grammar.

we see each half of a
head's back in each
half image.

(puncture it, or punctuate it)

[III] Noise

The self is a site of time absorbing dissonances (Lyn Hejinian)

Each face on the other
side

A site of translation for something auditory
Within the skin or under the skin
Sharpness and flooding or tumbling
Dissonance as no
Already has been
Before that body

I find the second line from Hejinian and she becomes a tracking system through auditory presence. A turn between body and self – self as porous, absorbing, as making a sound so bad it hurts, and other types of loud noise. The sounds come, sometimes as refusal. Hard noise carried both on inhale and on exhale. Refusal, as in already being refused, and used as a position against.

Dissonance in structures already broken or breaking up, distorted too, in conflict, across planes of determination and vulnerability, or in fact as amalgamation of all these. Lyn's body (self) also vocalises silences – she absorbs, into muteness – articulating something of the unspoken, unheard, an articulation of silence acting as amplification.

[IV.] Notes for (common)-(body)

is split, and touching
down the middle,

In a recent email a friend from Japan tells me about Jean Luc Nancy's *Being Singular Plural*. *Being Singular Plural* they translate through Japanese as *Corpus*, the Latin word for body. (It may also refer to: linguistics; literature; music;)

Corpus moves to: commune - body, is simply transferred in English into *community*, but the translator put a hyphen in between and makes (commune)-(body)

In this translation, the body is wired to the common, being purposed for the common, generally accessed, accessible.

(so too of mouths, of speech, of lungs, of breathing)

Commune-body articulates something about boundaries, edges, interiorities and exteriorities. It gives a form of holding together; held together.

read from left to right.

They tried reading the book and found instead what was being articulated through it, was not the meaning of the book, but a witness to a self being encircled by its own isolation, or trying to recognise a common body, a recognisable body, a recognisable mode of 'us'. The strangeness of something that lies and moves without body.

Linking precarity to the body, (the contradictions felt/made/hidden of the body outside, the body kept out, or kicked out, of the sanitised world of capitalism – though always held in relation, relating by a separation – the marginalised bodies, bodies at the margins) it calls on us to make physical or materialise a kind of group-being, the sort of body we look for in modes of resistance and modes of being that might break with what kicks us out.

Without seeing the face

Commune-body is not a complete body, it is perhaps continual and incomplete, multiple, irregular, hostile, no body.

[V] Self-naming

we see the anybodiness
of the back of the head.

Into malleable, refigured skin, oil, relations sliding into economies
reconstituted debt and intimacies, weigh all values, screen is
passion and distance, around nose mouth, occupying both, does
not disappear the other, dismantled forms (bodies), another thing,
reflection (mirror) supposed transparency while maintaining an
inside and an outside

Hypatia Vourloumis

Ten Theses on Touch or Writing Touch

[www.womenandperformance.org/ampersand/ampersand-articles/
ten-theses-on-touch-or-writing-touch-hypatia-vourloumis.html](http://www.womenandperformance.org/ampersand/ampersand-articles/ten-theses-on-touch-or-writing-touch-hypatia-vourloumis.html)

Lyn Hejinian

My Life

Middletown, Conn., Wesleyan University Press, 2013

Thank you to Liam Casey, Gesa Helms, Hirofumi Suda, Rebecca
Wilcox

Commissioned in response to the exhibition Ulay: *so you see me*

Cooper Gallery, DJCAD, 2017