

UC San Diego

UC San Diego Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

Nothing to amplify : : towards a conceptual framework for the performance of the absent body

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/42b9v9hr>

Author

Santos, Vabianna Daria

Publication Date

2013

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Nothing to Amplify: Towards a Conceptual Framework for the Performance of the
Absent Body

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree
Master of Fine Arts

in

Visual Arts

by

Vabianna Daria Santos

Committee in charge:

Professor Ricardo Dominguez, Chair
Professor Patrick Anderson
Professor Norman Bryson
Professor Michael Trigilio

2013

The Thesis of Vabianna Daria Santos is approved and is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

Chair

University of California, San Diego

2013

*Dedicated to my Pop for understanding Symbolic Complicated Activity and raising me
rock n' roll. Trip on this.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Signature Page.....	iii
Dedication.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
List of Figures.....	vi
Abstract.....	vii
Introduction.....	1
The Explicit Body.....	2
The Mediated Body.....	5
On the Threshold of the Absent Body: Douglas Gordon.....	11
The Absent Body.....	15
My Encounters with Absence in Nothing to Amplify: Subtracting the Performer and the Absent Body.....	17
The Artworks of Nothing to Amplify.....	21
Other Avenues for Absence: Enactment of Absence in the Works of David Wojnarowicz, Teresa Margolles and Jorge Macchi.....	32
In Conclusion.....	40
Endnotes.....	41
Bibliography.....	44

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: still from mediated performance: <i>Closed-Circuit Attraction</i> , 2011	22
Figure 2: <i>Closed- Circuit Attraction</i> , 2011 Performance can only be seen on closed-circuit TV	22
Figure 3: <i>You Must Agree to Be With Yourself</i> , 2012 Amplifiers, wood, fabric, amplifier handles, sonic and kinetic elements 60” x 60” x 27”	23
Figure 4: <i>Invisible Friend</i> , 2012 Installation view T-shirt knit textile, toy telephone, sound recording Approx. 12’ x12’	24
Figure 5: <i>Invisible Friend</i> , 2012 Detail view T-shirt knit textile, toy telephone, sound recording	24
Figure 6: <i>27 Club</i> , 2012 Microphones, cable, vibrating kinetics, sound	25

ABSTRACT OF THESIS

Nothing to Amplify: Towards a Conceptual Framework for the Performance of the
Absent Body

by

Vabianna Daria Santos

Master of Fine Arts in Visual Arts

University of California, San Diego, 2013

Professor Ricardo Dominguez, Chair

This text will examine the lineage of performance art and its relationship to the bodies of both the performer and viewer in order to define an alternative to dominant modes of performance art production, which utilize the Explicit Body and the Mediated Body. The essential qualities of the Absent Body are defined in conjunction with a series of sculptural works with sonic and kinetic elements, *Nothing to Amplify*, that comprise the physical element of the thesis in Visual Arts.

INTRODUCTION

It happened at some point that I wanted to subtract myself, to see myself disappear, feel what it's like to be just vapor or perhaps even less. I am aware of my body, aware of my constant performance within and without the images and events of art making. I am someone who found an intrinsic need for an escape route- maybe some way to disorganize myself into a state of pure void or maybe I felt so much in excess that I needed emptiness as system of containment. As an extension of my work as a visual and performance artist I am now asking: what kinds of performances can completely nullify, turning the body into zero? Let this serve as an enunciation of the stakes of this endeavor to continue the lineage of performance by creating the idea of the Absent Body. This text will attempt to provide a conceptual framework through which the performance of the Absent Body can occur by exploring its predecessors in performance theory: The Explicit Body and the Mediated Body. Further investigation will occur through examination of my own projects and their formal and experiential qualities. The cultural terrains and implementation of sound as a texture within my work will be discussed. Finally, other theoretical and practical modes of departure into the Absent Body will be explored. In seeking a foundation for an aesthetic of absence, Bataille's sacrificial erotic body that seeks joy and totality through experiences of negation, void and death will be discussed. Several examples of formal and conceptual means of conveying absence will be culled from artworks created by David Wojnarowicz, Teresa Margolles and Jorge Macchi.

THE EXPLICIT BODY

To start at a state opposite of absence, an intense presence, we look to early feminist performance art and the idea of the Explicit Body. Rebecca Schneider, Bell Hooks and Peggy Phelan all write on the primacy of the physical body within the temporal reality of performance art. The key thought surrounding the Explicit Body is that the performance must be present: even recording and documentation depletes this vitality. The Explicit Body is live flesh- it is the body you can see in front of you as an audience member, it is the voice you can hear speaking from the podium at a protest. The live act, in this sense, is one of claiming the voice and presenting the body in order to “engage an audience in such a way that they are not only participant but, potentially, are transformed in some way”¹ Works that utilize the Explicit Body often engage an “explosive literality” meant to act out the symbolic orders of the body and translate the body as a site of social markings and territorialization. This embodiment is aimed at undermining the commodification of the body- especially those of women and minorities, whose images have been coded into stereotypes and ideals of desire by society.²

Although the Explicit Body is one tactic of exposing our relationship to our bodies, its blatant mimicry of power structures is problematic. Both the audience member and performer are held in place by acting out prescribed roles- the viewer must utilize a static consuming-gaze while the body of the performer fills out the suit of the very stereotype she is against. The imagination is limited to the sphere of the satirical. We can read the code; we know exactly what is being poked fun at and we

begin to have a sense of where we stand in relation to the commodified figure, but at this point we become stuck. Is exposure and awareness of the body's societal stratification enough to evoke change in our relations with it? Both Phelan and Schneider express concern over the difficulty of taking the next step into a truly transformative state. Phelan admits that "part of what performance knows is the impossibility of maintaining the distinction between temporal senses- between an absolutely singular beginning and ending, between living and dying."³ Some anxiety over the ephemeral nature of performance and the inadequacy of documentation and preservation is being expressed here. A possibility opens up for accepting that anytime we are truly aware of something's presence we must also be aware of its impending absence. Still, within the Explicit Body the present NOW is always held primary, leaving little room for the investigation of what happens when a performance enters its after-life through documentation and stories of the event. Schneider introduces the notion of attempting to step into a "multiplicity" or "reciprocity" between object and subject.⁴ She writes of having difficulty experiencing multiplicity because she is always "locating herself" and "watching". She remarks that when you blur the distinction between object and subject you are at risk of a "terrifying experience" in which you may lose your very being to reflexive reflection, shifting between positions of object and subject, everything seen as through a funhouse mirror, with no way to know what is real. Schneider likens this to a type of death from which one must return to the self with new awareness and a feeling of being "one who has-been-other". But her form of returning to the self would seem to indicate singularity- you return as

yourself, one body still contained by a fixed identity but able to call on the awareness of the other to give depth to this stance. The Explicit Body, so heavily reliant on presence and the primacy of proclaiming one's identity, fixes itself into limited roles that the performance artist and audience member must conform to. The job of the performance artist is to expose herself, the job of the viewer is to gaze, as through a proscenium arch (even when one isn't present) and accept what is expressed. Are there ways out of the singularities at work in the Explicit Body into multiplicity? Are there ways to confront the mortality of the event? Can the performing body experience something further?

THE MEDIATED BODY

We inhabit a world in which our bodies are constantly mediated through various forms of technology. A great deal has been written about our contemporary existence within this framework and the artists that confront these interfaces by creating work that uses mediation self-referentially. A brief exploration here will suffice in connecting the Mediated Body with the possibilities it suggests for the Absent Body.

The Explicit Body is concerned with perpetually illuminating its presence. By contrast, the Mediated Body functions by existing in the tension between presence and absence, the live and the mediated, the singular instance and its multiplication. The Mediated Body is flesh in transmission. The body performs for a camera or is otherwise conveyed through technology, often captured for the viewer on a screen or monitor in the gallery as a digital residue of action and voice. By thus situating the body in the realm of virtuality, the performer creates a double world for the viewer to perceive and confront potentiality and liminality. The performing body is divided, multiplied and differentiated through being captured on video and the space of the screen.⁵ The viewer experiences a performance of questionable presence as systems such as closed-circuit video create both a here-now and an elsewhere. The viewer of work involving mediation is asked to consider where the “real” body lies- is it present? Is it elsewhere and absent? Or does it exist as part of the transmission between these two spaces? The technological framework for the event is exposed, self-

referential and readily examined in mediated work. The social framework and routing of the body at work in mediation is on display as much as the performance artist is.

The mediated body is often exclusionary- creating a virtual image of the physical body also produces its absence. The telephone is a simple example of a way that we commonly experience this dual nature inherent in mediation. When we speak to the person on the end of the line we feel that they are present while at the same time we know we are reaching them at some distance, our bodies, in fact, absent to one another. The telephone presents the:

continued formation of communication at a distance... electronic communication continues to be largely dyadic and highly personalized. Second, the foundation of telephone communication in orality and conversation gives particular properties to the information that it conveys and produces that is often reproduced in content for other media, where the effect of the original communication persists.⁶

Furthermore, the telephone and all media are markers of simultaneous presence and absence in a different sense. Forms of media are perpetually becoming outmoded as contemporary communication is advanced and molded by available technology. What once was the most immediate form of conveyance falls out of popular use. The analogue telephone, the letter, and the cassette tape are all examples of residual technology- still available, but functioning as ties to the past. The Mediated Body then, is a sphere in which dual awareness of presence and absence can also become embodiment of simultaneous life and death.

Photography is a related media terrain worth exploring in connection to the performance of the Mediated Body. Since its invention, photography has been used to

capture the image of the human body, to record and organize the social and physical body. When looking at art we are familiar with this system of containment. Most of our knowledge of performance art comes from the traces and documentation of events registered as a photograph and accompanied by a story. Photography has the ability to create a “life after death” sending the image out in place of the live event or experiencing the work first-hand. Our experiences with performance art are often an encounter with the Mediated Body even if this is not the central drive of the work. When we are witness to the residue of an event we encounter the absence of what “has been”, its former moment of “presence”, and the present moment all at once. When the camera is set to capture the image of the living it also has the ability to create a moment of death.

In *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, Roland Barthes expresses his views on the essential qualities of the photograph calling its paradoxical containment of life/ death or presence/ absence a “modest, shared hallucination (on the one hand “it is not there,” on the other “it has indeed been”): a mad image, chafed by reality.”⁷ For Barthes, the photograph presents a moment that the viewer knows has passed. In freezing the image of life, photography effectively creates death- we are always aware that what we are viewing “has been”. This is particularly true when viewing the photographed body, which indicates the passing of time, mortality and temporality. Photography is a technology that attempts to make the impermanent appear permanent. Someone or something has posed in front the lens and then remained forever- like being alive and dead at once. The foundation of Barthes’ argument is that

photographs bear an indexical relationship to their subject: what is pictured is always accepted as factually existing but the image always outlives the moment or event, making us all the more aware of its passing. Mortality is just a shutter release away. This reading of the indexical quality functions such that the “ photograph is always invisible: it is not what we see.”⁸

In some ways, Barthes’ argument is inconsistent with how photography interacts with the Mediated Body. The contemporaneous experiences of the past and present, elsewhere and here, presence and absence, life and death have been illustrated as an essential concern to the Mediated Body. What is open to doubt is Barthes’ framing of the photographic medium as an invisible containment of the body. To him, photography is the media we are not to see. Instead, we are supposed to float, in a suspension of disbelief, into the center of the image or its narrative, never seeing the edge of the print or the processes by which it was captured and printed. Within the first pages of *Camera Lucida* Barthes admits to never having worked with the medium of photography himself.⁹ He seeks the “essential” while those who have worked with a camera as a means of artistic production know its aptitude for distorting the truth. To the Mediated Body, the camera and the subsequent photograph are not invisible. The camera distorts by what the photographer chooses to include or exclude from the frame of view, it deceives by use of angle and exposure- to name just a few of the elements at work. The Mediated Body knows that the camera portrays its own gaze, becomes a party to what was witnessed. The Mediated Body knows that the photographic mediums, like video, sometimes have the power to betray the illusion of

the invisible witness and draw our eyes to edge of the frame, to the systems of display and the mechanisms of communication and control. To the Mediated Body the stance of the author of the image and the limitations of the medium itself are a playground for examining the self, the gaze of the viewer, and mediation all at once.

Encounters with the Mediated Body typically occur on a more elaborate scale than the intimate interaction that takes place when viewing a photograph. In video installation the Mediated Body exceeds the image and encounters space and time. Spatializing video work allows the viewer to take in, “ the multiple and sometimes contradictory durational impulses at work in the presentations of moving images to moving body in space.”¹⁰ By spreading out to inhabit space through installation, The Mediated Body welcomes exchange with the viewer’s body. Again, a tension between absence and presence is brought to the fore. The Mediated body is constituted in space only temporarily, “ The process of installing suggests a temporary occupation of space, a bracketed existence enclosed by a matching process of breaking down the composition into its elements again and vacating the site.”¹¹ Video installation suggests the temporality of the event- at this point the Mediated Body belongs not only to the artist but to the viewer, whose engagement with the work is physical; they must walk across the gallery space, investigate the arrangement of the work and see themselves in dialogue with projection screens that often tower in relation to their own frames. A kinesthetic and audiovisual exchange takes place that activates the viewer’s body as a site of reception. Margaret Morse emphasizes, “ The artist vacates the scene in installation per se. This allows the visitors rather than the artist to perform the piece.

Indeed, she or he is in the piece as its experimental subject, not by identification but in *body*.”¹²

ON THE THRESHOLD OF THE ABSENT BODY: DOUGLAS GORDON

The potentialities of becoming the Absent Body begin in the Mediated Body. This is especially apparent as the viewer begins to encounter, through their body, “conceptual propositions and imaginary worlds of memory and anticipation.”¹³ Not at arms-length, as with suspension of disbelief and the photographic image, but *through* the body and *within* the skin. Douglas Gordon builds potential shifts in perspective into his work. Gordon has worked with video, projection and installation, mediated performance, photography, sound and text. He is concerned with themes of memory, repetition, perception and death, using approaches to filmic appropriation and the self to explore representation and authorship within popular culture and performance. Gordon’s work is often performative- using the realm of the implied and imagined to complicate the performance act into something that acts upon the world by tying itself to the viewer’s experience. He has described the construction of meaning in his work:

I like to construct self-destructive systems, or mechanisms, which can only lead towards a multiplicity of meanings, a series of contradictory interpretations. I like a conspiracy of circumstances that can help construct meaning for a work, or that can turn against it in any moment.
14

What transmits this “self- destructive system” in the work? Gordon’s work is filled with propositions for the viewer to participate in creating the meaning of the work by linking their perception of image or text to their own memories or future actions.

Gordon is concerned with creating “future memories”¹⁵. The ultimate meaning of the work of art is over-written with the viewer’s personal experience and often an accompanying awareness of their bodies. Where appropriation of pop culture is present, this procedure extends itself to add a layer of meaning to the individual’s future experiences with a particular cultural text- usually a well-known film.

Some specific examples of Gordon’s work that contain performative elements show how the Mediated Body can move towards becoming the Absent Body by transferring some of the ownership over the construction of meaning onto the viewer. This is not to say that the meaning of the work is “open to interpretation” but that an infiltration of the imagination and life of the viewer is taking place. We begin to see that the Absent Body is insidious. In *24-Hour Psycho*, (1993), a different kind of dichotomous presence/ absence is created by warping our perception of time. Gordon slows the original 1960 Hitchcock film down to a 24-hour experience. In doing so he creates both impossibilities and new possibilities. It is a nearly impossible proposition to watch the entire 24-hour film. Were one to attempt to watch any significant portion of the piece an acute awareness of one’s own body rhythms would arise. On the level of perception, the delayed unfolding of the film, “situates the visitors in the present (what is going on now?) and the future (what is going to happen?) simultaneously.”¹⁶ Causing the viewer to put together what they see in front of their eyes with what they recall about the film.

Perhaps even more intriguing is the work’s ability to extend beyond the walls of the gallery and follow the viewer home. Gordon has stated his interest in causing

the viewer to recall the work as they go about the rest of their day- maybe picturing what is going on in the gallery as they sit with friends in a bar.¹⁷ In this way a different sort of presence/ absence is created than what is usually seen within the Mediated Body. Viewers start to project themselves into the space of the artwork and the artwork starts to imprint itself on future experiences. Several other works by Douglas Gordon function in much the same way. In *Letter*, (1993) text reads: *From the Moment You Read These Words, Until You Meet Someone with Blue Eyes*, effectively coloring the viewer's future experiences. At very least, it highlights an act of remembering and forgetting that will occur after seeing the work. *30 Seconds Text*, (1996) asks the viewer to relate what they are imagining to the perception that occurs as part of a mind-body link. The work is encountered in a space with a single bare light bulb swinging over wall text. The light bulb is timed to stay illuminated in 30 second intervals, during which time the viewer has the opportunity to read about an experiment conducted to test the length of perception or cognition available to a freshly severed head. The text explains that after 25 to 30 seconds it's lights out for the decapitated human. Then the viewer is left in a state of darkness, often surrounded by the bodies of other gallery visitors, the perceptive apparatus of Douglas Gordon's work having infiltrated, like a parasite, to hitch a ride home in the viewer's kinesthetic and mental memories. It waits for future opportunities to enact itself and create "future memories".

By the time one experiences a “future memory” all that is left of the work is its absence. The performance artist has exited, body and all. You, the viewer and your experiences have become fused with the intent of the work.

THE ABSENT BODY

Performance of the Absent Body has the potential to disorganize the roles of the viewer and the artist into an amalgam that is constantly in flux. Extending the Mediated Body to its outer limits of perception has shown some of the potentials of the Absent Body. The Absent Body is subtracted flesh- the performer's body has exited the work but the potential performance event remains. The Absent Body is a storyteller. It suggests the body through governing the viewer's interaction with the work. It elevates the status of sculptural objects and arenas of installation to allow the work itself to perform. This occurs through the slightest of performances and the "vaguest of sensations"¹⁸. By exiting the scene, the Absent Body causes the viewer to be imaginative and permeable to physical sensation, forming the work in an act of waiting and reciprocity with objects that seem to "act back". None of this occurs on the level of touch-and-feel recognition that is usually apparent in "interactive" works of art. The Absent Body sticks to smoke and mirrors.

The Absent Body is, in this examination of the lineage of performance, an extension of my own studio practice. The perspectives used in explanation of this concept will come, in part, through personal experience. My works created for *Nothing to Amplify* utilize spatial, temporal and, most importantly, sonic elements throughout. Other courses for achieving an aesthetic of absence are also possible, as can be seen in several examples of work by David Wojnarowicz, Teresa Margolles and Jorge Macchi. What is foremost to The Absent Body is its ability to exist within oscillating intensities- drifting back and forth between sensuality and nothingness

allows the work to unfold and implicate the viewer. The characteristics of the Absent Body allow it to be insidious. The Absent Body wants to find a way in.

***MY ENCOUNTERS WITH ABSENCE IN NOTHING TO AMPLIFY:
SUBTRACTING THE PERFORMER AND THE SONIC BODY***

An early note in my sketchbook reads:

I wanted to see myself rupture
The body in rupture or subtraction
My body as a site for the rupture, the subtraction
A site for disappearance

The works created in the series *Nothing to Amplify* attempt to subtract the body of the performer and to subsequently conjure for the viewer the event without the body, leaving the potential performance of emptiness to remain. Several procedures are at work in creating the absent performance. First, the status of objects is raised so that they themselves may “perform”. Of particular interest are objects that are the transmitters of residual voice- telephones, amplifiers, microphones - all these have an electrical-surge pulse of their own. In the work they are not props for the performing body but allies and equals, ultimately taking the place of the performer who, in most cases, is never to appear. The Absent Body acknowledges that both the body and objects are conduits for action and impulse. Sound and performativity inhabit the sculptural objects and arenas suggesting activity and interface. Each installed sculpture has a sonic element that gives it temporality, theatricality, and a voice. It performs for us in its own distant, mechanized way.

An aesthetic of absence is imbued with several other important qualities. Of primary importance is the work’s relationship to the body of the viewer. In an attempt to address the intangibility of the voice as it passes from “performer” to “viewer”, a

displacement occurs. The viewer's body is subject to shifts in perception and sensation. Since there is no traditional "performer" the responsibility of the active, responsive body shifts to the viewer. Through austerity and event, close attention is demanded from the viewer of the work. Seduced by raw and sensual elements within the sculptures, an oscillation of intensities occurs allowing the work to unfold rather than shock. Built on a foundation of acknowledging the most vital excesses of the body: eroticism and the awareness of death, the work moves between seductive elements and blank, emptied or mundane forms. The rhythms, tempos and forces of the objects on display and those of the body of the viewer are allowed to collide and transfer. Durational-sound within situational objects reach out to the temporal nature of the viewer allowing them to recognize attention span, mortality and awareness. To see the pulse of the object is at it's most profound to see one's own temporality.

A letter to a friend reads:

Joy is born of looking death in the face. To experience totality/wholeness you have to lose yourself, die, sacrifice- our desires allow us to become nothing. That sick to your stomach feeling around a crush tells you its true. How are your sacrificial endeavors going? I need to sort out this real-life declaration of desire business. Flirting really is the key to life, isn't it? Sacrificial flirting.¹⁹

In a play on the idea of "the object of desire" the specific objects and references utilized within the work originate from the sphere of rock n' roll fandom. These are the objects of amateur emulation- the catalysts of rock n' roll daydreams, teenage beloved "gear". A small practice amp, lo-fi microphones and a toy telephone with a guitar ring are not equipment for a sold-out stadium concert. These items are

the diminutive, personal equipment of a bedroom sing-along. *Nothing to Amplify* is concerned with bringing subcultural textures “back to the bedroom”. This is opposed to the limelight of irony and defiling the monumentality of rockstars and cultural icons so often employed in work about popular culture. Instead, a personal language of desire is offered. The objects are indicative of the private performances of the individual and their connection to their most highly valued objects. This is the place where the mundane and the magical mix – another scenario where objects and bodies are allies in performance, where the rhythms of the object and the body fluctuate to meet each other.

I wanted to see these objects of mediation both subverted and elevated in the process of creating the phantasmagoric performer. The gear without our hands upon it is still there; as a conduit of communication it still emits a call to action. When thinking of musical equipment, a much fetishized and sentimental field of objects, the body of the performer can be imagined as in allegiance with the instruments- not merely their master. The performer is not simply a user of props but someone in network with the things that surround them. A fan playing with his favorite gear is like a witch and their tools. As in occult practice, elements, forces, congruencies and correlations are drawn together in an effort to amplify, alter and manipulate energy. The body may stand at the center of this endeavor- but it is not primary, it is merely another conduit or channel through which forces may flow along with the other items, actions, arrangements and spaces involved. You can picture the body as becoming permeable or transparent through affect. Recognizing this is the first step in the

enactment of a disappearance- a negotiation of subtraction between flesh and objects that allows the performer's body to disappear. In *Nothing to Amplify*, what is left behind are sculptural scenarios each producing their own specific sense of performance that calls upon the viewer to themselves become porous in an act of receptivity.

Sound is a crucially insidious aspect of the pieces in this series. The noises involved in *Nothing to Amplify*, in most cases, have been stripped down from their rock n' roll origins. They are elemental sounds: white noise, the screech of feedback, a rasp of breath, echoes around ringing and distortion, and the cumulative clattering of vibrations. Sound has the special capability along with other atmospheric conditions (like vapor) to enter the body on an almost involuntary level as if by absorption. Sound is also durational, providing a link to our own bodies' rhythms. Think of a live show, the speakers blaring. The sound moves right through you- bass drums blasting through the amp stacks at just the right volume and rhythm to make your heart pound along. It's just the right tempo to slam into your gut. Just the right vibrations and tones to slide in along the seams of your jeans and make your crotch literally vibrate. By pairing the visual/ physical with the sonic, the work is capable of creating shifts in perception of one's own internal phases and those of the objects external to it, effectively linking the viewer's body to the artwork.

THE ARTWORKS OF *NOTHING TO AMPLIFY*

Closed-Circuit Attraction (2011) uses mediation to stand on the threshold of the Absent Body. I discovered a small fender amplifier waiting for me at a junk shop. It is diminutive and personalized- someone has taken the pains to replace the speaker mesh with pink satin, making it the picture of rock n' roll adolescence. It is designed for an audience of one- it's really made just so you can hear yourself practice. I bought the amp thinking to put my voice through it- to amplify myself in the slightest of ways. I built a contact microphone that rests on my tongue, connecting me to the amp by a guitar cable. I lick the amp in its entirety finding moments of friction and feedback. The amp produces it's own voice in this exchange- screeching and ringing with feedback of various tones as I move close to the speaker or contact the metal fasteners and knobs. It's an act of attraction accompanied with the worse possible sound. Excessive squeals of feedback celebrate the object. I connect with the amp as a reflection of myself. We are in a closed circuit with one another. I wanted to flirt with the medium and make-out with rock n' roll. The desire to consume is the desire to be consumed.



Figure 1: Still from mediated performance:
Closed-Circuit Attraction, 2011



Figure 2: *Closed-Circuit Attraction*, 2012
Performance can only be seen on closed-circuit TV.



Figure 3: *You Must Agree to Be With Yourself*, 2012
Amplifiers, wood, fabric, amplifier handles, sonic and kinetic elements
60" x 60" x 27"



Figure 4: *Invisible Friend*, 2012 (installation view)
T-shirt knit textile, toy telephone, sound recording
Approx. 12' x 12'



Figure 5: *Invisible Friend*, 2012 (detail view)
T-shirt knit textile, toy telephone, sound recording



Figure 6: *27 Club*, 2012
Microphones, cable, vibrating kinetics, sound

The performance can only be viewed on a television set that receives the encounter via closed-circuit camera. The viewer has the experience of witnessing an intimate exchange at a remove. The shot on the screen is tight- shutting out most of my body in favor of my head, which is roughly the size of the amplifier. This framing makes equals of us. These are the first steps in removing the body of the performer from the work. Ultimately, a level of intimacy is created through exclusion. The viewer must construct the fantasy of the work, imagining what isn't shown on camera and deliberating over whether a live occurrence is taking place. The Mediated Body's mixture of absence and presence is utilized, but as the object is allowed to "react" in performance, elevating its status to ally rather than prop, the Absent Body begins to form.

I repeated the words to myself: EXCESS leads to ABSENCE and ABSENCE leads to EXCESS. I remember staring down some phantasmagoric guitar cable, concentrating on the metal jacks, sliding down the shrink-wrapped black to the other end. Both ends were unplugged- there was a potential for transmission here- for the sending of an electronic voice- but the apparatus just floated, disengaged, seeking a way to disorganize itself, nothing to amplify. To sacrifice oneself to the medium and become absent, the performer disappears.

You Must Agree to Be With Yourself, (2012) is a sculptural iteration of the relationship presented in *Closed-Circuit Attraction*. The body of the performer is further erased, evolving The Mediated Body into The Absent Body. The sculptural installation presents the pink-faced amplifier hooked into a replica of itself, whose

treble knob is forever turning back and forth modulating the sound of white noise. The two small amps sit atop a short, faceted platform on the floor, surrounded by bed pillows. The box has been made with extreme care and wears amplifier handles on four sides. The pillows, covered in velvet, are similarly adorned with amplifier handles. The excess materiality of the additional elements has been stripped down to the essential; the smooth wood of the platform and the white cloth of the pillows are austere. Concurrently, there is still a place for sensuality within the contours of the work- surfaces are delicate or refined and convey an idiosyncratic personalization through out. The extreme care taken in presenting the amplifiers celebrates them and elevates their status.

The body in *You Must Agree to Be With Yourself* is only suggested. The work “performs” in two ways. The objects and their arrangement are fashioned to imply the interaction of bodies, and a kinetic/sound element draws attention to the amplifier’s “live performance”. There are places offered for bodies that will never come (the pillows). Handles create the suggestion of specific interactions. The object acquires its own temporality and theatricality as it sits on display, creating in the minds of the viewer the Absent Body.

As with other pieces in *Nothing to Amplify*, the element at the heart of *You Must Agree to Be With Yourself* is sound. The amps are linked to each other through a short cable and are on at full volume. The amp on the right appears to pick up the dead signal of the amp on the left, which sits silently. The white noise that is transmitted is actually the 60-cycle hum of the space the piece is installed in- essentially what you

get when there is nothing to amplify. The treble knob on the “speaking” amp moves slowly back and forth on its own, like a player piano, modulating the fuzz into a rhythmic hiss, a mechanical sigh, a breath for the technology. A relationship between this pulsating static and the beats of the human body is formed. The movement of the knob is slight, requiring the attunement of the viewer to detect it. Though no personification occurs, the amplifiers appear to enact a simple exchange that ratifies the nature of our own temporal bodies- there is something amorous about their joining which at the same time resembles the hiss and click of a life-support machine.

A reminder from a friend about doom: “There is no escape from the universe.”

Invisible Friend (Doom’s Tritone), (2011) is a sculptural installation that expands the tactics of the Absent Body. It employs the themes of residual technology and transmission of voice with a nod to the history of distortion in music. The piece exists as a tangent and companion for *You Must Agree to Be With Yourself*. Using a schizoid logic of multiples and mirroring, the amplifiers in the former piece are here echoed by an inept toy telephone. The telephone sits beneath a circular shroud of grey t-shirt knit, the fabric stitched with lines of gathering. The circumference of cloth creates an arena for the performing work. The circle is large and delicate enough that the viewer cannot reach the phone, which perpetually rings. The fabric is homely enough that the viewer feels welcomed to linger-casting eyes down its cozy folds. The disembodied ringing slowly transitions into a contemporary, heavily distorted guitar playing the “devil’s tritone”. This tritone is a combination of tones that is disquieting,

commonly associated with doom in rock music and heavy metal. I wanted to hear the sounds slip into one another in a hallucinatory fashion- seeing, in a ruptured logic, that a telephone's ring and the tritone must have something in common. In doom's logic, death is an ever-present absence.

Shifts in perception occur when experiencing *Invisible Friend*. As with several of the works in *Nothing to Amplify* the movement of sound waves is given a formal counterpart. The circular cloth is stitched along triangular sections- the folds give a visual manifestation to the sound emanating from the phone at the center. As the viewer hears the shift between recognizable phone rings and the creeping, immense distortion of the guitar, their perception and affective response to the visual elements changes. The sculptural object acquires a sense of floating, shivering or collapsing to some viewers. Physical responses and sensations have again been displaced onto the viewer, rendering the presence of the traditional performer unnecessary to create work in relation to the body.

27 Club, (2012) presents an array of microphones motorized to convulse- they are hung in an ordered arrangement just grazing the floor. The sculpture is titled for the "Forever 27 Club" the name given to categorize the deaths of famous rock musicians who died, primarily of self-destructive means, at age 27. Using similar tactics as *Invisible Friend* and *You Must Agree to Be With Yourself*, the work is created in alliance with the viewer's body and allows the objects themselves to perform. It cuts across the display space- at one end the microphones pointed towards the earth, at the other a line of gold-tone audio plugs- forever disconnected. The power

source is hidden within a section of cable, like the top a noose, leaving the microphones to appear deceptively self-animated.

Hey, do you know how much I want you to be empty?

The Absent Body demands the attention of the viewer. The balance between oscillating intensities within the work is insidious- finding a way into the viewer's body, allowing the traditional performer to disappear. Physical and experiential tendencies in the work force the viewer to be attentive and receptive. Materially, it is important to pair austere and essentialized forms and textures with those items that reference popular culture and subculture. This causes the viewer to be seduced by familiarity in the face of a leaking element of doom. At the same time they are starved by the simplicity of the forms. The viewer has the strictest physical relationships to the pieces due to their arrangement, scale, configurations and presence- true interactivity can only occur upon the stage within the mind. The viewers are conditioned into a state of extreme sensitivity by the apparent stringency of the work. They are receptive, lingering on the details and emissions of the object as they wait for something (the body of the performer) that may never appear. The work demands the viewer to be porous. This allows the transmission of affect, causing the Absent Body to come into being. The performing body is sublimated into the hair standing on end on your arms or the mirage of potential- playing like a fantasy behind your eyes, but having a counterpart in real physical phenomenon and bodily reception. The Absent Body is like so much smoke or even less. The Absent Body is only the slightest of hauntings.

***OTHER AVENUES FOR ABSENCE-
ENACTMENT OF ABSENCE IN THE WORKS OF DAVID WOJNAROWICZ,
TERESA MARGOLLES AND JORGE MACCHI***

So far, several essential tendencies in performing the Absent Body have been described. Though largely defined through the development of my own aesthetic, these qualities can also be seen in the work of other artists who approach the ideas of absence, death, the body, and the void. This section will focus on one specific work from each artist: The Chaco Canyon Portraits of David Wojnarowicz, *Vaporizacion* by Teresa Margolles and *Monoblock* by Jorge Macchi. Each piece presents a different set of concerns inherent to the individual artist's body of work but also stands in relation to some of the key attributes of an "aesthetic of the Absent Body". These include: an insidiousness on both physical and perceptive levels, the displacement of the role of performer onto the viewer's body through sensation, the use of mundane, blank or emptied out forms in oscillation with excess: emotionality, vulnerability and the recognition of death and eroticism, storytelling without a literal narrative, and the central importance of allowing perception to complete the work by enmeshing the viewer's awareness and affect with the objects and situations on display.

What does each type of becoming look like, feel like?
The body contracting
The body imploding
The body transmitting
The body un-hooking
The body vanishing
Each state of becoming moving from oneself
To all
To nothing

Perhaps the most striking difference between the three artworks I will examine here and my own works from *Nothing to Amplify* is their ability to link excess to absence directly. In each case, awareness of death is the central theme. Margolles has a long history of using the corpse itself as a material to allegorical effect. Macchi's work is created from a cut obituary and Wojnarowicz uses his own body as site to enact disappearance- creating self-portraits while dying of AIDS. Georges Bataille explores the reciprocity between excess and absence, life's joys and urges and an acceptance of death. His theories may serve to illuminate how artworks that convey absence can be built upon a seemingly contradictory foundation of excess.

Bataille writes that the ultimate "object of desire" is totality and unification with the universe. In order to achieve this, we must sacrifice ourselves to nothingness and to the void, becoming through desire, both whole and empty. This relates to the broader concept of eroticism's ties to death and repulsion. Death, and all its fecund substances indicate possibility for depth, wholeness and renewal. It is death's "fetid and lukewarm substances where life ferments ignobly."²⁰ We look through death to see that life expects to come once more from it. Similarly, The Absent Body is concerned with acts of emptying out that allow transformation to occur. Acts of excess may seem in opposition to the Absent Body- however, what is of particular interest are the sacrificial states described in *Desire Horrified at Losing and Losing Oneself* and *The Object of Desire and the Totality of the Real*.²¹ The depletion and renewal of energies that Bataille describes start with an act of excess but are ultimately aimed at ruination, closeness to death and the void through self-sacrifice. It is through this

proximity to the void and absence that we may experience “totality of being”. This might be rephrased as experiencing the continuity of life and death as it moves through our own temporal bodies.

Death is a performative event

Bataille posits that this “closeness to death” is most likely to be played out by the anguished heroes of literature. By extension, this sacrificial self can be embodied within the realm of performativity and performance art. The final works of David Wojnarowicz allow life to be seen *through* death. David Wojnarowicz was a painter and member of the Cinema of Transgression scene.²¹ His final photographic works, in which he performs, display an unhooking of perceptual mechanisms.²² By a procedure of reversal this unhooking allows life to be seen through death. This “infected vision” is a product of the artist’s experience of becoming HIV+. The performativity of the death event connects to both Barthes’ ideas from *Camera Lucida* and Bataille’s discussion of sacrifice and the totality of the real. By viewing experience through impending death, presence is disrupted. “Infected vision” opens up time, ruptures it, so that life-time and death-time may be felt simultaneously. Photography is the logical embodiment of this procedure. Its images are mourning surfaces where two moments can be seen at once: the moment captured (already gone) and the implied present moment, which is itself, already passing. Here, photographs conspire with the Absent Body to suggest that objects are present while simultaneously confirming their absence. In the case of certain photographs, “What is

no longer there performs upon us and we perform it. It bereaves us and we bereave it.”

23

Wojnarowicz’s photographs are self-portraits shot at Chaco Canyon (taken May 1991). They explore emptiness, the boundaries between self and void, and the containment of both self and the other (embodied by death) within one vessel. In the images we see the artist’s face emerging from dirt or possibly submerging. Either way, it is clear that it is preparing to greet and meld with nothingness. The skin here is the penetrable boundary between the self and void. In contemplating his own death, Wojnarowicz wishes to step into its place and become death himself. Wojnarowicz performs the Absent Body by recognizing the nature of death through his experience with AIDS. For him, the performance of sensuality and touch become encounters with the death of the body, which is always already occurring. We see an excavation taking place, layers of sand blowing away, layers of the self inverting to “position oneself for death.”²⁴ He reaches out to stroke death, and in so doing, becomes absorbed into its forces, performing the Absent Body.

Similarly, Teresa Margolles has built her life’s work around encounters with death. Her piece, *Vaporizacion* (*Vaporization*, 2002) allows the Absent Body to perform for itself, making a departure from her earlier work as performer with Mexico City collective SEMFO (named for the federal district’s central morgue where she works), which began as a death-metal group.²⁵ Often using corpses as an allegorical medium, Margolles’ work is characterized by a certain level of shock-value. Working with the bodies of the dead allows her work to confront the taboo of death and convey

stories of social inequity and create political awareness. Many of the bodies she uses are victims of poverty and violence the eventual outcome of which (death) is typically shielded from western eyes. While her earlier works involving shock tactics revel in excess producing a heavy presence of death via corpses, live performances and self-portraiture, her more recent works, like *Vaporizacion*, employ the Absent Body-relying on an insidious displacement of the performer's role in conjunction with confrontational themes and tactics.

Upon entering the installation *Vaporizacion* the viewer is submersed in an atmosphere heavy with fog. The space is otherwise empty. The vapor in the space is produced by water previously used to wash the body of corpses. In this work, the Absent Body allows an oscillation between shock and emptiness, between form and formlessness, between excess and absence. Two important procedures of the aesthetic of absence are utilized in this enactment of disappearance: the juxtaposition of neo-minimal, emptied-out forms with disquieting subject matter and the displacement of the roles of the performer's body onto the viewer. The vapor is both conceptually and physically insidious, finding a way into the viewer's perception and physical body. Pascal Beausse writes that, "The atmospheric dimension of the fog doesn't permit any distance: insinuating itself everywhere, its droplets settling on the skin and the clothes of the viewer, the vaporized water establishes a direct contact with the bodies of the dead and short-circuits our intellectual understanding of the work by soliciting both a

sensitive and cognitive approach... Each of Margolles' atmospheric installations creates an ambient space, a space of participation, of dialogue with the absent 'other'."

²⁶ It is within this space that an important transfer occurs- by this point in her oeuvre Margolles has erased herself from the work, instead allowing the viewer's body to take on the role of performer. As if she herself could become so much air, in *Vaporizacion*, "... Margolles as mediator has vanished to be replaced by her work's publics."²⁷

Jorge Macchi's work *Monoblock* (1999) also contemplates death, but utilizes different techniques of the aesthetic of absence to do so. The two-dimensional work is comprised of several layers of newspaper obituary pages overlapped. A mundane enough material to begin with, all of the text boxes on the pages have been sliced out into neat windows leaving geometric spaces of overlap- almost like the windows of a tall building. Above each absence the mark of the cross or a Star of David remains. Macchi's work hinges on an interest in the marginal, accidental and over-looked. He often works with everyday objects; through gesture he is able to defamiliarize these mundane textures making them hard to classify and reflective of philosophical complexity. Macchi's work, although primarily composed of static objects, implies the events of everyday- elevating the status of the mundane and unexceptional through the act of noticing. Picture him thumbing through the newspaper, all the events described already over with. He writes, "I cannot explain why I address my attention to that which invariably is left to one side: police blotter news, the poetically pretentious phrases that illustrate horror scenes, words taken out of context, love messages lost in

newspapers, advertising copy, obituaries, the names that appear after “the end” in movies, texts that nobody reads.”²⁸

The Absent Body relates to Macchi’s use of the mundane as a site of complexity and his work’s ability to slow the viewer’s perceptive experience, allowing the work to unfold. *Monoblock*, among other works, also acknowledges that objects are allies of the body, partners in our daily lives. As shown in examples from *Nothing to Amplify* and Margolles’ *Vaporizacion*, the blank, emptied-out or mundane form can be a powerful tool for allowing the work to be accessible to the viewer and as a conveyance of hidden complexity. Encountering Macchi’s work, “creates a disconcerting sense of low- grade but powerful uncertainty hidden somewhere within or behind an object that initially announces itself as something formally pure or innocuous.”²⁹ His making-strange of the everyday carries with it the power of the work to bring viewers awareness of their own perception, “ It is almost as though the split-second between perception and understanding has been slowed down and filled with content.”³⁰ Although not asking the viewer to be involved physically, this process bears a resemblance to the transfer of the role of performer associated with the Absent Body. The viewers are asked to give much of themselves to experience the work.

Despite their occasional reliance on excess as a theme, these works by Teresa Margolles, David Wojnarowicz and Jorge Macchi point to an aesthetic of absence that is shared by my own works from *Nothing to Amplify*. Each artist finds themselves a

storyteller in creating these works- albeit one whose narratives are ruptured, willfully creating a complexity of awareness that allows perception to stretch out and change in the viewer. Macchi and Margolles' forms find their vigor in being stripped down, emptied out, to a state of either banality or blankness. This austerity has the power to attune the viewer to slight details and sensations. Each work asks the viewer to perform: Wojnarowicz asks us to perform "infected vision", Macchi asks us to inject the work's "stubborn silence" with emotionality³¹, and Margolles activates the viewer's physical body to replace the presence of her own, and those of the dead. It is through these methods that the Absent Body may come into being.

IN CONCLUSION

My eyes my mouth
All my ways in are escape routes

Think of the Absent Body arranged in space ready for performance. Each sculpture emitting it's own suggestions and electrical wheezing. The body of the viewer distributed and called to attention by the work. Insidious exchanges are occurring between bodies- some of them human, some of them animate but unalive. Each sensitivity, each intensity, electrifies the space between bodies. The 60 cycle-hum in the wall offers a voice to *Nothing to Amplify*, its own unadorned sense of mortality, sculptures with a life-span, a temporal experience wakes us to the always already passing of the here-and-now. The performer's body is absent but its potentials are conjured in the flesh and the minds of those who come to experience it. They are standing on a threshold of exchange and transformation, forming the Absent Body between themselves and the objects. They are allies in becoming. The performer has dissolved, she is ruptured, disorganized- she's found and escape route. But her voice lingers.

¹ Hooks, Bell- Hooks explores how the power of performance lies in the immediate presence of the performer/ orator as a form of organized resistance. The performer in this case engages directly with the audience.

² Schneider, Rebecca: The Explicit Body in Performance. Paraphrased from main concept of article.

³ Phelan, Peggy: The Ends of Performance. (Introduction) Special attention is paid to the essential temporality of performance art.

⁴ Schneider briefly mentions Simone De Beauvoir's idea of reciprocity between subject and object.

⁵ Kaye, Nick, paraphrased

⁶ Collette Snowden, pg. 117

⁷ Barthes, Roland, pg. 115

⁸ Barthes, Roland, pg. 6

⁹ Barthes, Roland, pg. 9: " One of these practices was barred to me and I was not to investigate it: I am not a photographer... too impatient for that..."

¹⁰ Mondoloch, Kate. From chapter: Installing Time: Spatialized Time and Exploratory Duration

¹¹ Morse, Margaret, pg. 157

¹² Morse, Margaret, pg. 158. Italics are mine

¹³ Morse, Margaret, pg. 162: " The recorded video art installation can be compared to the spectator wandering about on a stage, in a bodily experience of conceptual propositions and imaginary worlds of memory and anticipation." By extension, I am using this quote in relation to what is experienced within the mind of the viewer, having "recorded" what they have experienced in their own memories, carrying forward within their own bodies outside of the gallery experience.

¹⁴ Douglas Gordon, pg. 69. Quoted from Douglas Gordon, "... in conversation: jan debbaut and douglas gordon," in *Douglas Gordon: Kidnapping* (Eindhoven: Netherlands: Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum, 1998), 23

¹⁵ Much has been written about Douglas Gordon's work's relationship with time. This mirrors the past/ present dichotomy of media work. I am focusing, instead in the potential of the imagined to allow the performer to render themselves invisible. This is suggested by Gordon's work containing a proposition for the viewer.

¹⁶ Mondoloch, Kate. pg. 43

¹⁷ Mondoloch, Kate, pgs. 44-45: “Gordon shared his thoughts about 24 Hour Psycho’s ideal spectator with his brother, David, who recalls the conversation thusly: “He [Douglas Gordon] went on to imagine that this ‘someone’ might suddenly remember what they had seen earlier that day, later that night; perhaps at around 10 o’clock, ordering drinks in a crowded bar with friends, or somewhere else in the city, perhaps late at night, just as ‘someone’ is undressing to go to bed, they may turn their head to the pillow and start to think about what they had seen that day. He said he thought it would be interesting for that ‘someone’ to imagine what was happening in the gallery right then, at the moment in time when they have no access to the work.” Quoted from: David Gordon, “... by way of a statement on the artist’s behalf”, in *Douglas Gordon: Kidnapping* (New York: D.A.P. / Distributed Art Publishers, 1998), 83

¹⁸ Bataille, Georges, pg. 119

Bataille writes of experiencing the totality of the real through excess. This, however, has ties to absence as at the moment of “embracing totality” (his example is orgasm) the sensations and awareness felt become complex and include “the vaguest of sensations”, that “reveal nothing clear and distinct”. Through excess the void is encountered. In another writing on the Object of Desire he writes, “It seems to me that the totality of what is (the universe) swallows me (physically), and if it swallows me, or since it swallows me, I can’t distinguish myself from it; nothing remains, except this or that, which are less meaningful than this nothing. In a sense it is unbearable and I seem to be dying. It is at this cost, no doubt, that I am no longer myself, but an infinity in which I am lost...” (<http://www.generation-online.org/p/fpbataille2.htm>) He depicts this as a false experience within the excess- still it is intriguing to consider the complex associations and “nothingness” encountered by entering the void through excess.

¹⁹ In response to reading Bataille’s *Accursed Share*

²⁰ Bataille, Georges, pg. 81

²¹ *Accursed Share*, Vol II: Part 4: Transgression, Section Three and Four

²² For further reading on the Cinema of Transgression and interviews with Wojnarowicz see: Sargent, Jack. ed. *Deathtripping: The Cinema of Transgression*. 1999, Creation Publication Group

²³ Mavor, Carol, introduction: Mavor’s text examines, in specific, Victorian photographs and the performance of sexuality within them

²⁴ Sember, Robert. Ideas of “infected vision” and “positioning oneself in relation to death” paraphrased.

²⁵ Carroll, Amy Sara, pg. 104

²⁶ Beausse, Pascal, pg. 109

²⁷ Carroll, Amy Sara, pg. 115

²⁸ Macchi, Jorge. Artist's statement text for the exhibition 12 Views.

²⁹ Barreiro, Gabriel Perez

³⁰ Barreiro, Gabriel Perez

³¹ Barreiro, Gabriel Perez, "In an early work like Escalon, the simple act of presenting a single step removed from the staircase shifts our reading of the object to suddenly see an irregular and bizarre coffin, while still remaining a stair that leads nowhere, a step into the void. This kind of conjunction of meanings around a single object is typical of Macchi's search for multiple layers of resonance... For this resonance to occur, the object must maintain a basic quality of *stubborn silence*, by which I mean that its intentions cannot be declared too explicitly at the risk of the work becoming didactic or illustrative."

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Barreiro, Gabriel Perez. "The Anatomy of Melancholy", Catalogue of the Monographic Exhibition at Santander Cultural. 2007, Mercosul Biennale, Porto Alegre, Brazil

Barthes, Roland. Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography. 1981 McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., Toronto

Bataille, Georges. The Accursed Share: An Essay on General Economy. Vol II *The History of Eroticism* 1991, Zone Books, New York

Beausse, Pascal. "Teresa Margolles Primordial Substances". *Flash Art* 38 J1/S. 2005, The H.W. Wilson Company

Carroll, Amy Sara. "Muerto Sin Fin". *TDR: The Drama Review*. 54:2 (T206), 2010, New York University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Ferguson, Russell, ed. Douglas Gordon. 2001, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles

Hooks, Bell. "Performance as a Site of Opposition". Let's Get It On: The Politics of Black Performance. 1995, Bay Press, Seattle, WA

Kaye, Nick. Multi-media: Video-Installation-Performance. 2007, Routledge

Macchi, Jorge. Artist's Text. Catalogue of the Exhibition 12 Views. 2001, The Drawing Center, New York

Mavor, Carol. Pleasures Taken: Performances of Sexuality and Loss in Victorian Photographs. 1995, Duke University Press, London

Mondoloch, Kate. Screens: Viewing Media Installation Art. 2010, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, MN

Morse, Margaret. Virtualities: Television, Media Art, and Cyberculture. 1998, Indiana University Press, Indianapolis

Phelan, Peggy, ed. Introduction, The Ends of Performance. 1998, New York University Press, New York

Schneider, Rebecca. Introduction, Epilogue The Explicit Body in Performance. 1997, Routledge, New York

Sember, Robert. "Seeing Death: The Photography of David Wojnarowicz." The Ends of Performance. ed. Peggy Phelan. 1998, 3: 31-51. New York University Press, New York

Snowden, Collette. "Reporting by Phone." Residual Media. Charles R. Acland. 2007, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, MN