

# MATERIALIZING PALIMPSEST

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Interrogation into *palimpsestuousness* as a queer  
enactment in artistic research

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Thesis submitted to Birmingham City University in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

August 2018

"I certify that this work has not been accepted in any form for an academic degree other than that of Doctorate of Philosophy being studied at Birmingham School of Art, Arts Design Media Faculty, Birmingham City University.

I also declare that this work is the result of my own investigation, except where otherwise identified by footnote and bibliographic reference. I further declare that have not plagiarised another's work."

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jakub Beglar". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small flourish at the end.

Dated: 9<sup>th</sup> August 2018

## Supporting Document

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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This research is a result of an encounter between radical thinkers makers and researchers in Birmingham School of Art, led by always fabulous and fierce Henry Rogers and Prof. Johnny Golding.

I would like to thank them for always championing queer theory and for embedding in me need to always question and subvert the cannons and status quo of academic practices and research.

I would also like to send my gratitude to Anastasia Starikova; her friendship and support enabled me to recognise the worth of myself and this work.

## FORM OF SUBMISSION

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This thesis asks its readers to rethink the processes of causality and linearity, as those which allow one to make and form a discursive argument. As such, each presented document forms its own body of research specifically designed to subvert and transgress the normative cause - effect narration of traditional discourse. This is not to say that these documents do not intertwine and interact with each other. Instead they, together with my *Heterotopias* films, *Home* exhibition and 3D printed *Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.2.0)*<sup>1</sup> create a way of thinking about relationships of art practice and associated theory, without superimposing one over the other and setting up understanding, which makes one seem more valid, or more impactful.

The decision to disband chapter-based traditional thesis emerged as a form of embodiment of palimpsestuousness, a non-hierarchal, critical, *wearable* experience of spatiotemporality. This form of palimpsestuousness, as I argue throughout this submission, emerged from the problematizing of queer theory through the sexual and erotic art practice. As it will become clear (although ‘muddled’ seems to be a better description of where this submission is heading), queer theory not only deals with the problems of contemporary identity politics, but also allows us to challenge artistic methodologies by questioning the way we understand temporality, spatiality and materialism.

Throughout my research I created a series of intertwined written documents, artworks, films and experiments, each focusing on one aspect of the concept of palimpsestuousness. It is because of the development of this concept as a form of model

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<sup>1</sup> *Heterotopias* films and file, which allows for reader to 3D print the *Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.2.0)* are submitted in attached USB stick. Photographs of artworks in this thesis are taken from the documentation of the exhibition *Home* that took place in International Project Space in Birmingham in December 2017.

for artistic research that I was able to deal with the way we can reimagine a relational logic by renegotiating the intimacy and sensuality as that which forms a 'cluster-like' inhabitable spatiotemporality.

Through the separation of the documents submitted here I explore concepts of time, space, matter and queerness, and it is because of the form of this submission I was able to queer the concept of causality and with it create a non-hierarchical critical space where one can continuously engage with the argument of how we make connections between multiple, trans-field and interdisciplinary approaches.

## ABSTRACT

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Contemporary theories and art practices that embrace the metaphor of a palimpsest find their grounding in the layered form that this concept speaks of. As such, they represent matter and meaning as a collection and assemblage of individually formed structures that can create a work of art via a constant move of superimposition. This practice-led research argues for a way of creating a palimpsest as a form of spatial and temporal (dimensional) enactment.

This discussion is developed and embodied throughout drawing parallels between the formalisation of the palimpsest, as presented by Sarah Dillon in *The Palimpsest: Literature, Criticism, Theory* (2007), in which she develops a strategy for rethinking history, subjectivity, temporality, textuality and sexuality, and an analysis of conceptual bodies established in the philosophical works of Michel Foucault. I aim to adapt Dillon's argument to develop a *model of palimpsestuousness*, an original and wearable synthesis of matter and meaning, that allows for the creating and understanding of palimpsestuousness as something beyond a layered structure. This process aims to show that through a focus on the intensity of intimacy that emerges from multiple encounters, notions of *ars erotica*, *subjugated knowledges*, *parrhesia* and *heterotopia* become embodied forms of queer art practice, which can challenge and expand on contemporary methodologies in fine art practice-led research.

The aims are specifically explored in my performance, video and photographic practices and at the same time they influenced form and materiality of this thesis submission itself by deregulating, and with it challenging, the notions of presupposed causality and linearity when creating and sustaining discursive, critical argument. The series *Fatima* focuses on the performative understanding of palimpsestuousness as a

non-layered dimensionality. Through the series of short films entitled *Heterotopias I* develop a vital multi-voiceness that speaks of its domestic-like quality. By referencing the body of work of artistic duo Lovett/Codagnone and literary texts of Jean Genet, I demonstrate the necessity of including sexual and erotic art in experimenting with plural and non-layered methods of producing matter and meaning that refuse hierarchy.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

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In what ways, might palimpsestuousness be seen as a conceptual and material model that enables one to expand on discourses created in the entanglement of art practice, queer theory and continental philosophy?

In developing an art practice through sexual and erotic praxis, to what extent and in what ways might we imagine the heterotopian dimension?

How might an investigation of the concepts of *ars erotica*, *subjugated knowledges* and *parrhesia* allow for the development of multidimensional, performative and queer art practices that inform methodological approaches in artistic research?

## CRITICAL STATEMENT

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The historical and contextual inquiry into usage of the palimpsest as metaphor to describe a form of layered materiality, continuously deconstructs and folds back on itself, expanding on its own previous meaning. One task of this project is to re-evaluate the notion/conceptualisation of the palimpsest - both in terms of its materiality, as a re-used piece of parchment; as a concept, a system of constant superimposition, and to establish its relationship to the realisation of a non-hierarchical, intimate, sexual and erotic experience of the spatial and temporal. As such, it embodies a challenge to the field of queer theory focused on socio-political notions of identity politics through a call for the continuous movement of queer as a queer materiality, a queering of existing queer logic that spills out beyond those things that have been traditionally associated with this term. It is through this spillage that one can produce a body of knowledge that informs and expands on the possibilities of queering as a methodology of constantly emerging excess, in fine art practice research.

As already discussed above, this submission is separated into five and/or seven documents, each aiming at furthering the notion of palimpsestuousness as a queer enactment on artistic research, by interlocking fields of study: the palimpsest as investigated by Sarah Dillon amongst others; sexual and erotic art practices; aspects of 20<sup>th</sup> century continental philosophy of Michel Foucault and Giles Deleuze; and the contemporary post-humanist queer and feminist theory of Donna Haraway and Karen Barad. It is precisely through the alignment of these fields of knowledge that I argue a way to develop and deploy yet another (different) understanding of the palimpsest. This 'new' palimpsest becomes an embodiment and synthesis of matter and meaning - a non-hierarchical density of dimension of art-research-practice. Giles Deleuze in his book *The*

*Logic of Sense* refers to a similar methodology of producing matter and meaning, which is not distinguishable from one another as the *operation* (the doing) of *sense*.<sup>2</sup> This form of “doing” speaks of a methodological approach, through which research requires not only a multiplicity of practices but also a constant emerging and continuously re-emerging forms of meanings and materialities. It is through this submission: a written non-linear argument, an exhibition of artworks, a model of methodology and a film series, I will demonstrate the necessity of ‘always-in-transformation’ methods that create a queer enactment on practice of artistic research.

The palimpsests and palimpsestuousness as developed through this research, allows me to problematize the materiality of layers in relation to the hierarchal systems of epistemologies. Sarah Dillon’s investigation into this field formalises the need to develop a material form of entanglement through inclusion of sexual and erotic art practices. Dillon in her book *The Palimpsest – Literature, Criticism, Theory* writes:

[Palimpsests] embody and provoke interdisciplinary encounter, both literary (...) and figuratively. The palimpsest cannot be the province of any one discipline, since it admits all those terrains that write upon it to its body; nor, indeed, does the palimpsest have a province of its own, since it is anything other than that which offers itself at first sight, the literal meaning of province.<sup>3</sup>

Through her writing one develops an understanding, which places any investigation into and with the palimpsest in the necessity of its own conceptual and material re-invention. The palimpsest as a concept is never fully owned and never fully describable. It is by its own default a matter of a queer object, constantly bothering and opening discourses. By recognising the palimpsest as *province*, Dillon suggests that the intimate relation between the layered texts (palimpsestuousness) has a sense of an off-centre

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<sup>2</sup> Gilles Deleuze et al., *The Logic of Sense*, ed. Constantin V. Boundas (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), p. 166.

<sup>3</sup> Sarah Dillon, *The Palimpsest: Literature, Criticism, Theory* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2007), 2.

(queer) spatiality. Following her conceptualization of palimpsestuousness as a type of critical space that allows for interdisciplinary knowledges to emerge, I will argue that palimpsestuousness can also be seen as a way of approaching mode of *confession* as discussed by Michel Foucault in his *History of Sexuality Vol.1: The Will to Knowledge*. Whilst discussing the 19<sup>th</sup> century arrival of psychoanalytical discourse and how practice of *confession* influenced the way we understand how meaning gets established, Foucault calls for a 'living-in' approach to making knowledge/art, that focuses on a non-confessional negotiation of the concept of truth-telling (*parrhesia*) and on the socio-political emergence of *subjugated knowledges* as those that were deemed as 'insufficient' and 'inferior' to the then growing scientific discourses. Through the *ars erotica*, a practice of sexual and erotic art, one can challenge the palimpsestic, layered structure and give shape and form to palimpsestuousness.

Through negotiation of the methodology of *ars erotica* and performance-based art practice, I will problematize the palimpsestuousness as that which does not create or inhabit a traditional position regarding layering (hiding or revealing), but rather as that which becomes a form of performative spatiotemporality that allows for thinking-in-making to become the structure of ongoing performances. Throughout this investigation I allow for the emerging arguments to become embodied by this thesis. Because of that, I am able to carry out investigation, which it itself inhabits the queer and palimpsestuous spatiotemporality.

Dillon's research on the usage of the term palimpsest, in relationship to multiple fields of knowledge, omits *The Palimpsest Model* created by E.B Banning, an archaeological tool developed to enable archaeologists to form a dig site. This model in combination with the findings from the renegotiation of palimpsestuousness allows one to think of palimpsest as a type of spatiality. Further, it is because of my performance

work and look at the performance and photographic practice of artistic duo Lovett/Codagnone, that I was able to realise my own interpretation of model. In the model created by Banning the attention is focused on the way that archaeological sites can be established through *densities of artefacts* rather than the presumed and priori frame for a dig.<sup>4</sup> *Model of Palimpsestuousness*, both 1.0 and 2.0 versions, creates a way to rethink methodological approaches for artistic research especially when confronted with, what Sarah Ahmed in her book *Queer Phenomenology*, refers to as a state of *disorientation*.<sup>5</sup> For her it is an event of losing ground, of being forced into a state of unsureness that is at the essence of using queer theory in relation to materialising a different sense and experience of spatiotemporality. As I argue further in my submitted documents, it creates a new form of post-human body and post-human logic, which is both built out of the differences in sexual desire and the practice of making sexual and erotic art.

What emerges from the above readings is a sense of a space that, to sustain itself, needs a constant homoerotic praxis embedded in it. I argue that we can draw parallels between the spatial sense of palimpsestuousness and the anthropological research conducted by Gayle Rubin in relationship to the experiencing of the space of the The Catacombs, a 1970s S/M club in San Francisco. To understand a need for certain type of intimacy with allows for these spatialities to create a special type of practices, I conceptualise them both through expanding concept of *home*. As seen through my *Heterotopias* film series, most of my artistic practice emerges from inhabiting my own home. It is through such concerns, I focus on the domestic and sexual materiality of

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<sup>4</sup> Banning, E. B. "The Palimpsest Model" in *Archaeological Survey*, (New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum, 2002), 18 - 19.

<sup>5</sup> Sarah Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham, London: Duke University Press, 2007), p. 10.

*Crisco*, a vegetable shortening that is used for both practices of cooking and practices of fisting as a matter, which allows us to create a new form of embodied meanings. As Rubin writes about the practice of fisting in her essay: *The Catacombs – A Temple of the Butthole*:

Fisting is an **art** that involves seducing one of the jumpiest and tightest muscles in the body. The Catacombs was designed to help the butthole to **open up**, relax, and feel good. The space was set to minimize any distractions from the quest for deep penetration and other extreme bodily pleasures. (...) At the *Catacombs*, a person could experience a hand in the butt or the exquisite agonies of S/M in total, absolute comfort. <sup>6</sup>

In this short paragraph, she envisions and gives sense to the way that a space in the form of dimension can produce another structure for materialization and fabrication (making of a fabric/network) of meaning. It is because of, what I argue is, the *extreme* and *exquisite* performativity of fisting as a practice that one can set up a nook of corporal-reality that gives a different, sexual and erotic meaning to the materiality of *Crisco*. At the same time the logic, and techniques of SM/Fisting can allow for experience of palimpsestuousness, by what Elizabeth Freeman in her book *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories* calls a *deviant pause* – a time bending practice of sexuality that transforms the way one can gain a sense of space and allows for a dis-orientation to produce an entanglement of matter and meaning.

In this research, I will renegotiate the shape and structure of the space of palimpsestuousness that takes its logic in the expanded understanding of the concept of *home*, by narrating it through the series of short films titled, *Heterotopias* produced as part of this research.

To refer to this temporal spatiality as *home* and as a dimension, one must inhabit

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<sup>6</sup> Gayle S. Rubin, "The Catacombs: A Temple of the Butthole" in *Deviations: A Gayle Rubin Reader*, (Durham, London: Duke University Press, 2011), 224-241 (emphasis added)

a practice of experimentation in proximity to a certain mundaneness and everydayness. The need for such a dimension to be seen as a space for the practice of art, emerged from the series of images called *Busts*, and through the photographic triptych *Landscape of Leather*. These artworks deal directly with the way that everyday objects become responsible for changing the body: from spoons to books and sofas. They allow for a body to change, to become extended through a specific relation and immersive sensuality with the supposed object. It is through these images that I aim to deliver a concept of *incestuality* – a strange intimate encounter - that allows for a modified experience of palimpsestuousness. I argue that through the investigation of the praxis of the artistic duo Lovett/Codagnone one can establish a queer, sexual and erotic materiality of a palimpsestuous dimension. This will be supported by elaborating on the descriptions of spaces in the literary works of Jean Genet, who allows for his spaces to be inhabitable, multidimensional erotic entities.

Donna Haraway in her *A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology and Socialist-Feminism in late twentieth century* designates ‘cyborg’ as a post-human entity, entangled in *couplings between organism and machine*.<sup>7</sup> I argue that through the production of the *Model of Palimpsestuousness* I am able to both achieve the state of becoming a *cyborg*<sup>8</sup> and with it achieve ‘cyborgian’ praxis of art especially in relation to the concept of *intra-action* as presented by Karen Barad in her queer understanding of quantum physics. In her book *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Meaning and Matter*, she challenges the traditional (Cartesian) notion of causality in favour of *things-in-phenomena*, a reality built out of the emerging patterns of

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<sup>7</sup> Dona Haraway, “A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, technology and socialist-feminism in the late twentieth century” in *The Cybercultures Reader*, ed. David Bell and Barbara M.Kennedy, (London, New York: Routledge, 2001), 2.

<sup>8</sup> This statement emerges from the investigation of *wearing* as a post-human and queer method of practice.

superposition. Her version of reality does not look for the 'original' meaning, nor does she attribute reality to the singular priori experience. The connection between meaning and matter, for Barad (I argue can be read here as theory/art – in understanding the challenges of practice-led research) are not separate entities, but a mix of attributes, multiplicities and extensions.

As an artist, I produce my films and photographs from the comfort of my own *home*. My body extends and entangles through my camera and the objects that surround it. *Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.2.0)* acts in a similar manner to the camera that extends my body. Through the wearing of this queer talisman and through the further analysis of my digital prints I develop further on methods of *wearing* and *slicing* as ways to practice multiplicity that does not ask for the recovering of an original, singular form of the body, but instead produces a more complex experience of palimpsestuousness. These methods, especially method of *slicing*, function by bringing things together into an intimate encounter that creates a material enactment, that could not and should not exist otherwise.

The aim of this research is to answer questions as set above. Here I will take some time (and some space) to show how my research embodies and with it problematizes the palimpsest and its materiality in relation to the queer theory and continental philosophy. Each research question is repeated here, and the answer given takes a shape of an interview.

QUESTION 1:

**In what ways might palimpsestuousness be seen as a conceptual and material model that enables one to expand on discourses created in the entanglement of art practice, queer theory and continental philosophy?**

*The process of constructing and using the Model of Palimpsestuousness allowed me to intertwine concepts of postmodern continental philosophy and queer theory. As it developed, from constant re-doing and doing-again (a form of practice, which seems to be at the core of the palimpsest as a materiality) I achieved an object that inhabits and is the experience of palimpsestuousness. What, became surprising during its development is the way that it allowed me to deliver a critique on contemporary state of queer theory. The shift of understanding queer theory not as a method that can be applied to different fields of practice and knowledge, but as a field of knowledge became most important in understanding this model and my way of understanding palimpsestuousness. This concept and this matter, as discussed throughout my research is not a 'queered' version of the palimpsest, but in fact it is a new materiality that emerged from queer theory as an art methodology. Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.2.0), allowed me also to think through my "naked flesh" about my practice, especially in performance work, which gave me a new understanding of the objects related to this practice. In some way, the dress, the Boom mask, the Cum t-shirt, and other objects present in my performances, are all versions of palimpsestuousness. As such, these objects need an attention of future research, as they allow one to understand the space and temporality of being in constant "disorientation".*

*It is in inhabiting this “disorientation” that I could develop a queer methodology as that, which is necessarily practice-led. I draw parallels between William Haver’s take on queer research and work conducted by Barbara Bolt in relation to artistic research. My task was to realise, through my performance-based artistic practices, that, by speaking about emergent queer theory’s methodologies of interruption and disorientation, one needs to understand the methodology as a soft and mouldable system, as economy of matter and meaning that constantly gravitate towards each-other creating cluster-like forms. This “clustering”, creates an argument through atunement to the way ideas, practices, theories can and should always “stick” together.*

## QUESTION 2:

**In developing an art practice through sexual and erotic praxis, to what extent and in what ways might we imagine the heterotopian dimension?**

*Here I will focus on a second achievement in relation to Foucault's concept of heterotopia - the relationship between a naked flesh and the space that this flesh occupies. The realisation of the importance of my apartment in relation to this research came about quite quickly. Most of my practice in photography and video is self-conducted and requires an intimate space, to realise. Similarly, to Mapplethorpe and his spontaneous Polaroids, this apartment allows for continuous framing and re-framing of the self - especially in relation to involvement of my sexual and erotic praxis.*

*This thesis does not feature all the works that were created during this period, it focuses on the most valuable when it comes to the conceptualisation and materialisation of palimpsestuousness. The need to film and map certain performance-based ideas that occupied my apartment led me to create a series of Heterotopias. This series not only refers to Foucault by name, but it is an artistic materialisation of his concept of other spaces, and it is through it that we can expand on our understanding of a spatiotemporality of home.*

*Through this film practice I aimed to produce not only research experiment that established the understanding of dimensionality in queer methodologies, but also a sexual and erotic portray of heterotopian space. It is also because of this renegotiation of the heterotopian spatiotemporality that I recognised two emerging methods that were part of my artistic and theoretical work in developing palimpsestuousness. First being the method of wearing. As a method in this*

research it functions as a form of expansion one's frame of the flesh, that in turn produces a sense of BwO as per Deleuze. This wearing produces an action of disorientation and illegibility, crucially important ingredients of queer research. It is also this wearing that can create an incestuous relation and a material parrhesia between the flesh and an object, denser more sexual and erotic this practice is. Slicing, or (af)-finitiy, is a method of dissecting time and temporality that is attached to it. It is very much emergent from the editing work done on the Heterotopias, but also incorporated through multiplicity and repetition into the series Plurality (2017). The digital images produced through this method are full of sensuality, as they play with the figural representation of a body, creating organic-like aesthetic of multiplicity.

These two methods that "came out" through my research are embedded in my conceptualisation of a non-layered palimpsest. They are also methods of producing intimacy and multiplicity that doesn't require mode of revealing to produce a knowledge and with it practice. The move to deregulate layered structures, was the origins and need for palimpsestuousness to be produced.

Palimpsestuousness is an odd spatiotemporality, experienced through the relationship between naked flesh and an object of desire. As a methodology, it requires researchers to inhabit spaces that often seem at odds with the traditional rigour of theory. It is in those spaces that speed of spontaneity, a deviant pause of sexual encounter, and multiplicity of making art and liveability, entangles together and can in some cases produce a material crystallisation.

Palimpsestuousness privileges taboo intimacies of incestuous relations. Those relations are created in relation of a naked flesh with the objects of practice. It is through these that another form of a body emerges; a cyborg one might say. It is

*also through these connections that one enacts transgression, even if translucent, that disorientates the stability of individual. This disorientation is provoked by approaches to illegible, unreadable and bounded spatiotemporality, of queer heterotopian nooks.*

QUESTION 3:

**How might an investigation of the concepts of *ars erotica*, *subjugated knowledges* and *parrhesia* allow for the development of multidimensional, performative and queer art practices that inform methodological approaches in artistic research?**

*The achievements in relation to philosophy of Michel Foucault, as I conclude, speak about how we can re-in-vision his concepts of *ars erotica*, *subjugated knowledges* and *parrhesia*, in the forms of performance-based art practices. Foucault's work is by many recognised as a one of the most influential in relation to the contemporary queer theory. Yet in most recent years, especially in philosophical works of Donna Haraway and Karen Barad, his work seems to need a re-reading and re-deploying. In my work this re-deployment takes shape of artistic practice. Here I do not mean a simple usage of his philosophy as a language to talk about my work, rather I mean forms of embodied knowledges that form performance-based works of art. Foucault in my research plays a predominant role, and it is through reading of his concepts, especially after Barad's challenge to the causal epistemological system, that I developed methods of embodying his philosophy through/as art practice. Even though the *Heterotopias* film seems to be the most direct reference to his ideas, it is the combination of *subjugated knowledges*, *ars erotica* and *parrhesia* that have allowed me to remove palimpsestuousness from the historical association of this concept with the vision of a layered surface, and focus on experiences of different a temporality and sense of spatiality. As shown in my research, *ars erotica* plays a particular role in this conceptual move. As Freeman observes in her text, it is through the incorporating a sexual and erotic flesh as body that knows the pleasures of delineated history, that we can*

*speak of experiencing a different sense of temporality. It is this temporality that, in actuality, speaks about a form of speed and interruption, that is essential for embodying concepts of Foucault's as forms of art practice. Subjugated knowledges, on the other hand, when paired with the concept of the palimpsest, speak directly to the way that the normative values of knowledge as commodity can be ineffective when approaching artistic practices.*

*The least developed Foucauldian concept in my research is parrhesia. As I observe by using it to talk about intimacy that is established during taking self-photographs, I seem to forget to clearly set it up as a way of talking about Donna Haraway's notion of cyborg. It is quite recent development in relation to this body of work, and as such it needs a further investigation, especially in arguing concept of intra-action as presented by Barad. At the same time, this thesis is the first one to analyse works of Lovett/Codagnone in relation to the incestual relation, that is vital for palimpsestuousness.*

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# MATERIALIZING PALIMPSEST

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Interrogation into *palimpsestuousness* as a queer  
enactment in artistic research

*(ANOTHER) INTRODUCTION TO PALIMPSEST*

## (Another)Introduction to palimpsest

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[Palimpsest](#) 3 - 8

[Moi Aussie \(Me Too\) & Palimpsestuous](#) 9 - 22

[Ars Erotica and Scienta Sexualis; or, the pleasures of leathers](#) 23 - 33

Story of palimpsests and their emergence as a both type of materiality and metaphor is one developed through reading of scattered, and sometimes un-relatable timelines and histories. This research aims to set up an understanding of the palimpsest as a construct that allows us to deal with sexual and erotic art practice, and provides us with an important and necessary enquiry into emerging methods and methodologies in artistic research. In this book I will establish a way of understanding the palimpsest not as a layered type of phenomena, but instead as a concept, which deals with the intimacy established through and in artistic practices and research. To do this, I will analyse the contextual writings of literary scholar Sarah Dillon, who in 2014 first attempted on creating a 'working' field of studies into the meaning of the concept of the palimpsests and through it develop a critical enquiry into my artistic practices that engages with this concept. Through that I aim to provide clarity in the conceptual move into palimpsestuousness as an artistic synthesis of matter and meaning, which is established in the intimacy of sexual, erotic art practices that this thesis provides.

The palimpsest originally refers to the written surfaces (or leafs), on which text was erased and a new text was superimposed. After time the original text reappears and through it creates a multi-layered materiality. One of the most famous and best preserved examples of this practice is a volume called *Archimedes Palimpsest*, recovered in 1998. This book is a collection of writings, by an unknown scribe that presented mathematical works of Archimedes hidden beneath the inscription of a 12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> century Greek liturgical book (FIG. 1).



FIG.1 – *Archimedes Palimpsest*, photo representing the unbinding process of the volume before restoration begins.

*Archimedes Palimpsest Project*, a collaborative restoration project, focused on imaging the leafs as to recover original work of Archimedes. It was believed to be the earliest copy of the author's thought (even though it was not actually written by Archimedes himself) and through the project developed technologies of photography that, in the end, revealed desired underwriting.<sup>1</sup>

The multi-spectral imaging<sup>2</sup>, originally conducted on the pages of *Archimedes Palimpsest* was supposed to reveal the *scriptio inferior* (from Latin *scriptio inferior*

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<sup>1</sup> *The Archimedes Palimpsest Project*, was a conservation project run by Dr. William Noel. The task of this project per their website was to conserve, restore, store, protect and make public the volume. I am presenting this enquiry as to narrate the methods of de-layering and argue against the desire to de-layer both materiality and concept of palimpsest. <http://archimedespalimpsest.org/about/management/> - accessed on 16/06/2016.

<sup>2</sup>The multi-spectral imaging – is a process of exposing an object to the different light waves and capturing the result through photography process. Those techniques reveal different chemical structures of the object. Roger Easton, one of the technical researchers in *The Archimedes Palimpsest Project* speaks about this practice in short video: <https://vimeo.com/29684551> - accessed on 10.01.2018

refers to the underwriting/original erased text in the palimpsest) and through that exhume the text of Archimedes written work. Unfortunately, original attempts on multi-spectral imaging did not produce a desired effect of recovering of the hidden text. Instead what was revealed, or rather produced, is a series of images that brought my attention to the physicality and sensuality of this historical volume. Each photograph of the leaf shows the visual density of the palimpsestic surface. Looking at them we can experience the way that pages fold, pass through one another, crinkle and break. Instead of a dusty, dry parchment, we are left with a vibrant, colourful and alive materiality (FIG.2).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> FIG. 2 presents an image of twelve multi-spectral imaging results from the early stages of process conducted by Roger Easton. This image is taken from <http://www.archimedespalimpsest.org/about/imaging/capture.php> accessed on 10.01.2018.

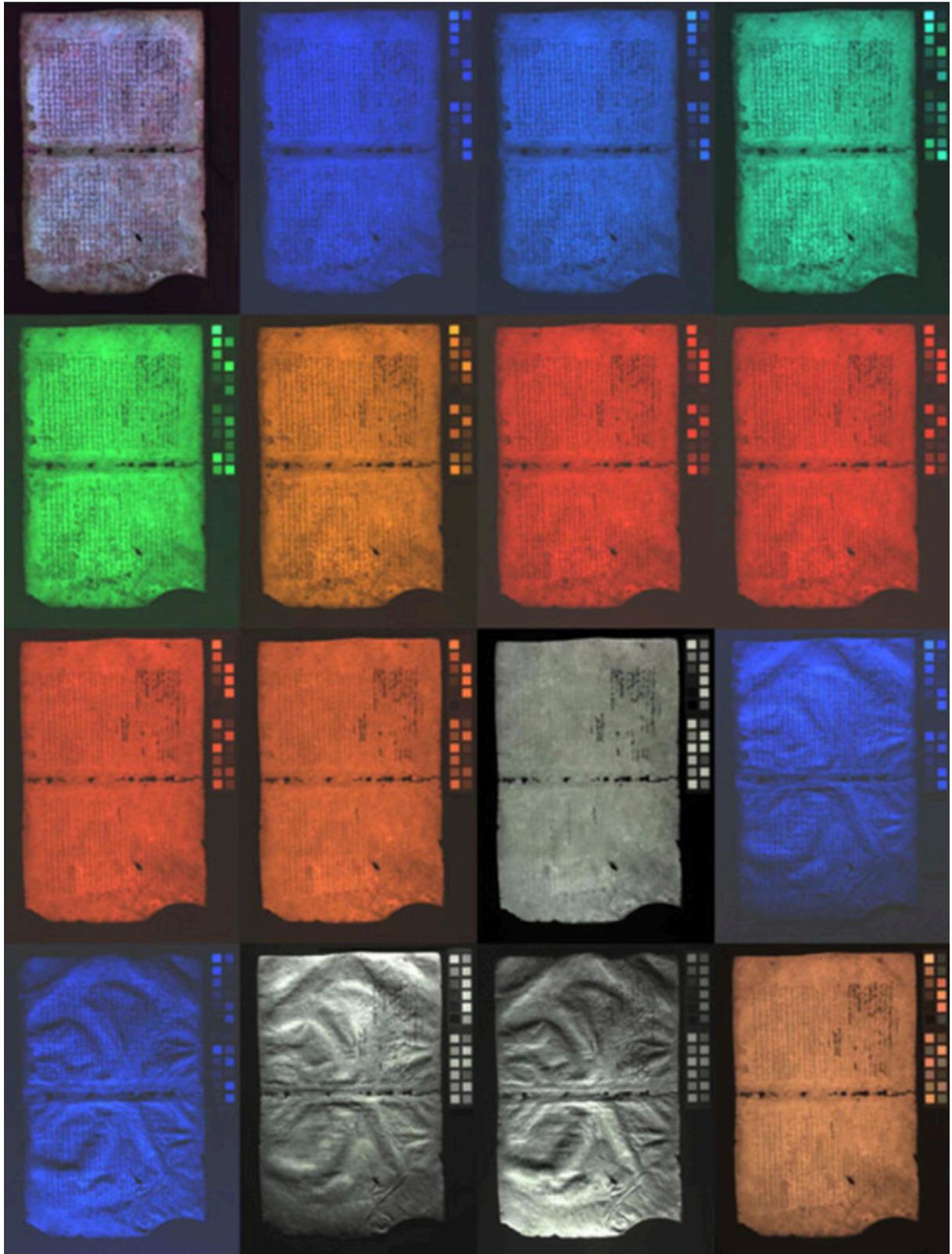


FIG. 2 - Montage of 12 shots of the pages (leafs) 105-110 of the *Archimedes Palimpsest*, 2001-2006.

The above visual record presents me with a change in attitude when approaching the palimpsestic surface. Sarah Dillon in her book *The Palimpsest: Literature, Criticism, Theory* refers to the work directed by Dr. William Noel as a *detective discovery*. She understands it as an attitude towards doing research, that directly aims at the separation of the layers and recovery of the lost texts. As she writes:

(Archimedes Palimpsest) displays the persistent fascination with palimpsests in the popular imagination, embodying as they do the mystery of the secret, the miracle of resurrection and the thrill of detective discovery. Palimpsests are not dusty palaeographic objects but uncanny harbingers to the present of the murdered text.<sup>4</sup>

The practice of research presented above, as necessary and of historical significance, is limited. It assumes that palimpsest (the material phenomena) only makes sense, and exhibits potential in relation to methodologies, when dismantled and de-layered. The significance of Dillon's work, and my research here, lies directly in experiencing the palimpsests not as a study of layers, but as a study of practices of creating a material and meaningful type of intimacy.

Dillon, similarly to my work, does not distinguish and does not separate the layers of the palimpsest. Instead, what she focuses on is the way that the growing conceptualisation of the palimpsest, especially in the 20<sup>th</sup> century critical theory, allows for establishing a new network of intertextuality that produces unexpected and sometimes unorthodox ways of knowing.<sup>5</sup> The main difference between my work and the research conducted by Dillon is the way that my palimpsest becomes a matter of art

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<sup>4</sup> Sarah Dillon, *The Palimpsest: Literature, Criticism, Theory* (London: Bloomsbury USA Academic, 2014), p.12-13. – *the murdered text* here refers to the underwriting in the palimpsest called *scriptio inferior*. I will be discussing further the contextual connotation of its existence in my work, by analysing Michel Foucault concept of *subjugated knowledges* and my performance practice titled *Fatima*.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p.35-37. – the dissemination and usage of the term “palimpsest”, especially in 20<sup>th</sup> century structuralism and post-structuralism (from Roland Barthes in relation to Cy Twombly paintings and Jacques Derrida notions of *erasure* in methodology of deconstruction) as presented by Dillon changes from the name of the object. Instead it is used as a metaphor that speaks about any layered materiality that emerges in relation to time.

practice and as such can inform our artistic methodologies. This will be further discussed when I develop my contextualization of *Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.1.0 and v.2.0)* in further books.

This research creates a new inscription for and with the palimpsest. It also provides us with an opportunity not-to-read and de-layer surfaces in art works. Instead it is a study of a pleasure taken from the encounter with the materiality of the palimpsest that becomes a driving force in attempting to materialise palimpsestuousness. This physical and emotional pleasure emerges from the encounter with the unusual and unframed materiality. It suggests to me that there is something sensually erotic in the methods of practices that do not relay on the modes and processes of revealing. For now, I will focus on providing a clarity in how the contextualisation and understanding of the palimpsest developed into the concept of palimpsestuousness.

## MOI AUSSI (ME TOO) / PALIMPSESTUOUS

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Sarah Dillon, while describing the historical ways of producing the palimpsests, engages in discourse on the way that the supposed and finite erasure of the original text turns into an actual preservation mechanism.<sup>6</sup> This leads her to develop a fascination with the surface of the palimpsest (both material and conceptual), especially in relation to the way that layers of texts that, without having anything to do with each-other when it comes to the meaning of the text, collapse and produce a new, often illegible phenomenon. This energy that 'holds together' layers of the palimpsestic surface becomes for Dillon a space of inquiry into the logic of how the intimate, sensual entanglement can produce a new matter of knowledge.

Walter Benjamin, in his essay *The Task of the Translator*, recognises the need of this intimacy in the layers and multiplications of processes of translations. He writes:

Fragments of a vessel which are to be glued together must match one another in the smallest details, although they need not to be like one another. In the same way a translation, instead of resembling the meaning of the original, must lovingly and in detail incorporate the original's mode of signification, thus making both the original and the translation recognizable as fragments of a greater language, just as fragments are part of a vessel. <sup>7</sup>

Even though the layers of the palimpsest surface do not 'know' each other and are not a translation of one structure to another, they do form a certain type of bond. Their *glue* allows for the different understanding of multiplicity to emerge. For Benjamin, who recognizes the need for a *pure language*, the collection of translations allows one to see and experience the 'whole picture'. For Dillon attention is put on the value and critical possibilities of this bonding. For me, what become clear, is that palimpsest offers within

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<sup>6</sup>Sarah Dillon, *The Palimpsest: Literature, Criticism, Theory* (London: Bloomsbury USA Academic, 2014), p.89.

<sup>7</sup>Walter Benjamin, "The Task of the Translator" in *Illuminations*, trans. Hannah Arendt, and Harry Zorn, (London: Pimlico, 1999), p.79.

its structure a possibility for us to speak about different, more perversely sexual in nature, relationship. My disobedient look, that does not desire to de-layer the palimpsest, instead wants to focus on a character of above *glue*. Through that my research produces a different kind of meaning and different (queer) kind of logic.

Similar desire guides Dillon to abundant the methods of revealing and recovering the *scriptio inferior* that creates a palimpsestic surface, and instead produce research that focuses on understanding and producing this *glue*, and with that create a critical space of palimpsestuousness. For me the queer palimpsestuous palimpsest is a matter of understanding and developing sense of spatiality and temporality that challenges, through its sexual and intimate glue our approaches to creating and making art and research. Here I would like to introduce a neologism *palimpsestuous*, as a challenge to the layered structure of the palimpsest.

Most of the research dealing with the concept of the palimpsest has been done in the field of literature, and it is there one can find a way of to re-thinking the way in which the palimpsest becomes an entanglement of matter and meaning. Thomas DeQuincey writes in his work *Palimpsest of the Human Brain*:

What else then a natural and mighty palimpsest is the human brain? Such a palimpsest is my brain; such a palimpsest, oh reader! is yours. Everlasting layers of ideas, images, feelings have fallen upon your brain softly as light.<sup>8</sup>

DeQuincey clearly substitutes the concept of a layered materiality with the idea of the palimpsest, by doing so, and it happened in 1845, he sprung forward this conceptual exchange. This is picked up by Christopher Whalen in his essay *DeQuincey and the Palimpsest*. In this texts he writes:

Texts feed off and breed with one another, as grafted plants share the same live giving nutrients, sustaining each other. (...) In De Quincy's hands (palimpsest) is

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<sup>8</sup>Thomas DeQuincey, *Suspiria de Profundis* (Blackmask Online, [www.blackmask.com](http://www.blackmask.com), 2001) p.28.

transformed from literal artefact into metaphor of the workings of the human mind.<sup>9</sup>

Connection between the memories being identified by DeQuincey as a form of the palimpsest becomes even more intriguing when read through somewhat sensual *breeding* brought forward by Whalen. This suggestion opens and expands the materiality and conceptual connotation of the palimpsest into that of a way of 'belonging-together'.<sup>10</sup>

The *breeding* process of the creation of the palimpsest could be argued to invoke an experience of sensuality and rough sexuality. It is in the pleasure of this breeding that palimpsest becomes a conceptual body, and it is through that it presents us with different ways of approaching the understanding of its meaning. This research explores this moment of *breeding* in the palimpsest, and sees it as a palimpsestuous conceptual phenomenon. Rather than focusing on creating a generalised history of this concept, and structures that develop around it, I am dealing with and arguing for the intimate, sexual and erotic understanding of the *glue* that holds such an enactment together. Instead of deepening the research into historical palimpsest and creating a linear narration of its usage, I will focus on reading and understanding of the neologism of palimpsestuous in relation to my own practice. The history and context of the palimpsest is intertwined into the whole of this thesis, becoming visible and readable to realise the relationship that my own work has with conceptual palimpsest.

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<sup>9</sup> Christopher Whalen, *De Quincy and the Palimpsest in Double Vision: Literary Palimpsests of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, ed. Derby Lewes, Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2008, p.60.

<sup>10</sup> The term 'belonging-together' is borrowed here from Marting Heidegger and his short text "Identity and Difference". It is also intertwined with Karen Barad's notion of intra-action and with the development of my method of praxis that I refer to as *slicing*. This is further discussed in the book *TITLE* of this submission.

The neologism “palimpsestuous” was first coined by Philippe Lejeune, late 20<sup>th</sup> century French specialist in autobiographical literature, who in his text *Le Roland Barthes sans peine* (Eng. *Roland Barthes made easy*) published in 1984. He writes:

Because of the possibility of correcting the error, the author who thinks of himself as inconsistent, writes much more surely than when he handwrites the text: it is a striking energy. The text becomes not irreparable. I buy (this paper) from the papermaker of U. small sheets of which P.L. reveals to me (errors) certain existence: they are already under the ribbon of the typewriter (...). Then a particular thing happens: my body must, voluntarily, repeat the fault in order to erase it. The bad letter re-inscribes itself, it obliterates itself, and it forgets itself. It is then *palimpsestuous*. (emphasis added)<sup>11</sup>

The ribbon of a typewriter becomes another type of palimpsestic surface – one that speaks directly about the bonding aspect of the layers and the relationship it creates. By developing a neologism of palimpsestuous, Lejeune combines the multiplicity and plurality of the written text with the necessity of binding, bonding and collapse of historicity. He finds himself at the threshold of sexual, sensual and erotic pleasure towards the ribbon through the performative error-typing. At the same time, what becomes apparent is the intimacy of the relationship between him and his typewriter. By describing it as a *striking energy* of confidence in writing he suggests that the method of making sense ‘sits in’ the development of the intimate relationship with another. Through that it becomes apparent that the palimpsest as layered reaches its limit of producing meaning. What emerges is a palimpsestuous adjective, that focuses on the relations in the processes of making.

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<sup>11</sup> Philippe Lejeune, ‘Le Roland Barthes sans peine’ in *Moi Aussié* (Paris: Seuil, 1986), p.115 – English translation: A traverse la faute mécanique, l’inconscient écrit bien plus sûrement qu’à la main : c’est l’esprit frappeur. Mais rien d’irréparable. J’achète chez le papetier de U. de petites feuilles dont P.L. m’a révélé l’existence : elles sont une sous le ruban (...). Alors se passe une chose particulière : mon corps doit, volontairement cette fois, répéter la faute pour l’effacer. la lettre mauvaise se réinscrit sur elle-même, elle s’oblitére, elle s’oublie. Elle est alors palimpsestueuse. – What the reading of Lejeune provides here is not only a certain pleasure in the notion of mistakes, but also through the analysis of the machine that is capable of mistakes (the queered typos) produces a special type of dimensionality that finds the logic beyond that what seems to be correct and established.

It is not the first time that Roland Barthes becomes associated with the concept of the palimpsest. He uses this concept to speak about abstract paintings by Cy Twombly (FIG 3). He writes:

...the hand has drawn something like a flower and then has begun "dawdling" over this line; the flower has been written, then unwritten; but the two movements remain vaguely superimposed; it is a perverse palimpsest... (emphasis added) <sup>12</sup>

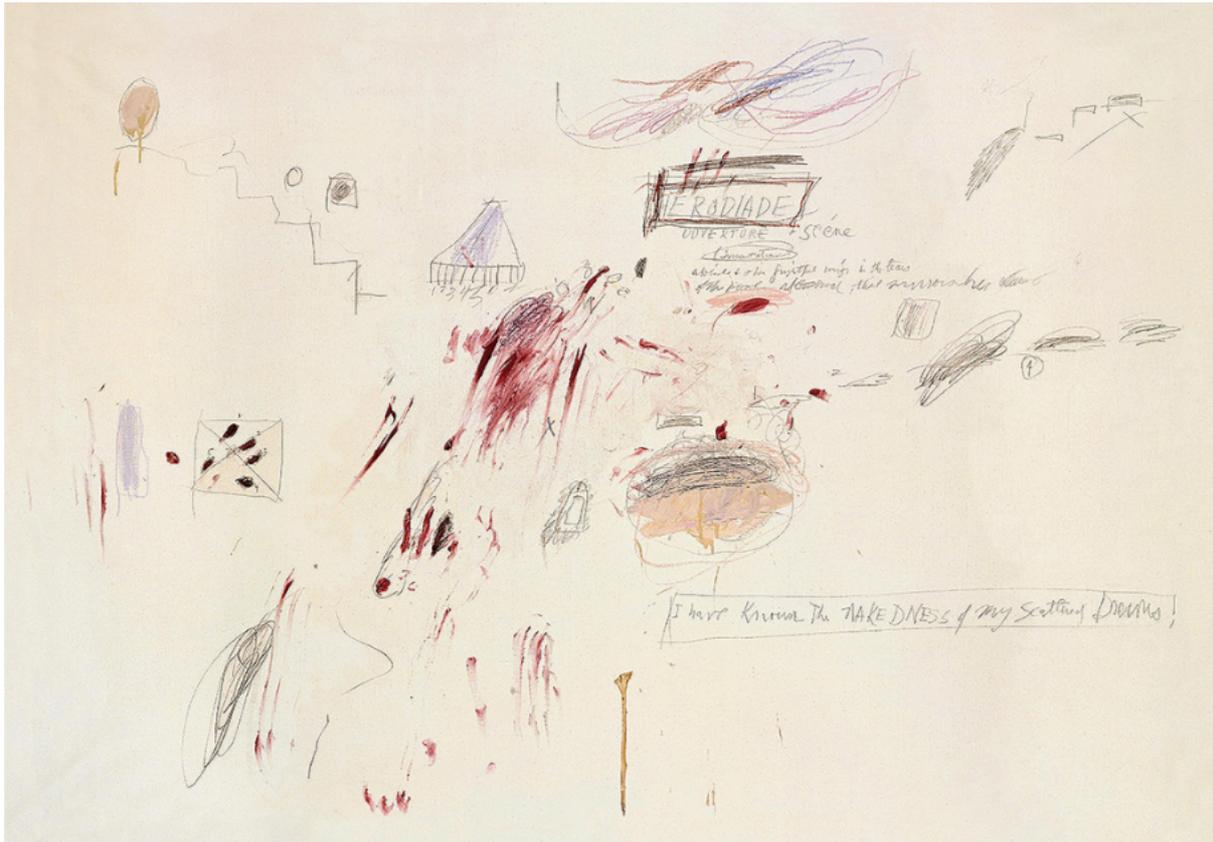


FIG.3 - Cy Twombly, *Herodiate*, 1960.

By referring to the palimpsest as a perverse entity, Barthes invites us into a temporality of intimacy that occurs between the moves of erasure and superimposition. For him, Cy Twombly is a writer-painter, a mutated creature that challenges our priori understanding of a matter of art. Barthes sees the irrationality of the palimpsesting

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<sup>12</sup>Roland Barthes, *The Responsibility of Forms: Critical Essays on Music, Art, Representation*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985).

processes that presents us with a materiality that cannot be untwined and returned to the individual, priori existing layers. What we have is what we see – an illegible, unreadable multi-layered surface that for all purposes should not exist. Yet, it is that perverse surface (here I mean both physical surface and philosophical one) that my practice explores.

Palimpsestuous palimpsest becomes another post-mistake-product of thinking in difference, it creates a possible ‘way-out’ of the struggle with the conceptual function of the tradition of layering associated with the palimpsest. The palimpsestuous adjective, in Lejeune work, arguably refers to the sensual and intimate relationship with the surface of the text. He does not desire to read the text, rather he is inhabiting the space of this relationship. This is an odd temporal embodiment that creates, and is created in a special type of environment. The mistakenly written Z instead of S, the self-narration of such mistake, the touching and feeling of the pages and typing machines all suggests a multitude and plurality of thinking/writing.

Palimpsestuous palimpsest speaks of a type of tension and sensual relationship between layers. It is through that understanding that I developed a research video that reproduces an ancient process of palimpsesting and in return produces an experience of curiosity. The fact remains that palimpsest, in both a material and conceptual sense, has its meaning embedded in the type of error that Lejeune speaks of. The palimpsest, as developed here, appears to be a historical and material embodiment of interruption, a thing of a *double vision*, that allows for the questioning of authority and necessity of readability/recognisability.

*Illumig My Library* (FIG. 4)<sup>13</sup> is a research video piece that allowed me to think about the way that sensual, sexual and erotic practice can change the way that one sees and enables palimpsest to happen. In my research on the palimpsest one of the ancient processes of palimpsesting (erasing and superimposing text) was to remove text from the parchment by rubbing it with a wet finger. Most commonly this method was used in ancient Egypt on the volumes of papyrus.

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<sup>13</sup> Video is available to view at <https://vimeo.com/117791615> .

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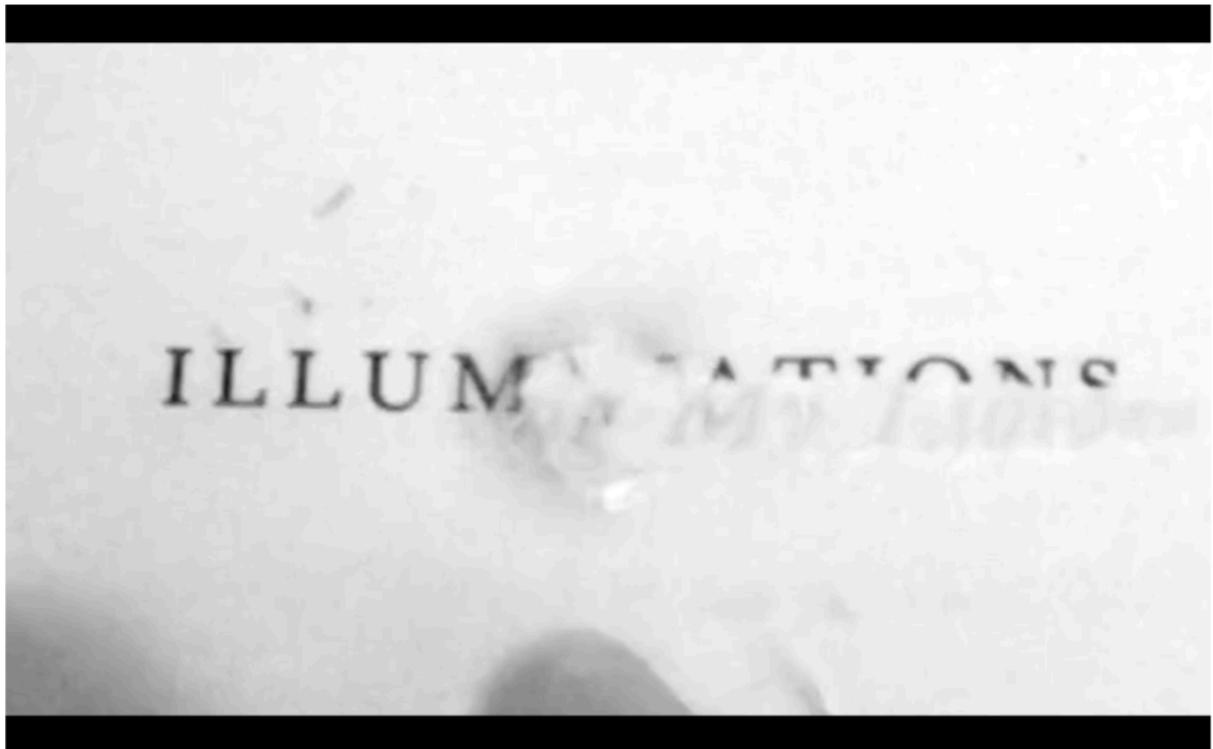
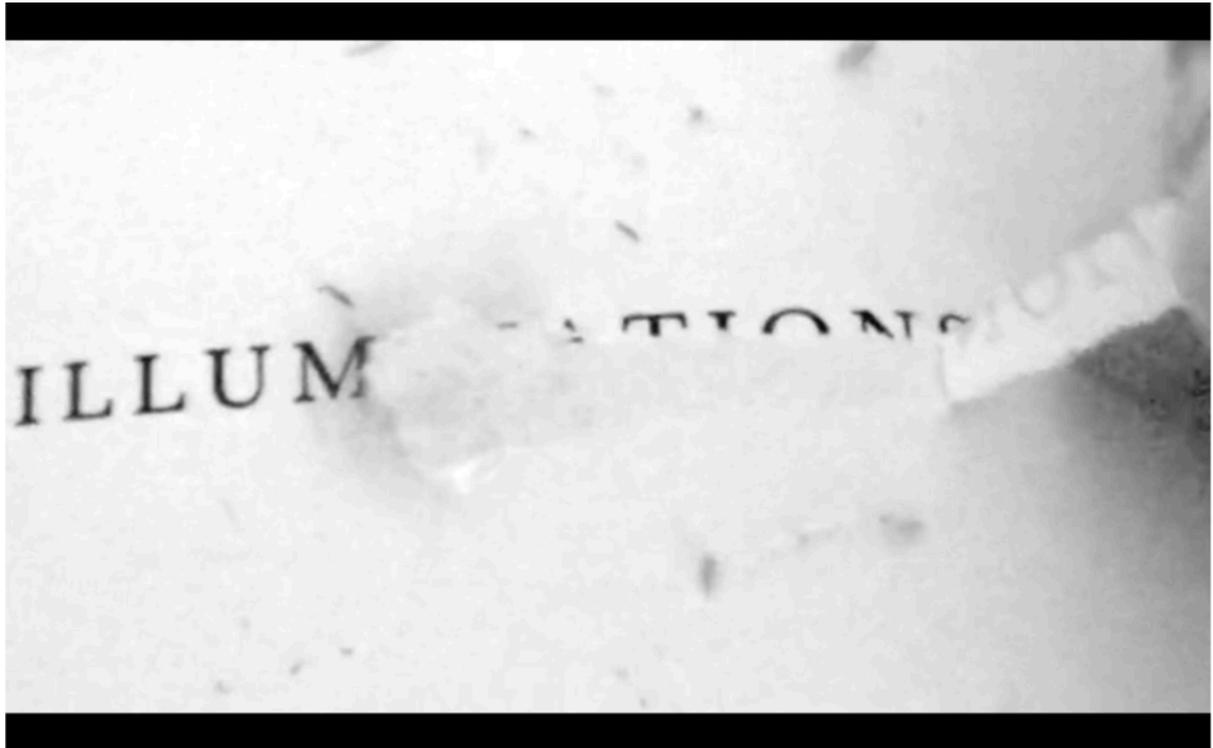


FIG. 4 – Jakub Ceglarz, still images from video *Illumig my Library*, 2014.

In the video, I am rubbing the titular page of the *Illuminations* by Walter Benjamin, with the finger wetted with my saliva. There is no obvious reason for the

choice of this text, in some way by looking at it now, I realise it had to do with the way that Benjamin describes translations and how they 'stick' together. As I remove a small layer of the paper *Illuminations* slowly disintegrates, disappears and becomes partially erased. At the same time the print on the other page, the title of the chapter *Unpacking My Library*, which is printed on the other side of the page, becomes barely visible. What we see is rough paper, some letters that do not make sense and dirt left over from my fingers. When I flatten the page with my hand, for a second the letters create an odd phrase, which is now a title of this piece of work. Instead of separating layers, and recovering the underwriting, I created the palimpsest with a wet finger. I engaged the page with my body, rubbing and in some way writing an illegitimate phrase.

*Illumig My Library*, similarly to the material palimpsest, makes sense when the new text that appears on the surface. This leads me to believe that palimpsest as a concept doesn't speak about layers. It speaks about the way that the funny phrase, through the practices of erotic making (because a wet finger is always an erotic figure to some extent) holds the tension of this palimpsestuous palimpsest.

The palaeographic phenomena of the palimpsest holds within its structure a process of production. This process was further developed into a way of re-using the then expensive sheet of parchment, and in a somewhat ironic way, the chemical/physical actions that were supposed to *murder* or *erase* texts, preserved it. As such, we can argue that the palimpsestic surface is a materiality of unknown production rather than a purposeful act of making. Hence, I argue that the palimpsest cannot be made intentionally, as its existence depends on a paradox: processes of erasure – that did not erase, but instead preserved. Therefore, in time the 'original' layer sneaked past

just to return (partially) from dead. In this way palimpsest, intimately bonded time into a new type of surface.<sup>14</sup>

This research is not the first work on the palimpsest that challenges its layered structure, and the methods of revealing as knowledge making that seems to be a predominant focus in previously mentioned works. Gerald Genette in his text *Palimpsest: Literature of the second degree* (1997) adds further to the role that sensual intimacy plays in the palimpsestuousness. He sees layers and layers – the thickness of surface - of entities, but instead of accepting the traditional methodology of revealing he asks reader:

The hypertext invites us to engage in a relational reading, the flavour of which, however perverse, may well be condensed in an adjective recently coined by Philippe Lejeune: a palimpsestuous reading. To put it differently, just for fun of switching perversities, one who really loves texts must wish from time to time to love (at least) two together.<sup>15</sup>

Genette brings to the fore the fact that palimpsestuousness does not require revealing, and de-layering. Instead what we are asked to do is to develop a relationship with the sense of plurality. Lejeune, DeQuincy and Genette all try to re-do the palimpsest by focusing on the phenomena of its existence rather than a methodological recovering of the forgotten and lost text. Yet at the same time they do not question the layers,

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<sup>14</sup> The usage of the term: *murdered text* here suggests, as following Sarah Dillon though – an intentional mischief approach. In the medieval times – most of the palimpsests known today are from that period – the economy of paper / book making made it almost necessary for the authors to re-use or rather re-purpose the volumes in order to feed the need of what was viewed as necessary reading. One could argue political and economic standing of knowledge production of medieval period around the growing social power of Christian faith in Europe and who was allowed and educated enough to read. Through this dealing the Greek liturgical text that was over written on the Archimedes text seems to speak of the political and historical connotations of social issues at the time.

<sup>15</sup> Gerard Genette, *Palimpsest: Literature in the second degree*, trans. C.Newman and C.Doubinski (Lincoln, London: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), p.339 – The pleasure that Genette suggests here seems to be functioning as both the acknowledgment of relation-like building blocks of the multiplicity and encounter with the multiplicity as that similar to the palimpsest. This pleasure is very much a reflection of traditional sensibility that unfortunately (not like the approach of Lejeune) does not escape the layered logic.

however multiple, and still recognise their validity. Through Lejeune, and his invention of 'palimpsestuous' as an adjective, Dillon starts to recognise the need to develop the critical inquiry into that *glue*, that invokes a sensual intimacy in and with approaches to understanding, and for me to create a materialised version of such relationship.<sup>16</sup>

Palimpsestuousness as described throughout this book is a perverse and sensual mutation of the palimpsest, that enacts methodological difference on its own body.

Instead of layers and moves of erasure and superimposition, the focus here needs to be put at the relationship. Dillon refers to that relationship by saying:

Palimpsestuous relationality, 'palimpsestuousness', treads the line of the problematic of incest – the intimacy that is branded as illegitimate since it is between those who are regarded as too *closely related*. The utmost intimacy is only legitimate, and, one might suggest – recalling the biological myth supporting the taboo of incest – productive, between those terms that retain some amount of estrangement from one another.<sup>17</sup>

Dillon sees the word palimpsestuousness as *composed of meanings, sounds, and other words* that create a phonetic based etymology. By coupling it with the incestuous attitude she raises the question of creating sense and meaning. If the legitimate and supposed ways of production need a touch of unfamiliarity between themselves, then this research unfortunately becomes an illegitimate production. This incestuous attitude for me rather than just a reference to the forbidden taboo, also speaks about the way that the things become familiar with each other, through the sensual and intimate knowing of each-other. In "*Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.2.0)*" I will develop this understanding by analysing Michel Foucault version of *parrhesia*, a 'frank talk', as that, which allows us to produce an embodiment of a post-human Cyborg that Donna Haraway speaks of.

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<sup>16</sup> Philippe Lejeune, 'Le Roland Barthes sans peine' in *Moi Aussie* (Paris: Seuil, 1986) p.115.

<sup>17</sup> Sarah Dillon, *The Palimpsest: Literature, Criticism, Theory* (London: Bloomsbury USA Academic, 2014), p.5.

We arrive at an understanding that palimpsest (palimpsestuous type) is a materiality of sensual and intimate relationship that challenges the supposed and 'rational' ways of making and thinking. It invokes in me a pleasure to understand and to inhabit that 'illegitimate between-ness' and through that pleasure produce queered materiality of the palimpsest. The space of the palimpsestuous does not look at/on/in the layers but rather exists by creating a series of sensual networking that does not fall back on the layers as identities but rather becomes a type of materiality in its own nature.

As expressed in above text the palimpsest as seen by the lens of this research, draws my attention to the materiality of intimacy that is produced through incestuous relation that holds this multi-layered surface together. It is the task of this part is to redefine palimpsestuousness as a sense and experience of a different materiality of a spatiality and temporality.

Dillon in her research expresses similar understanding by making connections between the concept of the palimpsest and several concepts in the field of literature, from identity, authorship and erasure through metaphor and sexuality. For her the sense of palimpsestuousness of the palimpsest is created exactly through making of those connections and later it develops into a methodological attitude through the way such network becomes epistemologically productive. I argue that, when taking her understanding of palimpsestuousness as a form of critical space, which allows for incestuous connections to take shape, palimpsestuousness changes its materiality again when confronted with performance-based, queer art practice. This change emerges as to question strategies of forms of practice of knowledges and art that rely on layered superimpositions and on methods of revealing in production of coherence.

In the beginning of my research I focused my attention on delivering instances of meanings by use of self-photography and writing a semi-academic texts surrounding my work. A prime example of this practice is my photographic triptych *Landscape of leather* (FIG. 5) with a peer-reviewed paper produced in relation to the piece called *How did it happen? / This poor naked body* (2016).<sup>18</sup> In both, piece and paper, I focus on the

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<sup>18</sup> The paper critically assesses the experience of the spatiality in relation to the nude body. It circulates around the moves that the (my) body makes while producing photographic triptych *Landscape of Leather* (2015).

meaning and materiality of space that allows me to experience a form of multiplicity of being in relation to everydayness, erotic and sexual praxis and performative photography practice.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1993), p. XII. - I refer to me taking photographs of my own body as 'performative photography' as to inform the actual physicality of this practice. By 'performative' in here I mean a set of repetitive and temporal actions that produce a new experience of the bodily / artistic existence. In some way it borrows its definition from Judith Butler (who in turn expands on Michel Foucault's philosophical enquiry) who defies performativity as "not as a singular or deliberate "act", but, rather, as the reiterative and citational practice by which discourse produces the effect that it names". In another it expands on this meaning by invoking art making as part of the discursive practice of establishing a meaning.



FIG. 5 – Jakub Ceglaz, *Landscape of Leather*, photographic triptych, 2014.

What becomes apparent from this investigation is the element of in-distinguish-ness between the operations of those performative workings. This in-distinguish-ness becomes materialised in the visual and linguistic game of words in which the word 'leather' that appears in short phrases written across the photographs refers to both skin of my body and the fabric that sets up the limits of the sofa in my apartment. As much as this linguistic game exemplifies the idea of the in-distinguish-ness and certain attempt on the merger of materialities, it also gives us clue to the way we can identify the incestuousness of the palimpsestuousness.

To do so, instead of putting intellectual pressure on the layers between which this incestuous intimacy can occur, as Dillon is doing, I want to explore the sexual and erotic nature of the palimpsestuous relation that Dillon speaks of. It is essential at this point to understand the value of the erotic and sexual art practice that allows for the way that methodology of this research develops. Through the investigation and contextualisation of the piece *Landscape of Leather* as the instance of a temporal merger, what emerged is the way in which erotic and sexual practice becomes an agent of such merger. What I mean, in relation to the palimpsest and its development into palimpsestuousness, is the fact that without allowing an influence of erotic and sexual practice into everydayness and art practice, one cannot move into an understanding of the palimpsest as that, which is not a layered surface. To explain it further, and to allow for further developments of this research I will draw parallels between two attitudes of making knowledge and art; concepts of *scientia sexualis* and *ars erotica* as presented by Michel Foucault, and which are a direct response to the growing psychoanalytic discourses in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is imperative to re-introduce those ideas again as to break away from the causality of the formative epistemology of the concept of the palimpsest as a layered structure, which only leads us to accommodate the value of

methods of de-layering. On the other hand, when faced with palimpsestuousness, one should embrace the sexual intimacy that not only holds this phenomenon 'together', but also creates an experience of difference in relation to how knowledge/art becomes impactful.

*Scientia sexualis* and *ars erotica*, as developed by Michel Foucault in his *History of Sexuality vol.1: The Will to knowledge*, are a perfect example of a change in the attitude of making knowledge and art that this research speaks of. As I will argue below, it is through embracing *ars erotica* as a methodology of art practice, one can develop a different (queered) way of making art, which breaks away from the classical forms of revealing, as those which provide an understanding in practices of making and thinking art.<sup>20</sup>

The system presented and problematized by Foucault in relation to the social conditions developed in Western society in the wake of postmodernism, evaluates the concepts of power and knowledge, and their entanglement. His work often focuses on the study of social 'pocket dimensions', a spaces and histories often removed from general historical narratives. It is through them that he allows us to recognise the way we encounter, disseminate and validate notions of truth, identity, selfhood and difference.<sup>21</sup>

For Foucault, the analysis of the modernity and the practices of psychoanalysis, as those that ground (one might argue to this day) the late 20<sup>th</sup> century assessments of knowledges, draws its prerogative on the privileged power from a social method of

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<sup>20</sup> By 'classical forms of revealing' I understand the beginnings and subsequent embedment of the psychoanalytic discourses as a form of causality of logic based on extortion of truth. This research, even though visibly engaged in the study of practices that involve my own body, does not look at the study of self as an autonomous pre-existing figure of thought. Instead I am here dealing with the form of knowing and making sense that does not require a priori form of identity as an agent of knowledge. I will explore it further in discussion of intra-actions and quantum queer ideas presented by Karen Barad (see "*At home*").

<sup>21</sup> Tamsin Spargo, *Foucault and Queer Theory*. Cambridge, (New York: Totem Books,1999), p. 1 – 13.

confession. He criticises this methodology, through looking at the emergence of homosexuality as an identity, and argues that the need to *exhort* truths from a subject, who is often in a subjugated position, creates a paradigm of power that develops into a dry, lifeless system of rules and sub-sequential transgressions. This way, he sees the control in/of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century rise in medical studies influenced the social understanding of 'correct' experience of concepts of time, space and pleasure.<sup>22</sup> In short, Foucault tries to navigate the reading of history as to show the moments which developed what we would refer to as 'normativity' – a vague state of socio-political affairs that through proliferation of representations of identities, knowledges, art, sciences (etc.) delivers a binary system composed out of attitudes of power and oppression.

This analysis of modernity, allows Foucault to develop a concept of *scienta sexualis* (Eng. *science of sexuality*), which he describes, by reading the 19<sup>th</sup> century psychiatrist, as:

... a time when the most singular pleasures were called upon to pronounce a discourse of truth concerning themselves, a discourse which had to model itself after that which spoke, not of sin and salvation, but of bodies and life processes – the discourse of science.<sup>23</sup>

*Scienta sexualis* developed in an environment that emerged from the excess desire to quantify and assume power over sexual behaviour of a human subject. It marked identities, perversions and 'normal' functioning, and developed practices that aimed at correcting and rehabilitating the subject from its own 'ill' desires. Through those practices the sciences claimed a commodity (ownership) of knowledge over sex and

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<sup>22</sup> Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality Volume 1: The Will To Knowledge*, trans. Robert Hurley (London: Penguin Books, 1998), p. 35.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

pleasure, and, what Foucault notes later in the text, delivered a *discourse that must produce its truth*.<sup>24</sup>

This delivering of a truth, as that which, when revealed, allows one to develop an understanding of these issue, resonates very closely with my struggle with layered surfaces. The quantification of discursive power of *scientia sexualis* lies directly in its causality of logic. What I mean by that, is a cause-effect based systems of knowledges that allow for the multiplication of ethical dichotomies and distribution of economic of power. As I mentioned before, Dillon's understanding of *detective* practice in relation to concepts of the palimpsest, and Foucault's confessional basis of *scientia sexualis*, both speak about similar approaches and similar methodological attitudes towards developing and establishing knowledges. At the same time, those two methodologies of practices, exist only in the layered and palimpsestic understanding of meaning and matter. Yet it is through further reading of what appears to be on the first sight just another binary recognition of knowledge that Foucault allows us to recognise the importance of the attitude of binding, not dissimilar to the incestuality of palimpsestuousness that Dillon desires.

Even though Dillon tries to focus her attention to palimpsestuousness as a new form of critical and discursive space, she still recognises that layered structure of the palimpsest and does not question the stability of this methodology. To challenge the palimpsestic layers, one must disobey conditions of modernity, or as Foucault refers to homosexuality before *scientia sexualis*, to become a *temporal aberration* – a creature that enables and channels, and embodies the other and often non-linear structures of meanings and material.

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<sup>24</sup> Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality Volume 1: The Will To Knowledge*, trans. Robert Hurley (London: Penguin Books, 1998), p. 65.

The palimpsest in both material and conceptual form, is a representation of a layered structure. As a concept the palimpsest becomes associated with the multiplicity of layers and as such furthers the development of attitudes in methodological approaches, which re-enables Modernist pragmatism of thought that wants to expose and reveal in order to generate knowledge. It is not to say that such approaches do not generate any significant, or impactful synthesis of thought, but what this research recognises is that with the emergence of an odd adjective of palimpsestuous the above attitude in research needs to be challenged and changed.

My fascination with this multi-layered surface does not lead me to recover or de-layer this surface, but rather it allows me to understand the intimacy that allows for this synthesis of matter and meaning to exist. This intimacy, as we discussed before in this text, is a material methodology of practice that connects, binds and at the same time embodies the workings of sexual and erotic art practices.

To understand why palimpsestuousness has such a vibrant critical potential in art research, one needs to 'slide off' the normal and supposed logics of causality, and instead embrace the different approaches in how knowledge and art do matter.<sup>25</sup> To perform this "sliding off" I will analyse the way Foucault evaluates changes in methodologies provoked by the rise of psychoanalytic discourses. In doing so, I will show the need to embrace sexual and erotic art investigations as those that can operate outside the normativity of causality.

Michel Foucault presents an alternative to the evidence based dimension of *scientia sexualis* by introducing us to *ars erotica* – a methodology of erotic art. Foucault

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<sup>25</sup> Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and The Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, (London: Duke University Press, 2007), p. 3-38. - At this point I want to bring to attention my usage of the term matter. Similarly, to Karen Barad in her text *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, I use 'matter' as both a state of corporeal thingness and a state of affair that is of bother and slight annoyance.

presents this to establish a possibility of a difference in attitude to confessional/revealing methodologies that emerged from the Western medicalisation of sexuality and from influences of Christianity. As he writes:

In the erotic art, truth is drawn from pleasure itself, understood as a practice, and accumulated as experience; pleasure is not considered a relation to the permitted and the forbidden, nor by reference to a utility, but first and foremost in relation to itself. <sup>26</sup>

The idea that ‘truth’ – and here we should expand this concept to include term ‘knowledge’ – is not extracted or revealed, as per confessional connotations of *scientia sexualis*, but instead is presented as a *practice* and *experience*, affecting the way one can understand and expand notion of palimpsestuousness into art practices and research. It is because *ars erotica* is a knowledge of pleasure for pleasure sake that this research embarks on understanding the queerness of *art erotica* and even further how practices of erotic art is a form of methodology.

The critique that Foucault brings with his introduction and contextualisation of *ars erotica* is based on his interest in a state of pleasure in discourses on power. For him, pleasure, especially an erotic one, is what provokes and gives ground to the function of *ars erotica* within society. As he discusses the social and epistemological changes, brought by the growing scientific discourses on sexuality of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, he mostly pays attention to the experiences of pleasure. For Foucault *ars erotica* is a methodology of pleasure-for-pleasure sake, developed to enhance and expand the experiences of pleasure. <sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality Volume 1: The Will To Knowledge*, trans. Robert Hurley (London: Penguin Books, 1998), p. 57.

<sup>27</sup> Michel Foucault develops concept of pleasure in relation to the network of power in his follow up volume *History of Sexuality Volume 2: The Use of Pleasure*. By looking at the ancient Greek and Roman culture he criticises 20<sup>th</sup> century post-Christian approaches towards pleasure, which he sees as those that operate on a principle of binary oppositional relations – ‘wrong’ and ‘correct’ pleasure experience. In my research, I will be exploring pleasure further in “*Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.2.0)*” as a form of

Reading *ars erotica* in relation to the expansion of understanding of palimpsestuousness, puts this research directly at ‘moment and in space’<sup>28</sup> of the incestuous merger. It is in that ‘moment and space’ that we can understand the queerness of both *scientia sexualis* and *ars erotica*. Foucault does not present those concepts as an opposite narrations of the production of the knowledge. For him it is because of the introduction of the ‘foreign’ erotic art into the Western methodology of de-layering as presented through *scientia sexualis*, that we can achieve an original body of work – work that leads to form of knowledge, which arrives at conclusion and openness. Even Foucault notices that struggle and fluctuation of understanding when he, in some way, delineates the dichotomy of his own narrative of *scientia sexualis* and *ars erotica*. As he writes:

Perhaps this production of truth, intimidated though it was by the scientific model, multiplied, intensified, and even created its own intrinsic pleasures. It is often said that we have been incapable of imagining any new pleasures. We have at least invented a different kind of pleasure: pleasure in the truth of pleasure, the pleasure of knowing that truth [...] the specific pleasure of the true discourse of pleasure [...] the formidable “pleasure of analysis” (in the widest sense of the latter term) which the West has cleverly been fostering for several centuries: all this constitutes something like the errant fragments of an erotic art that is secretly transmitted by confession and the science of sex. Must we conclude that our *scientia sexualis* but an extraordinarily subtle form of *ars erotica*, and that it is the Western, sublimated version of that seemingly lost tradition? Or must we suppose that all these pleasures are only the by-products of a sexual science, a bonus that compensates for its many stresses and strains?<sup>29</sup>

Dillon and Foucault both find themselves at an odd and unfamiliar ground of knowledge production. Dillon refers to it as palimpsestuousness, a moment of non-causal delineation of meaning that produces its own sense. For Foucault, even though not by

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intimacy, by arranging it with the concept of *parrhesia* and the way it allows us to experience a post-human states of practice of art.

<sup>28</sup> By ‘moment in space’ I mean to describe an experience of space and temporality. I use this phrasing as to stay close in language to what I later refer to as *homespun* rigour of this research.

<sup>29</sup> Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality Volume 1: The Will To Knowledge*, trans. Robert Hurley (London: Penguin Books, 1998), p. 50-52.

his own words, we can read this 'moment and space' as a potential queer phenomena, and even further as a queer, and artistic methodology of practice. It is through producing such deregulated instances of sense and meaning that one can realise that erotic art position in normative produces an experience of uncertainty and interruption. My task, and the topic of the further reading of this disjointed thesis, is to contextualise and embody such interruption to produce a methodology of artistic erotic practice, which inhabits the 'moment in space' of the incestuous merger of matter and meaning.

# MATERIALIZING PALIMPSEST

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Interrogation into *palimpsestuousness* as a queer  
enactment in artistic research

*PALIMPSESTUOUS PALIMPSEST*

# Palimpsestuous Palimpsest

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## QUEER METHODOLOGY

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In this piece of writing I will discuss how contemporary queer theory and practice can be approached as an artistic methodology. To do that, I will navigate the history of the term 'queer' as to deliver its meaning as seen through this research, which will allow me to analyse and produce a critical enquiry into three performance works created during my research and further the notion of palimpsestuousness as a form of queer synthesis of matter and meaning.

According to Annamarie Jagose, queer theory emerged from the entanglement of the post-structuralism, feminism theory and Lesbian and Gay Studies in the 1980s and 1990s. Its critical body of inquiry was delivered through the AIDS crisis in Western society and the political activism that followed.<sup>1</sup> Jagose in her text *Queer Theory: An Introduction*, argues that through the rise of the gay liberation movement, feminism and the re - appropriation of the terminology of 'queer', queer theory allows us to question concepts of gender, sexual identity and normativity. Jagose writes:

Broadly speaking queer describes those gestures or analytical models which dramatize incoherencies in the allegedly stable relations between chromosomal sex, gender and sexual desire...queer locates and exploits the incoherencies in those three terms which stabilise heterosexuality.<sup>2</sup>

This 'broad' definition directly speaks to most common contemporary understanding of the term queer that functions as an 'umbrella' that incorporates LGBT identities and culture. As such, even though relevant, this definition of queer needs a destabilisation in order, and here my task as a researcher becomes less clear, to describe it as used in this research. Where focus should remain is in the fact that Jagose recognises and develops

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<sup>1</sup> Annamarie Jagose, *Queer Theory: An Introduction* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), p. 93 – 95.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 3.

critical and analytical functioning of the term. It is how I deploy queer – not necessarily as a strategy that challenges socio-political standing of normativity, but as a methodology that allows us to rethink how we practice art and with it how we practice knowledge.

This potential is further picked up by David Halperin, who places queer in *whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant*<sup>3</sup>. To place queer studies and theory as a way of thinking and being that is at *odds with the normal* means to allow it not only to question the stability of supposed normativity, but also, and this comes from the normalisation of this term within the academic community, and community at large, to allow it its own system that does not require constant positioning in anti-normativity. This is visible in later Halperin essay titled *Normalisation of Queer Theory*. In this text, he is responding to growing academic usage of queer theory and the fact that it functions as a substitute to the post-structural methodology of *deconstruction* introduced by Jacques Derrida. Halperin writes:

Those working in English, history, classics, anthropology, sociology, or religion would now have the option of using queer theory, as they had previously used Deconstruction, to advance the practice of their disciplines by “queering” them. The outcome of those three moves was to make queer theory a game the whole family could play. This has resulted in a paradoxical situation: as queer theory becomes more widely diffused throughout the disciplines, it becomes harder to figure out what’s so very queer about it.<sup>4</sup>

Being *at odds* suggests that the meaning and matter that emerges from queer theory not only escapes normative coherence, or as I refer to it earlier – causality – in both living experiences and in academic research, but also is removed and dismissed as inadequate and not rigorous. Halperin in his writing navigates queer theory not as a method that

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<sup>3</sup> David Halperin, *Saint Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 79.

<sup>4</sup> David Halperin, “The Normalization of Queer Theory” in *Journal of Homosexuality*, 45 (2-3, 2003), p. 342.

allows for deconstruction of knowledges, but rather as a discipline – a system of knowledge itself that deregulates and actively does not look for approval by the thing that it is *at odds* with. Noreen Giffney refers to a state of queer that doesn't rely on normativity and does not position itself in oppositional relation to make sense as an *excess*. She writes:

There is an unremitting emphasis in queer theoretical work on fluidity, über-inclusivity, indeterminacy, indefinability, unknowability, the preposterous, impossibility, unthinkability, unintelligibility, meaninglessness and that which is unrepresentable or uncommunicable. This theoretical emphasis points to the excess which cannot be categorized, that which is not or cannot be expressed through language; the queer remainder.<sup>5</sup>

Giffney's work allows us to clarify the notion of queer not as an approach to knowledge, which passes the structural critique of normative assessment and judgment, but as a world with its own power and gravity – constantly changed and re-shaped by its own instability. Queer in my work functions as such reference. It points at the direction and spatial, methodological and sexual orientation, which does not fit-in, yet at the same time embodies a field of knowledge that, similarly to artistic research and methodologies, focuses on the praxis-as-practice. This is very much presented in William Haver's essay, *Queer Research; or, How to practice Invention to the Brink of Intelligibility*. In here he develops a queer form of methodology that questions the model of the exchange of knowledge as commodity but also reminds us that 'queer' is a type of interruption that forces one to experience instability.<sup>6 7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Noreen Giffney, "Introduction: The 'q' Word" in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Queer Theory*, ed. N. Giffney and M. O'Rourke, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), p. 8.

<sup>6</sup> By 'normative research practices' I refer to the spectrum of attitudes in establishing validity and way of production of meanings and matters, by what Foucault would refer to as confessional practices, that try to reveal, or exhort the form of quantifiable truth and through that reinforce the idea that 'truth' is a priori existence that needs to be made visible.

<sup>7</sup> Jean Genet's work became quite prominent in my own research. William Haver describes him as "least dishonest political thinker", through which he attributes him with the critical and intellectual

The practices of interruptions, or as earlier referred to as methods of ‘sliding off’, disjoint the emerging practices and offer us an opportunity for questioning and creating original forms of knowledges. For Haver ‘interruption’ as a means of challenging normative research practices, draws on the work of the French writer, philosopher and literary theorist, Maurice Blanchot, in which he develops the idea of three types of *distinguished* interruptions in speech. Blanchot writes:

A change such that to speak (to write) is to cease thinking solely with a view of unity, and make the relations of words an essentially dissymmetrical field governed by discontinuity; as though, having renounced the uninterrupted force of coherent discourse, it were a matter of drawing out a level of language where one might gain the power not only to express oneself in an intermittent manner, but also to allow intermittence itself to speak: (...) a non-pontificating speech capable of clearing the two shores separated by the abyss, but without filling in the abyss or reuniting its shores: a speech without reference to unity.<sup>8</sup>

For both Blanchot and Haver, interruption allows for a dis-causality of meaning to occur, allowing for something else to occur. The unpredictability of this ‘else’ is similarly what Halperin ask for at the end of his essay.

If queer theory is going to have the sort of future worth cherishing, we will have to find ways of renewing its radical potential and by that I mean not devising some new and more avant-garde theoretical formulation of it but, quite concretely, reinventing its capacity to startle, to surprise, to help us think what has not yet been thought.<sup>9</sup>

We can approach a move from a layered palimpsestic surface into palimpsestuousness in a similar way. It cannot be denied that palimpsest is an entity made from layers, and the attitude to reveal and to de-layer the elements of this surface, and here I mean both in material and in a conceptual sense, allows to us to experience the linearity of history.

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prominence. For me Genet’s work clarifies the experience of discontinuity and general, and purposeful, disregard for dichotomy based narratives of thought. Genet’s work allowed me to designate the experience of palimpsestuousness as that of home (*At home*).

<sup>8</sup> Maurice Blanchot, *The Infinite Conversation*, trans. Susan Hanson, (New York: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), p. 77 – 78

<sup>9</sup> David Halperin, “The Normalization of Queer Theory” in *Journal of Homosexuality*, 45 (2-3,2003), p. 343

Methodologies in artistic research are necessarily emergent and subject to repeated adjustment, rather than remaining fixed throughout the process of enquiry<sup>12</sup>.

What becomes clear is the similarities between queer and practice-led research enquires. What Haver, Halperin, Barrett, and Bolt bring to attention is that each new artistic and queer research needs an emergent creation. It is not just a re-purposing of existing methods, but a way of producing matter and meaning that at its core cares and rises responsibility<sup>13</sup> to praxis and practice – meaning life and art as intertwined and not separate entities, but rather a province and dimension of palimpsestuousness.

In artistic research and queer research the core of the project is always in need of reshuffling and renegotiating, which sets up an assumed researcher on a certain type of wondering. This wondering allows for the research to create its own structure, which in turns feeds back into research itself. Similarly, it is the task of palimpsestuousness as a dimension of research to exhibit a self-made structure of its own meaning, that cannot be reduced primarily to the causality of history of its emergence as a conceptual entity. Instead, palimpsestuousness is a sexual and erotic reflection of a certain economy of praxis/practice. Praxis and practice become not separate entities – but rather ways of making - both in relation to ethics of living and in relation of making art. This notion is very much captured by Elizabeth Price, who through her practice-led PhD research focused on creating a reflexive writing around her continuous practice of creating a sculpture. The piece *Boulder* (1996), emerged as a large-scale sphere, created from a

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<sup>12</sup>E. Barret, B. Bolt (ed), *Practice As Research – Approaches To Creative Arts Enquiry*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2007, p. 6

<sup>13</sup> By responsibility I mean a critical ability to respond. This, as I will discuss further, understanding allows us to develop a form of friendship and belonging, that exists in encounter with an object/subject of art.

repetitive usage of brown packing tape. Price writes continuously on her experience in making this piece:

I unwind packing tape from the roll upon which it is commercially distributed. As I unwind it from the roll, I rewind it again, but not onto a roll, only onto itself... this sphere is quite big now. I get confused exactly how big it is. <sup>14</sup>

Price reflects on her rigorous undoing and doing, as to set up a critical narrative of her practice. In a way, her piece cannot exist outside of this reflection as both continuously interact with each-other, stabilising, realising and communicating the synthesis of matter and meaning. At the same time, it opens what Amelia Jones – performance artist and theorist - calls a *process of meaning production*.<sup>15</sup> My task in developing a queer methodology lies directly in processes that open the meaning production through transgressions.

In her text *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Other*, Sarah Ahmed deals with the experience of disorientation as a queer methodology of practice that provides us with a form of understanding transgressions and ‘sliding offs’ that I discussed before. Ahmed uses disorientation by analysing orientation from terminology of ‘sexual orientation’ as to give sense to the processes of facing of the phenomena of the queer object. As she writes:

(...) queer objects support proximity between those who are supposed to live on parallel lines, *as points that should not meet*. A queer object makes contact possible. Or, to be more precise, a queer object would have a surface that supports such contact. The contact is bodily, and it unsettles that line that divides spaces as worlds, thereby creating other kinds of connections where unexpected things can happen.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Elizebeth Price, *Excerpts from sidekick, Journal of Visual Art Practice*, Vol.2, No. 1-2, July 2002, p.108 – 112

<sup>15</sup> A. Jones, A. Stephenson (ed.), *Performing the Body, Performing the Text*, London: Routledge, 1999, p.2. - Part of my practice-led research deals with the performance of forms of textuality (starting with the performance *Fatima* in 2015). This will be discussed further in relation to temporality and the experience of spatiality through performance and performance-led practice in the following text.

<sup>16</sup> Sarah Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham, London: Duke University Press, 2007), p. 169

The connections that Ahmed speaks of are very much in line with the development of palimpsestuousness presented by Dillon. It is through the type of those connections that Dillon starts her enquiry into palimpsestuousness, and it is because of them that my research developed into the study of the character and experience of those connections, which bind not only layers in the palimpsest, but also can create a 'moment in space'. As already mentioned in the *(Another) Introduction to palimpsest*, Dillon calls *palimpsestuous relationality* (palimpsestuousness) an *intimacy that is branded as illegitimate*<sup>17</sup> by referring to it as incestuous in character. I argue that because of the incestuous branding of the palimpsestuousness, one not only can approach it through queer theory, but in fact the palimpsestuousness, which does not seek to reveal the layers, is an emergent methodology of queer theory in artistic research. This is further discussed in other submitted texts, for now I want to develop further the difference between incestuous palimpsestuousness as described by Dillon and palimpsestuousness that emerges from a sense of queer theory and practice.

Sarah Dillon reads incestuous palimpsestuousness through her approach to Philippe Lejeune relationship to his typewriter. I argue that, his typewriter becomes a fetish as understood in the contemporary discourse of sexuality. As he gives Barthes recognition to the development of this term he writes:

I amused myself by attributing to [Barthes] this type of portmanteau word that I took pleasure in – in development inspired by my own relationship with my typewriter, and, perhaps also with incest!<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Sarah Dillon, *The Palimpsest: Literature, Criticism, Theory* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2007), p. 5

<sup>18</sup> Philippe Lejeune, correspondence with Sarah Dillon in *The Palimpsest, Literature, Criticism, Theory*, p.129.

I understand his relation to his typewriter as perverse and illegitimate, and erotic and sexual in its matter and meaning. It very much might be that we can refer to Lejeune's typewriter as a *queer object* that Ahmed speaks of. In the case of Lejeune, his erotic attitude towards the object of his typewriter becomes than a temporal interruption of the pre-supposed identity and function of both typewriter and him as a writer/reader/maker. It is because of that interruption that a new type of intimate space of knowledge opens, and it is in that space that subject and objects become familiar with each-other.<sup>19</sup>

Dillon and Lejeune suggest need for reconfiguration of palimpsestuousness by attributing it with the sense of spatiality and temporality. This sense is what I refer to throughout this thesis as 'moment in space'. As presented in *(Another) Introduction to palimpsest*, and picked up in here the neologism of palimpsestuous as an adjective that characterises a space and time of a bond that holds the layers of the palimpsest together. Arguably, such a space is a queer space of sensual, sexual and erotic logic, that depends on, and is created by the tension of the slantwise connections that operate as illegitimate when seen through traditional narratives of causality.

The amusement that Lejeune speaks of functions as a surplus and unexpected disorientation in his establishing palimpsestuous as an adjective. This amusement and certain feeling of embarrassment continues at every step of writing research in taboo subject of incest, not only by me, but also as stated by Dillon. The usage of the term incest in relation to palimpsestuousness makes this work hard to read/listed. My many readings of Sarah Dillon's work in relation to the palimpsestuous and the transgression it provokes can help us to understand how such destabilising amusement continues. In

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<sup>19</sup> The type of irreducibility described here will be further explored with Karen Barad concept of *intra-action* as described in her book *Meeting the Universe Halfway*. For now the critical point is to reshape the palimpsestuousness as a type of space and type of time that is an interruptive in nature.

her work Dillon recalls her intellectual relationship with her father Michael Dillon, author of *Politics of Security: Towards a Political Philosophy of Continental Thought*, and how it shaped her understanding of palimpsestuousness. In one of the footnotes she writes:

It is a delightful coincidence that the text I have found most useful in my elaboration of the concept of palimpsestuousness here was written by my father.<sup>20</sup>

What becomes even further a delight and amusement, for me, is the fact that in my own reading of her text I could not easily distinguish between the Dillon(s). It is in that disorientation that I intellectually merged them as one synthesis. What she proposes through her delight is that the type of palimpsestuous/incestuous spatiality that refers to a type of intimacy, not only makes critical perversities possible, but also allows for the objects that inhabit this space to become familiar with each other. Her concept of palimpsestuousness deals precisely with the critical space of intimacy that allows for the drawing of connections between beings that could not, or rather should not, be seen as critically important to one another. Yet through sexual and erotic (perverse) practice of reading, that creates an experience of amusement and delight, one allows for this spatial existence to become critical and at the same time reconstruct the traditional layering of the palimpsestic page.

Palimpsestuousness is a character of such spatiality. Dillon's expression of a sense of spatiality when dealing with a history of the palimpsest allows her to refer to it

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<sup>20</sup> Sarah Dillon, *The Palimpsest: Literature, Criticism, Theory* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2007), p. 129 – This is a footnote comment by Dillon, it becomes especially interesting in studying the way that exchange of knowledge happens and how through that a certain ambiguous, or rather pleasurable entity/feeling escapes the form of what is supposed to be the accepted. The work of Michael Dillon deals with the intimate relationship between security and insecurity and is developed through reading of Martin Heidegger's work. As such he does not mention the *palimpsestuous* in his work, but as Sarah Dillon notices he does deal with subjugated types of economies that exist within the world.

as *province* of knowledges. By framing palimpsestuousness as a *province*, Dillon immediately recognises the difference and otherness of this critical spaciality. My research directly deals with the erotic and sexual understanding of this type of dimension, which I discuss in the text titled *At home*, and how one can practice research/art in economy of sexual and erotic difference that gives meaning and ground to such experience of a 'moment in space'.

To practice queer and art as that, which becomes a strategy and a field of knowledge at the same time, for me means to engage in the pleasure that emerges from erotic and sexual praxis, which binds and create a palimpsestuous 'moment in space'. I will discuss the character of this spatiality later in this thesis – for now I want to focus on another aspect of the palimpsestic surface – as to bring closure to the understanding of a queer slantwise move that this research performs. Through next part of this piece of writing I will argue that in Foucault develops understanding of queer theory through his concept of *subjugated knowledges*, and later I will show how by performance art practice one can embody such knowledges to challenge the palimpsest and its layered structure.

## SUBJUGATED KNOWLEDGES

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As this is a practice-led thesis, throughout this research some of my own work, will come into play as to inform and expand upon the theory that I am engaging with. This text functions as such – it informs my reading of palimpsestuousness as a queer enactment by engaging with the philosophical concept of Foucault and my own performance art practice. However, I will not be delivering specific enquiry into performance art overall. Instead I will engage with the sense and experience of the concept of time and space ('moment in space') that they provoke.

Before I do that, I want to deliver a case study of artwork by Henri Jacobi who is a contemporary artist working with the concept of the palimpsest. Through it I want to show how my performance art practice allows me to inhabit palimpsestuousness that emerges from the interruptive field of queer theory, rather than from a historical inquiry into the palimpsest and its linear conceptualisation. This will conclude with the understanding of Foucault's notion of *subjugated knowledges* as presented in his lectures published under title *Society Must be Defended* and how for today's reader this concept directly resonates with epistemological validity of queer theory.<sup>21</sup>

In the case of my art work this requires me to engage with the discussion on how incestuous connections that create a critical and non-layered moment in time and space (palimpsestuousness) becomes a synthesis of meaning and matter. It is exactly through transgressions of queer enactment that palimpsestuousness takes shape in the sensual, sexual and erotic praxis.<sup>22</sup>

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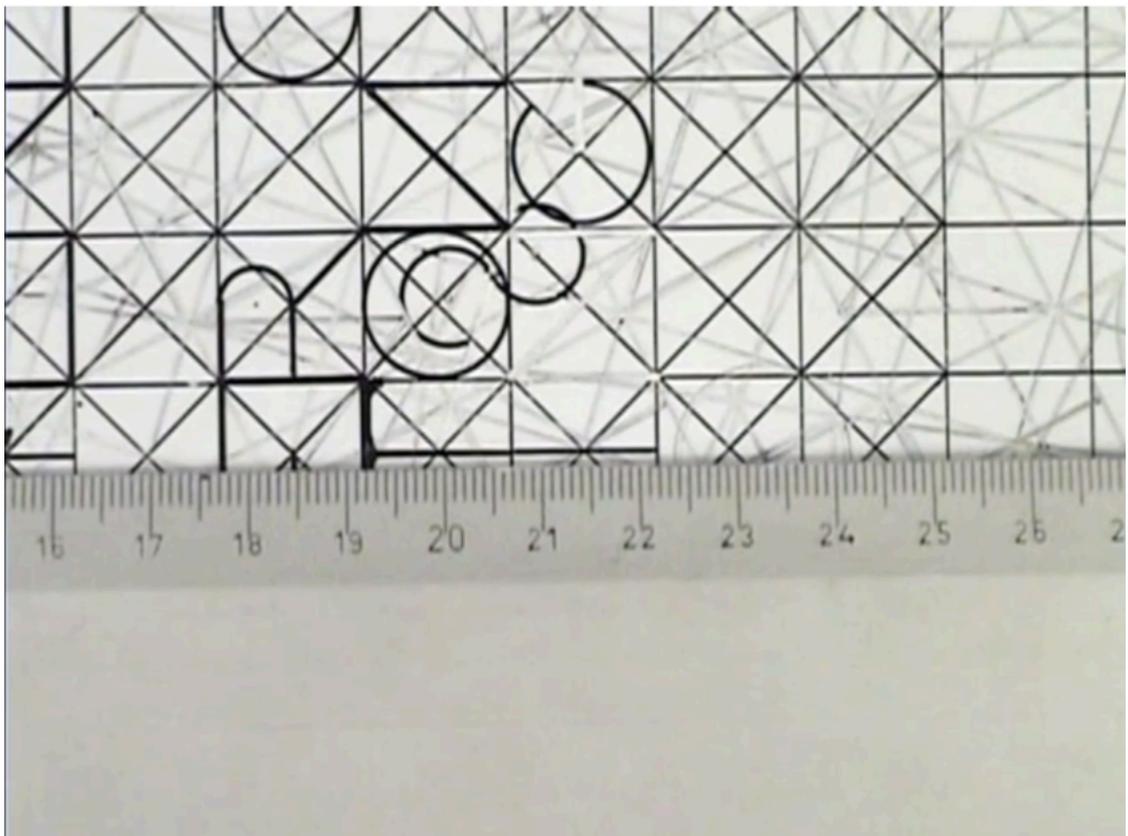
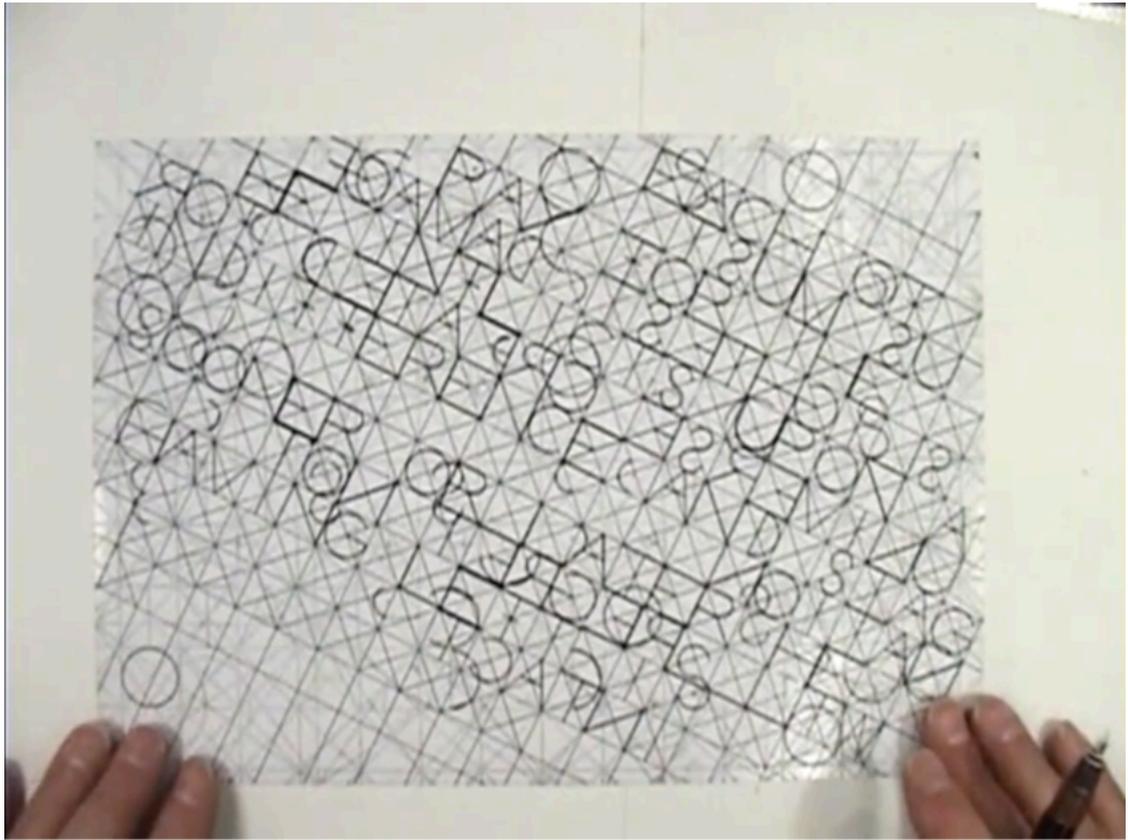
<sup>21</sup> Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures At The College De France, 1975 – 1976*. Ed. Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana. Trans. David Macey, (New Yourk: Picador,2003).

<sup>22</sup> In the other submitted writings, I will be discussing my first attempts on exactly that - to model and to create an enactment of rules on its structure.

As demonstrated in this writing palimpsestuousness is an emerging synthesis of matter and meaning that speaks about an interruptive 'moment in space'. As such it can be viewed as a subject of queer theory. On the other hand, palaeographic palimpsest is a materiality constructed out of multiple layered surfaces, each continuously erased and superimposed. One of the most current and practice-led research into palaeographic palimpsest comes in the form of works by Henri Jacobi (FIG. 1). His work produced during a residency at Gerri Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam, focused on dealing with the changing aspects of a surface through the constant movements of erasure and superimposition. In his artistic research, he produces images that are composed of geometrical shapes that somehow are reminiscent of the cartography of letters that he carves into the white acrylic surface. Even though his work seems often textual in nature, the point of producing those lines and shapes lies in the thickness of the surface that he carves. In some way, it is through his actions that he removes the possibility of legibility from the letter-like geometry of his carvings.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Henri Jacobs, *Surface research*, 2009, <http://vimeo.com/12073279> - in this video Jacobs shows the way he produces his images by tools of erasure and imposition of geometric lines. The surface as he produces it seems to speak about a type of material infinity, a somewhat never ending possibility of those tools, that can be constantly changed and through that never arrive at the finish line.



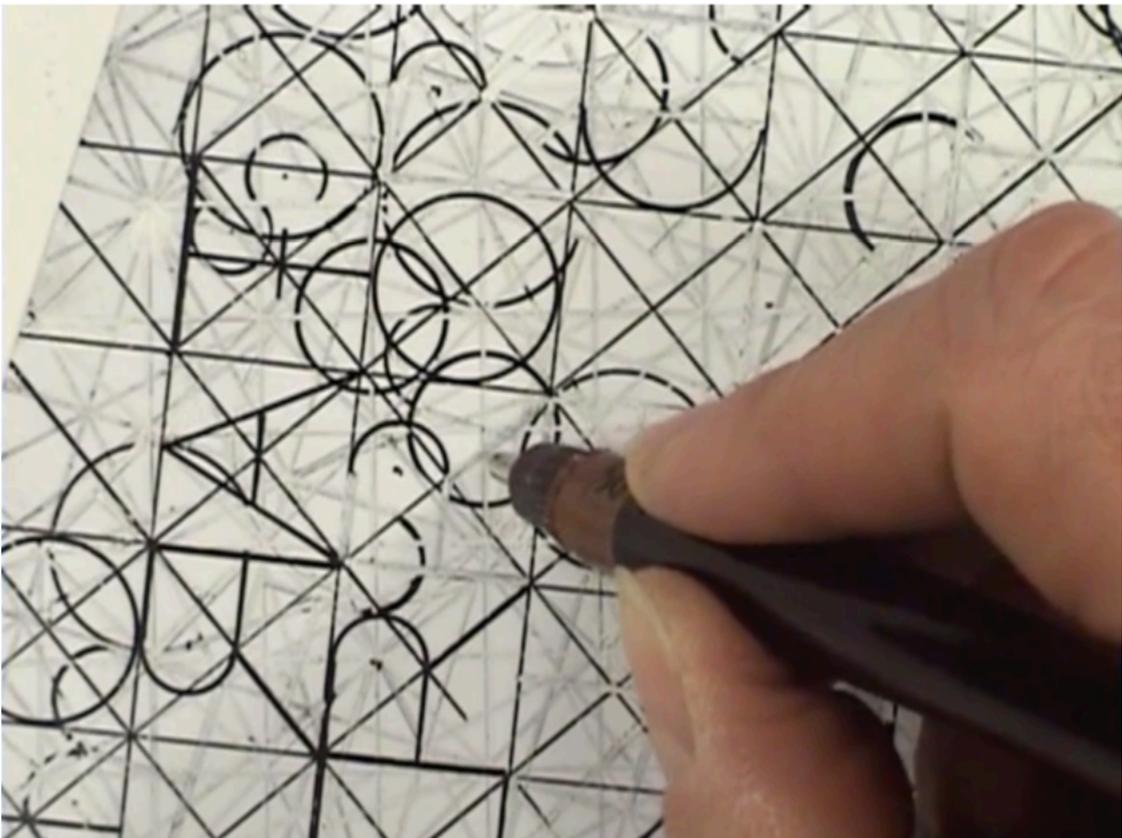
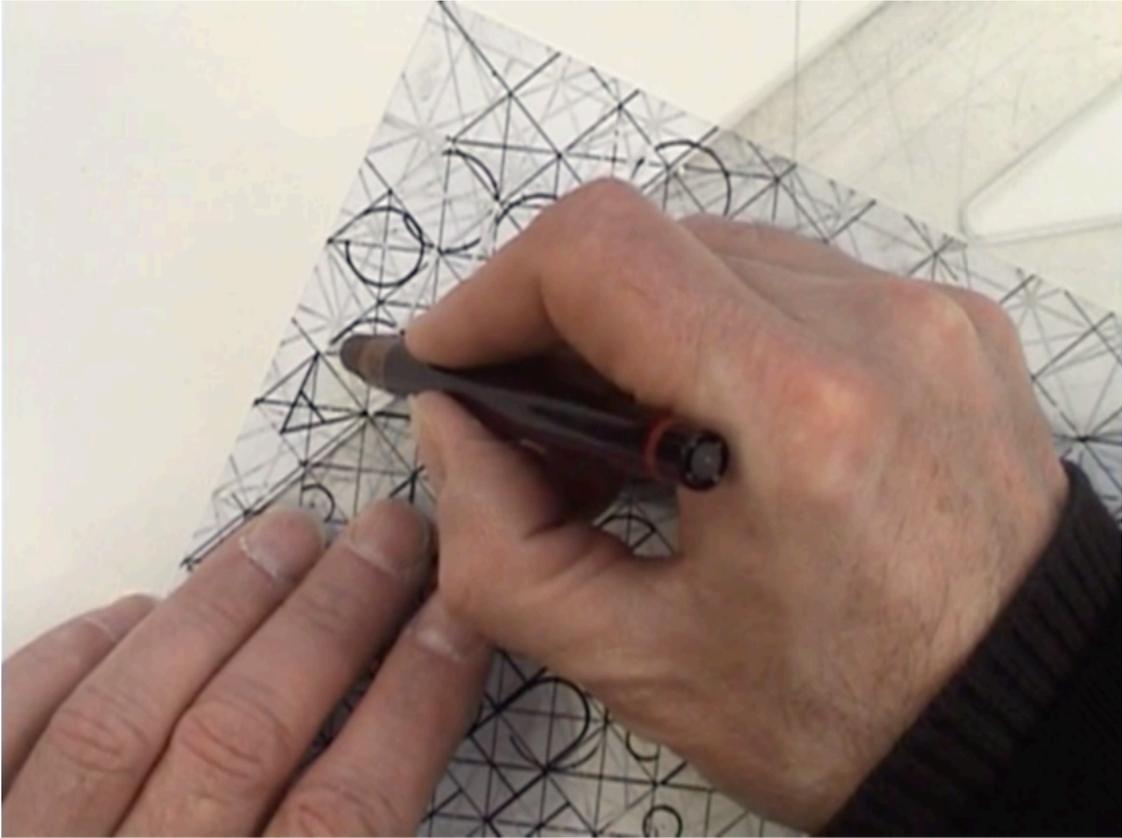


FIG.1 - Henri Jacobs, Stills from the video *Surface Research*, 2009.

Jacobs consciously develops his practice so as to incorporate the elements of the 'making' of the palimpsest and test the aesthetic effects it has on the surface he is exploring. As mentioned before, part of the matter of the palimpsest is in its making – in the erasures, superimpositions and expositions. In his research Jacobs follows the rules of those actions to produce new images and surfaces. His palimpsest reinvents the surface as to develop a study of constant movements. It is through those movements of erasure and superimposition, that his artworks develop and it is because of those movements that his works represent the linearity of the palimpsestic surface.

Even though his practice does not question the palimpsest as a structure, Jacobs form of practice allows us a deeper understanding of the thickness of the matter of the layered palimpsest. Yet it seems that the conceptual meaning of this type of matter still relies on the existence of layers and on the meaning that the multi-folds of practices that produce those layers give to it.

His practice not only stabilises the palimpsest as a layered structure, but because of the fascination that he presents with the continuous movements of erasure and superimposition, it creates a performative practice that could also be referred to as layered. Jacobs does not try to reveal and extort the truth of the underwriting instead he finds the technology of making in the continuity of reproducing the actions that made the palimpsest possible. As such this methodological approach in his artistic research does not build up on the intimacy and sensuality of the thickness of layers – rather it 'dries' this thickness, making it exposed, and visible.

This furthers the need for a different way of orientating palimpsestuousness. Through the understanding of my own practice as a form of expanded performance that produces 'matter' in the form of film, photography and digital collages, I seek to investigate the possibility of dis-placing layers to the extent of them becoming not

important. Palimpsestuousness as a perverted plurality that can be seen as a version of the palimpsest, if looked at from the role that palimpsest plays in relation to layering and de-layering, but it is also a perverted plurality that through the intimacy and illegibility of its phonetic (incestuous) origins, creating an experience of a 'moment in space' that interrupts even its own chrononormativity.<sup>24</sup>

As discussed before the stability of a typical palimpsest depends on its erased and superimposed layered structure. This erased underwriting is also a space that I want to challenge both with my performance practice and with the understanding of Michel Foucault notion of subjugated knowledges.

The underwriting or, *scriptio inferior*, is a part of the palimpsestic manuscript that was erased, rubbed off in order to provide a space for the new piece of text. It does not have any legible connection to the layer on top of it, other than a form in which it is produced. In the case of *The Archimedes Palimpsest*, as discussed in *(Another) Introduction to palimpsest*, the underwriting was an actual treaty on mathematics and geometry scribed by Archimedes himself. There was no reason for this text to be erased in the first place other than the economic value of paper (velum) at the time of re-inscription.

The existence of the other timely ghostly presence of the *scriptio inferior* in the materiality of the palimpsest is a marker that obligates methods and methodology to focus on its recovery, especially when confronted with a valuable archaeological find. When applied to the conceptual palimpsest that develops in 20<sup>th</sup> century, this *scriptio inferior*, becomes understood as a marker of priori truth that needs to be extracted and collected as to create an acceptable and legible version of knowledge. We can conclude,

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<sup>24</sup> Chrononormativity is a concept set up by Elizabeth Freeman. It deals with the assessment of day-to-day life as that, which is imposed by relationship between productivity and temporality.

that because of the rise in west of sexual science as explained by Foucault, the ground of a valid epistemological system depends on the existence of a marker of hidden priori cause. In this scenario palimpsest becomes a metaphor of causality.

As discussed already in this text, palimpsestuousness as an emergent critical space, needs a renegotiation of the *scriptio inferior*, and its function. When the palimpsest becomes a palimpsestuous 'moment in space' the interrogation of it displaces the *scriptio inferior* from the nook of 'underneath' and places it at the level of visible surface. Its parameters cause palimpsestuousness to simultaneously become illegible, abstract and to revoke its meaning from the necessity of possessing layers.

For the researchers of *The Archimedes Palimpsest* recovering the *scriptio inferior* was and still is a main objective of the work undertaken on this layered surface. At the same time, and in a similar way to the production of *Illumig of My Library* video, my focus was on understanding the movements that Henri Jacobs deals with in his research. Yet when we approach palimpsestuousness described above, layers become less and less significant. It is because palimpsestuousness is incestuous in character that *scriptio inferior* needs to be queered. To do that I will elaborate on how *scriptio inferior* becomes a marker of a social and historical subjugation. One way to understand the logic of such an appropriation comes from a deeper investigation of *subjugated knowledges* as presented in the series of lectures by Foucault titled *Society Must Be Defended*. He writes:

...a whole series of knowledges that have been disqualified as non-conceptual knowledges, as insufficiently elaborated knowledges: naïve knowledges, hierarchically inferior knowledges, knowledges that are below the required level of erudition or scientificity. And it is thanks to the reappearance of those knowledges from below (...), reappearance of what people know at a local level, of those disqualified knowledges, that made the critique possible.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the College De France 1975-76*, ed. Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana, trans. David Nacey, (New York: Picador, 2003) p.7-8.

For Foucault, the rise of the institutionalised discursive position of producing science/knowledge, removes and discards the local and marginalised ways of making sense. It is through their *reappearance* that the social and political power of normalisation and subjugation become visible, and can be a subject to further scrutiny. By drawing a parallel between *scriptio inferior* and *subjugated knowledges* we discover that layering as a scientific strategy of making sense becomes limited - but such limits can be transgressed through local, sexual and erotic engagement. It is through the practices of pleasure and the knowing of pleasure that new methods of making sense can be developed.

*Subjugated knowledges* as described by Foucault are in fact queer knowledges: particular ways of knowing that emerge through the sexual practices of hidden, figural socio-political subjugation. They are the knowledges that operate within the economies of the dirty, marginalised, visceral praxis of self and of community (friendship), knowledges that operate by embodying the *ars erotica*, and become embodied through the clash of this system with *scientia sexualis*. What becomes apparent is the way that these modes of making sense do not function in a normative binary structure, but rather they emerge from and with the practice itself, without a goal and without the need of a confessional extortion of truth. They are in constant and consistent moulding, operating at their own pace. To talk about them as in need of rediscovering would re-produce their classification as supposed 'truths'. Instead in the sensual hands of an erotic researcher, they continuously allow for change in meaning and the possible futurity of knowledge.

This way of thinking/making is not new, rather it is a radical reminder that re-enables one to challenge the normative effects of the layered quality of knowledge

(palimpsestic) and act upon it in an innovative, queer and artistic way. The palimpsestuous palimpsest (a matter of relations) becomes an object of transgressions, not only does it challenge its own materiality, but also enables one to produce meaning through the sensual, sexual and erotic economy of praxis. It is arguably through such moves that a different form of *scriptio inferior* emerges, not necessarily subjugated but rather as an embodiment of a form of subjugation. To refer to something as subjugated, one needs to realise that in some respect, and in some spaces and at some times, a subjugated community does not necessary remain hidden. I will use the example of *open secret* in the relation to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century art practice and how it remained subjugated yet very much visible.

The function of the *open secret* in early 20<sup>th</sup> century art in Europe allowed for the new forms of work/practice to emerge from the often-unheard voices of the social body. Through such practices one can speak of both the excitement of new forms of making and about the socio-political relation of privilege. What I mean here is to establish a connection between the matter of the secret (palimpsestuous *scriptio inferior*) and a matter of subjugation (palimpsestic *scriptio inferior*).

Historically viewers have often found themselves at the loss of understanding as the formal ways of representation and of recognition proved wasteful in relation to rising phenomena of the freedom of 20<sup>th</sup> century art and culture.<sup>26</sup> Avant-Garde practices that in themselves call for the breaking and transgressing of functioning forms and norms create a certain amount of separation through which the viewer or receiver re-embodies his position as that which, even though a witness to, is not a part or the actual making of the work. The viewers detach themselves from the 'thing' in front of

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<sup>26</sup> Christopher Reed, *Art and Homosexuality: A history of Ideas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 69-104.

them because they believe (as that was the only method available) that the understanding of what they are witness to, needs to possess a deeper, more elaborate, hidden structure than they themselves are not part of.<sup>27</sup>

In a similar way Foucault describes the obsession with secrets and sex in relation to Modern society. Per him, the possession of a reveal-able form of secret creates an understandable form of 'making sense' and through that reinforces strategies of creating systems of knowledge and power (or rather normative knowledge and normative power if looked at from a queer perspective), through the systematic oppressions of sexuality. As he writes:

What is peculiar to modern societies, in fact, is not that they consigned sex to a shadow existence, but that they dedicated themselves to speaking of it ad infinitum, while exploiting it as the secret.<sup>28</sup>

The structure of logic created around secret and extraction of it, ravished in the scientific discourses created from the constantly expanding; assumed to be necessary, practice of confession. It is because of this confession/revealing method of making sense, that the social and political notions of identity (such as homosexuality) become known in the form that exists today - as a type of assigned logic and a way of being.

To see an *open secret*, as a type of queer *scriptio inferior* is to understand it as a form of enactment of interruption. It then becomes an underwriting that exposes itself, creating an uncontainable and ungraspable embodiment; it sets a difference through

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<sup>27</sup>Christopher Reed, *Art and Homosexuality: A history of Ideas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 136-48 – It is always a difficult move to imagine queer without the necessity or rather as something else than the LGBT identity politic discourses. Reed's deep investigation of the relationship between discourses in art history and often unspoken stories of the history of homosexuality is an attempt to re-evaluate the normative narrations as to produce a certain series of markers and interruptions, which in turn allow for the queer modes of art to set up a body of practice. It is also important at this point that when dealing with the audience/spectator gaze in relation to Modernism and Avant-Garde there is an assumption of a certain identity (usually white male) as that, which can provide – and because of that identity – has an ability to make judgment. Hence I am referring to the audience of that period as 'he'.

<sup>28</sup> Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality Volume 1: The Will To Knowledge*, trans. Robert Hurley (London: Penguin Books, 1998), p. 35

allowing us to question layered structures and instead focus on the relational position of palimpsestuousness. In a similar way Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick in her book *Epistemology of the Closet*, reads an *open secret* as a system, which challenges the system of secrets by deregulating the binary positionality of private/public.<sup>29</sup> She refers to *open secret* (a homosexual secret) as a *glass closet*, an abstract space that one inhabits that allows for one to be both visible and hidden at the same time. This contradiction invokes a collapse of the binary and with it, an emergence of a different way of knowing. By analysing the literary text of Oscar Wild's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, with the analysis of the arising public (negative) opinion on male homosexuality in early 20<sup>th</sup> century, she both criticises his modernist writing and attributes him to perform *an alibi of abstraction*.<sup>30</sup> What she means by it is the way that homosexuality (identity) as performed in the text of his book, is there only for those who see and for those who know; for those who are in on the secret.<sup>31</sup>

But it is the metaphor of a *glass closet* in relation to male homosexuality, that intrigues me even further. The designation of a space of knowledge that is not 'for everyone' and that actively plays on the presupposed narratives, by rubbing its transgressions in the visible sphere, speak directly to the way one can see palimpsestuousness as emerging from queer theory rather than from historical linearity. It also directly refers to Foucault's *subjugated knowledge* – and by that it changes the way one can approach and understand *scriptio inferior*.

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<sup>29</sup> Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), p. 67-90.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p.164.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p, 169 - I do not deal necessary with social politics of gay male identity, but at the same time the metaphor of a *glass closet* encapsulates the experience of palimpsestuousness.

Work in performance allows for us to inhabit and to experience such type of space. Here I will write about three performance works that I developed while renegotiating and attempting to realise a queered form of *scriptio inferior*.

*Fatima* (FIG. 2) was originally conceived of as a form of embodiment of underwriting as to form a *subjugated knowledge*. It was my first attempt to analyse the role that performance art plays in challenging the normative ways of approaching *scriptio inferior* and its subsequent re-innovation as *subjugated knowledge*. *Fatima* was developed over first two years of my research, it began with a purchase of a simple, black, cotton dress and the wearing of it as to challenge the visibility of my own body in relation to its gendered appearance. In that sense, it was *Fatima's* task to produce an illegible, barely visible, interruptive instance that would challenge the homogeneity of gender and provide me with a temporality to invoke erotic aberrations of my practices.



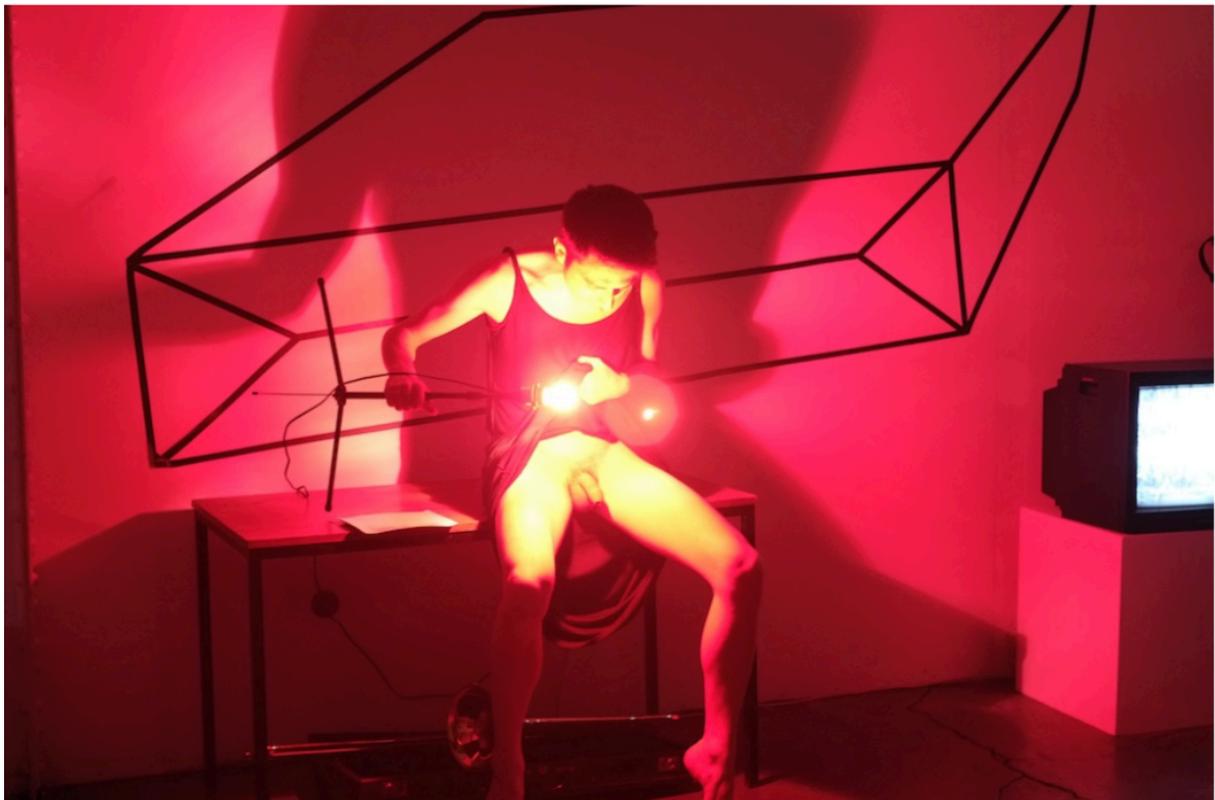


FIG.2 - Jakub Ceglarz, photographs of performance: *Fatima – Do Laseczka // To the Forest*, Curtsey of Richard Short (Centrala Gallery in Birmingham), 2015.

This performance was full of misconducts, mismatches of gender and action and the flux of supposed becoming. Sky Gilbert, a notable LGBT playwright who often performs as Drag Queen Jane, questioned this performance as a form of gender play by asking during our tutorial: *Why do young queens need to deconstruct everything?* But my task was not to directly challenge the continuity of gender and of identity, instead I wanted to deal a direct blow to the supposed normativity of layers as described by palimpsestic adjective.

Peggy Phelan, a notable feminist writer on performance art, places performance art in relation to its in-reproducibility. As she writes:

Performance implicates the real through the presence of living bodies. In performance art spectatorship there is an element of consumption: there are no left-overs, the gazing spectator must try to take everything in. Without a copy, live performance plunges into visibility—in a maniacally charged present—and disappears into memory, into the realm of invisibility and the unconscious where it eludes regulation and control. Performance resists the balanced circulations of finance. It saves nothing; it only spends.<sup>32</sup>

Phelan's definition of performance is necessary in pointing at the irreducibility of live art to become anything else than a temporal phenomenon. *Fatima* takes this notion and gives its audiences continuous mishaps, mistakes and glitches. As she wears a dress – she is not completely assuming a role of gender, as she sings a Polish folk song, she is confusing the audience with the foreign language – as she plays a trumpet she only can make a screech of sound. There is no music, no clear rhythm of performance, instead there is constant and overwhelming sense of destabilisation.

The notion of inability was central to the performance as none of the actions and movements that were performed achieved a supposed level of success. Instead by

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<sup>32</sup> Peggy Phelan, *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 149.

focusing on *Fatima* as a role of *subjugated knowledge* and as a state of becoming that doesn't arrive at the desired finitude, I wanted to question the factuality of layers. This performance allowed me to bypassed the layers and instead focus on the spatiality and temporality that palimpsestuous bonding can create. Through that performance the conceptual palimpsest changed, it becomes dependent on actions, movements, mistakes and multiplicity which in turn produces a sense of excess, a queer excess that transgresses and at the same time is not dependable in logic on the supposed normativity, yet as per Phelan, this excess is present at the time of performance, and then becomes removed and forgotten.

It is because of that sense of confusion, generated by *Fatima*, that we can see that palimpsestuousness is always responsible for Sedgwick's *alibi of abstraction*. It is similarly picked up by Henry Rogers who writes about similar uncertainty, which he refers to as error, or rather 'written error' when he engages with the artworks of Matias Faldbakken. He writes:

We are invited again and again to shift from one form of engagement to another, or rather, in many instances the shifting demanded is so fleeting that we hardly notice what is happening at all.<sup>33</sup>

This invitation and demand puts one in a position of deliberate 'not understanding' and asks one to embrace a 'moment in space'. It disorientates, to use Ahmed's term, which means that there is a need for art research and practice to make sense in and through its transgressions. These processes of shifting and struggle involved in this attempt to

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<sup>33</sup> Henry Rogers, "The Words I Thought I Saw" in *I see what you're saying: The Materialization of words in contemporary art*, ed. Henry Rogers (Birmingham: IKON, 2013), p.7-17 - Rogers through his text expands on the notions of multiplicity of reading and approaches in creating textuality through manifolds of relations of Michael Foucault in his text *This is Not A Pipe*, which in turns deals with the enactment on textuality of the painting *The Treachery of Images* (1928-29) by Rene Magritte.

understand the conditioning of the space and time, inform the way in which the palimpsestuousness becomes a matter of methodology of making art/sense.

In 2015 I developed a new piece of performance that narrated the struggle of binary epistemology in relation to Sedgwick's writing and notion of *open secret*. For Sedgwick, the binary modes of making sense are *a chronic, now endemic crisis*<sup>34</sup> of modern Western culture. *Scriptio inferior* when in relation to the superimposed layers of palimpsest, does not create a binary model. However, reading it as a marker of hidden truth that needs to be exhumed, provides us with a normalisation of its meaning. As Sedgwick calls into question the obsession with creating meaning out of the binary oppositional rationale, I engage in delivering a performative transgression that emerges from the sexual and erotic gay praxis.

In a performance *Becoming Cock-y* (2016), I sit with a mask covering my face in front of the public. Behind me there is a projection of a piece of digital work from my *Cock-y Series* (2015) that reads 'LOVE' written by imposition of the images of the dildo cast from my own penis (FIG. 3). In front of me there is a floor sculpture produce out of unrolled condoms and beige cloth that covers them. The piece I refer to as *Bulges* (2016) (FIG. 4) creates a distance between me and the audience, and enables me to occupy a different temporality then that of an audience. As I sit on a chair I start to read stories of experiences of glory hole sex posted on internet forums (FIG. 5).

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<sup>34</sup> Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), p. 1.

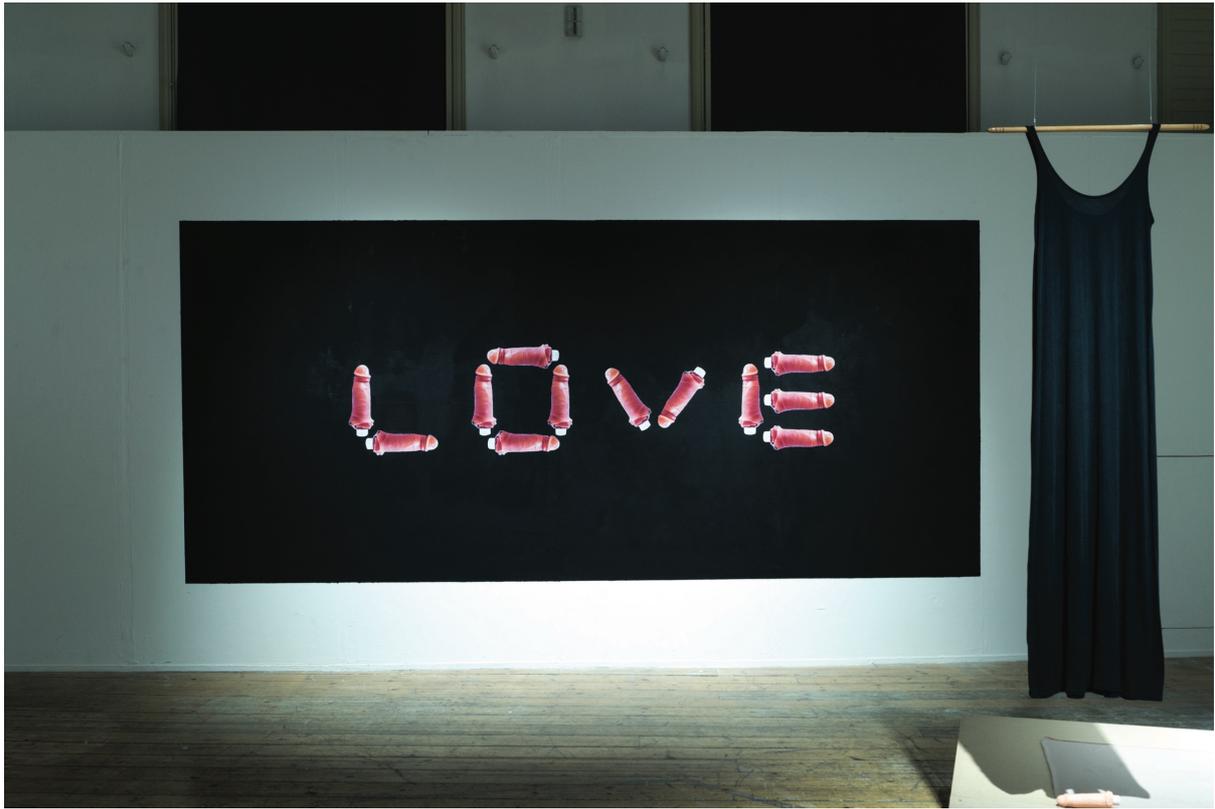


FIG. 3 – Jakub Ceglarz, *Cock-y Love*, digital print, 2016.

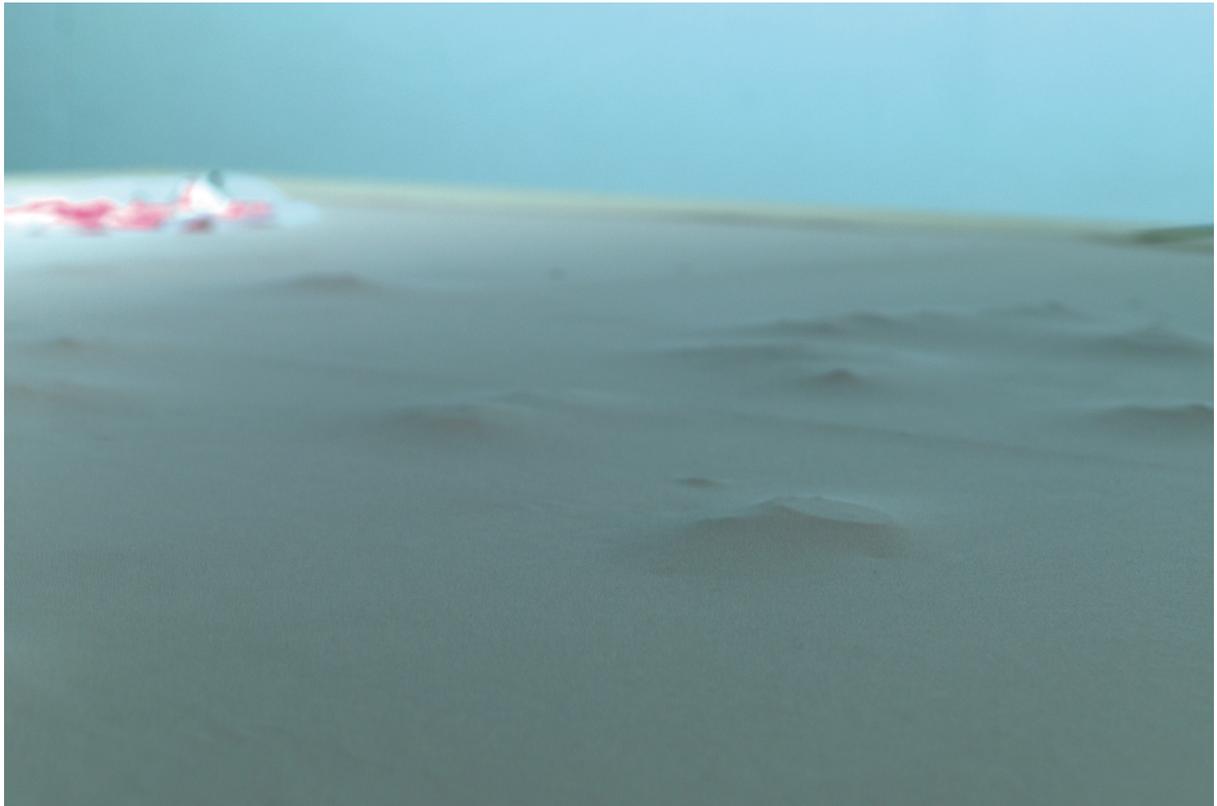


FIG. 4 – Jakub Ceglarz, *Bulges*, floor sculpture, 2016.





FIG. 5 – Jakub Ceglarz, *Becoming Cock-y*, performance. 2016.

I mean here not to reveal the sexual practices of individuals, rather (and that comes from the fact that this performance was a production made for an academic conference), I want to transform the space that I occupied as to hold the audience into

an incestuous secret keeping space. The space of this performance becomes an inhabitable, mouldable *glass closet*, bringing the audience on a secret, yet keeping them at distance by the presence of the beige, bulged cloth.

Through creating this perverted experience of spatiality, the palimpsest changes and with that change meaning of the *scriptio inferior* becomes affected. The ability to change a binary understanding of the space, especially in relation to private/public can be read in Don Anderson's essay on philosophy of glory hole practice. In this essay Anderson writes about the relationship between the glory hole sex and concept of "body without organs" (*BwO*) created by Giles Deleuze<sup>35</sup> and later expanded by him and Felix Guattari.<sup>36</sup> Anderson argues that the act of performing glory hole sex generates forms of becoming, without a priori identity, which function as the *body without organs*. As he writes:

Further, the wall separating the two individuals reduces each to a partial object: the mouth and the penis. The hole facilitates a machinic connection between these two objects. A sex act operating through partial objects, that specifically emphasizes the machinic connection between mouth and penis, and in which the anonymity of the organized body behind the wall functions as a key component in the sex act itself, naturally resists the concept of sex as an activity between two complete individuals whose anthropomorphism and molarity traps desire in a male body. Further, glory hole sex dis-organ-izes the individuals and forces them to take on the role of a machine: a desiring-machine composed of partial objects. The wall completely disengages any interaction between the bodies for which these machines are part.<sup>37</sup>

*Becoming Cock-y*, similarly to the hole between walls, disorganises the bodies in the space, both mine and the audience, creating a multi-voiceness, that is not hierarchal

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<sup>35</sup> Giles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, ed. Constantine V. Boundas trans. Mark Lester Deleuze, (London: The Athlone Press, 1990), p.188.

<sup>36</sup> G. Deleuze, F. Guattari, *A thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi, (London, New York: Continuum, 2004), p. 21.

<sup>37</sup> Don L. Anderson, "The Force that Through the Wall Drives the Penis: The Becomings and Desiring-Machines of Glory Hole Sex" in *Rhizomes: Cultural Studies in Emerging Knowledge*, ed. Michael O'Rourke, Issue 11/12, 2005/06, <http://rhizomes.net/issue11/anderson/index.html>, accessed on 12.10.2016.

and oppositional, but rather that inhabits a different understanding of a 'moment in space'.

This multi-voiceness tempted me to start to write as *Fatima*, and allow for this written component of my thesis to inhabit such a multiplicity too. However, I write about this in more details in *Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.2.0)* text, *Fatima's* meaning in my performances, and meaning of that body that performs, comes from the simple notion of *wearing*; of changing the appearance and through it changing the parameters of body to the extent of it not being able to return to its priori state.<sup>38</sup>

The notion of *wearing* as an action that produces palimpsestuous experience became very much inhabited and embodied in my most recent performance. *Shaky* (2017) performed at Centrala Gallery in Birmingham, deals with *wearing* as a production of non-layered multiplicity (FIG.6). In this performance, again I wear a mask with the word 'BOOM' shimmering on its surface. The t-shirt printed with the word 'CUM' in a font of a recognizable brand, places the viewer directly at the experience of sexual and erotic praxis. My body repeats the lifting of weights producing screeching sounds. Those sounds come from the contact microphone hidden under my shirt. This microphone picks up movement of the shirt against the skin and feeds it to the room. In the breaks between 'exercise' I play my humorous songs that I reordered earlier. One of those songs repeats the phrase 'I DO PERFORMANCE', others are a result of drunken free flowing speech. It is not the lyrics that bring the meaning to the whole production – it is the contrast achieved by physically struggling body with the lyrical humour of the songs.

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<sup>38</sup> This is also visible in my practices of photography. As in case of *Landscape of Leather*, that I discussed in *(Another) Introduction to palimpsest*, the relationship between my body and a camera is incestuous and through it the meaning arises in this relationship. It also means that object 'me' and object 'camera' disband their individualisation to give space to a new and temporal synthesis of matter and meaning.





FIG.6 – Jakub Ceglaz, Shaky, performance, Centrala Gallery, Birmingham, 2017.

This time multi-voiceness becomes even further expanded on. The slurring speech of the songs, heavy breathing of the body that struggles with the continuous movements and the contrast of the words on the mask and on the t-shirt, creates an experience of illegibility. This illegibility is constantly expanding and makes the air/atmosphere in the space almost palpable. This space is a sensual type of materiality that, when followed through the changes that this research offers to the meaning of the palimpsestuousness, creates an intimacy; holding/bonding things together' even, or maybe especially, when those things could, or should not be together to begin with.

Anderson reads the praxis of glory hole sex as a form of *glass closet* that creates *body without organs (BwO)*. In my *Shaky* performance, I try to achieve a similar notion. Giles Deleuze in his *Logic of Sense* establishes sense of the dis-jointed body, a type of flesh which operates at the temporal difference – the unrecognizable and unrepresentable body that functions as that which does not order itself into the priori knowing but rather takes its meaning and function in its plasticity.<sup>39</sup> This *Body without Organs* is a creature and a monstrous spatiality. It keeps on transgressing through the constancy of actions. It changes and challenges the notion of layered surface, so familiar to Western society. It creates a 'moment in space' that is at *odds*, but not a binary opposition. It is a queer enactment and perversion of making and thinking in palimpsestuousness; a term that refers to a certain type of character of spatiality, that does not produce palimpsestic layers. Instead it finds pleasure of knowledge in the moulded, messy, sexy and wet nooks of praxis and practice.

Those three performances become an investigation into *subjugated knowledges*, and at the same time they challenge the concept of its supposed meaning. Through

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<sup>39</sup> Giles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, ed. Constantine V. Boundas trans. Mark Lester Deleuze, (London: The Athlone Press, 1990).

them, one can realise the non-binary, yet subjugated way of making sense, that it turns informs and challenges the layered palimpsest, and transform it into a new inhabitable space. In the next part, I will look at three examples of conceptual spaces that also can be characterised as palimpsestuous.

## PROVINCES OF PALIMPSESTUOUSNESS

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Loving each other like two young boxers, who before separating, tear off each other's shirt, and, when they are naked, astounded at their beauty, think they are seeing themselves in a mirror, stand there open-mouthed, shake (with rage of being caught) their tangled hair, smile a damp smile and grip each other like two wrestlers (in Greco-Roman wrestling), interlock their muscles in the precise connections offered by the other, and drop to the mat until their warm sperm spurts high and maps out the sky a milky way where other constellations that I can read take shape. (...) Thus, a new map of Heavens is outlined on the wall...<sup>40</sup>

As established through my performance work, palimpsestuousness is a type of conceptual and actual space, which allows for sexual and erotic praxis to produce a synthesis of meaning and matter. Joanna Frueh, performance artist and theorist, in her book *Erotic Faculties* understands the importance of the sexual and erotic praxis in establishing new meaning. She writes:

Erotic Faculties emphasizes art, sex, and pleasure, especially as they grow out of and affect women's lives. As these subjects intertwine a densely layered picture of ways in which beauty, aging, woman's bodies, and sexual practice and experience can influence making, interpreting, analysing, and theorizing about contemporary art.<sup>41</sup>

Her methodology strongly depends on the sexed female body and the sexuality of pleasure that it can obtain and through her work she sees pleasure as that which *appears on the other side of privilege*.<sup>42</sup> Frueh calls into question the established and *dry* system of creating meaning and tries to bring into research the necessity of a *wet*, erotic,

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<sup>40</sup> Jean Genet, *Our Lady of the Flowers*, trans. Bernard Frechtman, (Paris: The Olympia Press, 2004), p.19.

<sup>41</sup> Joanna Frueh, *Erotic Faculties* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), p. 13 – In her book, Frueh attempts to bring together often hidden erotic desires with the way that the performing body renegotiates the epistemology it can produce. The text itself very often plays and intertwines these binaries as to set up different rules for rigor in research. *Fatima* was an attempt on those kinds of logics that does not produce a hierarchy but rather is based on pleasure of the sexed body within the space.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid* – p .87 – The phrase: “the other side of privilege” is a quote that Frueh takes from Luce Irigaray whose work I will be discussing in further investigation of practices of revealing and the matter of secret. The work of both writers is based on feminist theory concerned with producing a difference in knowing. The *dry* system refers to masculine patriarchy whilst the *wet* refers to feminist discourses on sexuality and female body. I will develop this later in this thesis by enquiring into the ways that the palimpsest (as layered) is developing a special bond between the surfaces.

multi-sensual, feminist and performative system of knowledge by incorporating the poetic, personal and academic writing. Her book is sliced and composed of the multitude of voices that she develops in the plurality of her practice. This way she challenges the 'supposed' narratives of making sense. It is the same way that I approach multi-voiceness as mentioned above. As this thesis progresses the interruptive behaviour of palimpsestuousness starts to appear more frequently. It is not, as per Frueh, an intertwined poetics of self-reflection, rather it is present in the structure that I present. This work occasionally jumps and mis-directs its reader, sometimes moving in few directions at once, then repeats itself. This is because I am also trying not to detangle the convoluted and sometimes multiple meaning of palimpsestuousness. My focus in here is to develop its synthesis of matter and meaning through characterising it as incestuous. It is also, and this will be shown in this part of my writing, to develop its behaviour and character.

In the previous writing, I directed my attention towards the rise of the conceptual connotations of palimpsestuousness, and how, through queer theory, we can refer to it as a non-binary and non-phallogentric notion of 'moment in space'. Through those renegotiations palimpsestuous space emerges as that which materialises through the bonds that hold layers together, and it is in study of similar bonds that the further enquiry into their incestuousness can produce an unexpected and somewhat muddled way of its environment and economy.

The quote that I used in the beginning of this text <sup>43</sup> tells us that it is through the sexual and erotic praxis *a new map of Heavens* can take shape. It takes it matter from the flesh and logics of desire. The two wrestlers lose their 'wrestling' status – instead

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<sup>43</sup> Jean Genet, *Our Lady of the Flowers*, trans. Bernard Frechtman, (Paris: The Olympia Press, 2004), p.19.

becoming an entangled with each other. They produce a new, sexual, erotic and incestuous bond - refined by the pleasure. It is not the only time that Genet deals with this sort of enactment. His novels full of homoerotic intimacy and sexual praxis recreates the world around to generate a different version of reality. He does not aim to create a connection with the normative, rather he finds beauty and pleasure in the sexual methods of producing meaning, often in those that are perverse and profound to the heteronormative, modern eye. In his book *Querelle of Breast* (1947) he tells a story of George Querelle, a bisexual sailor, prostitute and murderer, who arrives at the port city of Brest. In 1982 the story was adapted as a movie directed by Rainer Werner Fassbinder.

The city of Brest, as presented by Fassbinder is filled with phallic symbols and because of the constancy of a continuous sunset, it seems to be deprived of time. The city, filled with men in notoriously and continuously engaged in homoerotic gazes, actions and repetitions of images. In one of the scenes in Fassbinder's film, *Querelle: A Film based on Jean Genet Novel* (FIG. 7) Querelle meets his brother and the two brothers perform dance/fight with each other. In deeper analysis of their relationship, similarly to my mis-reading of Sarah Dillon and her father Michel Dillon, one starts to see that this brotherhood is a perverse relation. Yet it is not exactly a clearly homosexual desire that binds them. By looking at the film, one starts to think if Querelle and his brother are actually one and the same person. If so, this relationship is clearly incestuous, and through it - as mentioned already above - it disintegrates the notion of selfhood. Selfhood here is an example of a layered (palimpsestic) structure. Incestuous relation between brothers challenges this form and creates a new density of relationship between those two characters.





FIG.7 – R.W. Fassbinder, stills from *Querelle: A Film based on Jean Genet Novel*, 1982.

The fight scene as directed by Fassbinder becomes less of a 'one' versus 'the other' as in usual understanding of conflict, it functions as a foreplay – a tensor – that similarly to the *Bulges* sculpture as used in my performance establishes a sense of incestuous distance and with it an experience of palimpsestuousness. You can almost smell it in the air between these characters. In this air, you realize that both entities, both familiar bodies create an entangled unity of sorts, a sense of sameness produced by sexual and

erotic tension, which desynchronizes the need of comprehending the deeper understanding of such actions and instead creates a matter of such *AIR*.<sup>44</sup>

Genet's poetry through Fassbinder's lens, not only portrays homoerotic sexuality and marginalized identities but it is also transgressing it. Engulfed in this *AIR* are not only characters in the film – it is us as well. By proxy, we are also swept of our ground and we start feel the sensuality of the incestuous *AIR*. Because of how Fassbinder shows us the city of Brest and develops the incestuous relationship between brothers, the viewer gets a glimpse of a queer space of sexual and erotic praxis.

Sedgwick would refer to it as a space of *homosocial* praxis.<sup>45</sup> As she acknowledges the social science 'clean' version of *homosocial* that usually refers to the systems of male bonding, but wants to return this neologism back to its sexual and erotic connotations. As she writes:

(homosocial) is a neologism, obviously formed by analogy with "homosexual", and just as obviously meant to be distinguished from "homosexual" (...). To draw the "homosocial" back into the orbit of "desire", of the potentially erotic, then, is to hypothesize the potential unbrokenness of a continuum between homosocial and homosexual – a continuum whose visibility, for man, in our society, is radically disrupted.<sup>46</sup>

Brest as presented in Fassbinder's film, can be seen as a space of homosocial continuum. Through the constant homoerotic imaginary, it continuously reminds the viewers that what they see is another sense of space, which is guided by erotic and sexual praxis and logic (economy) it produces. Yet it is in the *AIR* that is most sensual in the scenes between brothers that something else takes place. This *AIR* brings them together and makes their incestuous relationship a type of conversation. As the camera dances with

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<sup>44</sup> I deliberately capitalise the word *AIR*. It is to gravitate on the emerging meaning of spatiality of palimpsestuousness and translucent quality it possesses.

<sup>45</sup> Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Homosocial Desire*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), p. 12.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 96.

the characters, that already, in one of the first scenes of the movie, fight/hug one another, establishing an odd ground between them, the difference and narrative that transgresses the binary logic becomes established. Those scenes mark out the territory and binds and entangles characters and the audience, and through this entanglement a new sensual matter of *AIR* emerges. This sensual translucent *AIR* becomes a form of material palimpsestuousness; matter that is ungraspable, un-comodifiable - like performance art per Peggy Phelan – matter that is constantly changing.<sup>47</sup>

For Phelan this matter is in the un-reproducibility of performance art, for Sedgwick it is in fills the knowledge of the *glass closet*, for Genet as per Fassbinder the matter of palimpsestuousness is based on homoerotic deviations and transgressions, and as mentioned when discussing Foucault's concept of *subjugated knowledges*, it is a renegotiation of sexuality, truth and pleasure. Those sensual translucent experiences of space and temporality, speak directly to the way that I am navigating palimpsestuousness as emerging from queer theory.

Deleuze and Guattari call for a similar consistency via concept of a *plane of immanence* by which they mean a type of metaphysical ontological surface, which does not in itself possess any form of 'outside', as it is always at the present, always moulding and moving.<sup>48</sup> They write:

It was over. Only later on would all this take on concrete meaning. The double-articulated mask had come undone, and so had the gloves and the tunic, from which liquids escaped. As they streamed away they seemed to eat at the strata of the lecture hall, which was filled with fumes of olibanum and "hung with strangely figured arms." Disarticulated, deterritorialized, Challenger muttered that he was taking the earth with him, that he was leaving for the mysterious world, his poison garden (...). No one had heard the summary, and no one tried to keep Challenger from leaving. Challenger, or what remained of him, slowly

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<sup>47</sup> Peggy Phelan, *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 150.

<sup>48</sup> G. Deleuze, F. Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi, (London, New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), p. 1-26.

hurried toward the plane of consistency, following a bizarre trajectory with nothing relative left about it. (...) <sup>49</sup>

This plane suggests that the consistency of *AIR* always is at the point of the event, and as such one can never realize the substance of this *poisonous garden* with the outside gaze, as one can never be outside. The political and social material translucency of palimpsestuousness as discussed in this writing is always at the present, always in the encounter and through that removes one's sense of needing the stability of ground. It wants to be disorientated, erotic and sexual.

This erotic and sexual *AIR* is particularly sensible in the practice of artistic duo Lovett/Codagnone who use fetish and leather gay culture to produce a deviant meaning of the concepts associated with domesticity and family. Lovett/Codagnone (FIG. 8) play the intensive game of moving their relationship and their sexual practices into the sphere of almost heteronormative spatiality. Through that they do not necessary provoke the feeling of shock and hardness of their appropriation of the bondage and sado-masochistic practices, but rather, I would argue, realise the sense of such practices as part of what I refer to as sensual translucency. This sense emerges out of material existence that is generated by the inclusion and even favouritism of the practices associated with the sexual and erotic play of S/M.

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<sup>49</sup> G. Deleuze, F. Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi, (London, New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), p. 84-85.



FIG. 8 –Lovett/Codagnone, *After Eight*, C-print, 1997.

It is especially visible in their photographs, in which they, while wearing the full S/M gear, participate in the formal family landscape. By bringing S/M into the 'family housing' the structure of the economy changes, suddenly S/M practice becomes familiar, and recognizable as a binding mechanism of the sexual practices especially in relation to the gay male fetish scene. The difference in the experience and production of palimpsestuousness between Lovett/Codagnone and *AIR* as written about earlier, comes from the notion of exposure. Brest as a city presented by Fassbinder is a dimension that developed without the breaking of the continuum of the development of *homosocial desire* as presented by Sedgwick – Lovett/Codagnone on the other hand directly involve the strangeness and a provoking nature in their work and erotic praxis, as to challenge the homophobic breakage of homosocial.<sup>50</sup>

What we are left with is the new dynamic production of research, that doesn't relay or reproduce the internal workings of the subject/object relation, but instead finds and makes the matter of trembling erotic and sexual praxis. S/M (gay) sex requires participants to engage in performance and performative practices that play on the economies of normative power relations (master/slave). Lovett/Codagnone in their photographs use this challenging visual enactments as to provide participants with a new sensual and yet strict ways of communicating that in fact develops into a sense of community. Lia Ganginto in her essay *Do not become enamored of power* writes about the power relation in Lovett/Codagnone works:

Love and power have preoccupied Lovett/Codagnone's performance-based works in photography, video, and installation, in which their relationship, families, and physical limits have been systematically renegotiated through use of cultural filters ranging from S/M, role-playing to popular love songs, iconic cinematic and literary tropes. Their transgression of understood hierarchies (...)

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<sup>50</sup> Sedgwick call social and political homophobia an agent that created a discontinuity in relation to homosocial experience, by removing the erotic component of this praxis.

strives toward different kind of wilful bonding, whose potential can subvert dynamics of power.<sup>51</sup>

It becomes clear that when dealing with the 'moment in space' in performance-based works of Lovett/Codagnone we can not only see that the bonding (both about S/M practice and about the tensions of homosocial experience) is in fact a reference to palimpsestuousness. Lovett/Codagnone find their relationship to become a form of enactment of incestuous relations, not only on the workings of art itself, but also on the workings of bondage and S/M culture.

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<sup>51</sup> Lia Gantimo, "*Do not become enamored of power*" in Lovett/Codagnone, ed. Octavia, Z, (Italy: Edizioni Charta Srl, 2006), p. 80.





FIG. 9 –Lovett/Codagnone, *Obliquities*, Performance at Vox Populi Gallery, 2011.

In their work (FIG. 9) the over-extended strain jacket holds their bodies at a distance from one other. The performers look in opposite directions at mirrors that reflect the image of the other. Those mirrors multiply space and their own gaze. It allows them to see each other in otherwise ‘impossible’ physical conditions of contact. They behave as though are two entangled particles – both not only physically bonded through the strain jacket, but also bonded to the extent of the impossibility of their unbonding. Their performance-based work, I argue, create an experience of incestuous palimpsestuousness, a non-layered dimension created from the intimacy of sexual and erotic praxis. Their transgression does not only challenge *dynamics of power*, as per Gantimo, they also challenge the strategy of performing a form of ‘selfhood’. Foucault talks about the such ‘selfhood’ in his lecture *The Culture of Self* (1983). He says:

People think that what we have to do is to disclose, to liberate, to excavate the hidden realities of The Self. But The Self, I think, has to be considered not as a reality, which can be hidden. I think that The Self has to be considered as a

correlation of technologies built and developed through the history. The problem is not to liberate, not to free The Self, but to consider how it could be possible to elaborate new types, new kinds relationships to ourselves.<sup>52</sup>

*The Self* in Foucault's work points to the direct confrontation with the conceptualization of subjectivity as commonly represented through the 20<sup>th</sup> century rise in psychiatry and psychology studies. What Foucault asks his students to do is to realise the possibility of a different type of selfhood, that is not a permanent and hidden consistency of priori individuality, but rather a delicate and constantly changing organism that becomes a type of matter through the dealings with the constant interactions. By looking at the relationship between Querelle and his brother (or rather himself) and Lovett/Codagnone's continuous performance of bonding, what we can see is that in fact the incestuous relation can be also envisioned as a relationship to oneself. This relation to oneself can be further discussed when approached by the method of *wearing*, which challenges the visible self and at the same time, as discussed before is a permanent method of my own performance-based practice.<sup>53</sup>

In *The History of Sexuality vol.3: The Care of The Self*, Foucault tries to renegotiate the way that pleasure, desire and sexuality change the apparatus of self into an object of knowledge through the notion of *care*. For Foucault, this care, this sexual attention to the self is delivered from the non-dialectical position, by which I mean a type of entanglement based on movement and the plasticity of the pleasures. Such understanding deeply resonates with Deleuze and Guattari notion of *desire-machine*, by which they understand a form of production that is not a representative but rather a

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<sup>52</sup> Michel Foucault, "The Culture of Self", *Lectures Series at UC Barkley, California*, 12.04.1983 – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4QvSUYeEBQ>, accessed on 12.02.2016 – this is a transcript of the lecture as heard through the uploaded video.

<sup>53</sup> In the later book, I will be discussing the role that movement of *slicing* as a method of practice allows us to create a sense of intimacy without necessity of causality that leads to it. I want to observe at this point that Lovett/Codagnone are (even in name) a materiality of such intimacy.

force of mattering in the bigger constructs of interlocked mechanic making. As they describe it in relation to the concept of *BwO*:

(...) desiring-machines are fundamental category of the economy of desire; they produce a body without organs all by themselves, and make no distinction between the agents and their own parts, or between the relations of production and their own production, or between the social order and technology.<sup>54</sup>

In this way one can see a method of a relation of *wearing* as a form of extending of body. As discussed earlier in Anderson's reading of the concept of the *BwO* in relation to glory hole sex – the desire-machine removes the Oedipal simplification of the self and instead allows for the new form of the relation to become a non-binary synthesis of matter and meaning. This especially becomes important in dealing with art practice, that per Deleuze and Guattari *takes advantage* out of the fact that *desiring-machines*:

(...) run only when they are not functioning properly: the product is always an offshoot of production, implanting itself upon it like a graft, and at the same time the parts of the machine are the fuel that makes it run. (Art) interfere with the reproductive function of technical machines by introducing the element of dysfunction.<sup>55</sup>

At the beginning of this text I introduced a notion that a methodology of artistic research and queer methodology both have similar a function. This function is to interrupt, transgress and produce a sense of disorientation and illegibility. Rather than producing a meaning that creates an exchangeable commodity, artistic and queer research form a dimension of incestually entangled elements. This incestuous entanglement is a form of translucent palimpsestuousness – non-binary, non-hierarchal and very much embedded in sexual and erotic performance-based practices. The

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<sup>54</sup>Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. B. Massumi, (London, New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), p.46.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, p.45. – This understanding of art, as a product and influence on the workings of the desire-machine connects directly to the earlier enquiry into queer phenomenology as described by Sara Ahmed, as well as to the need to give matter to the notion of interruption in research by Lucina Parisi.

structure of palimpsestuousness develops only through the body(s) engagement with praxis of the sexual, sensual and erotic, that in turn transgresses the normative notions of selfhood.

# MATERIALIZING PALIMPSEST

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Interrogation into *palimpsestuousness* as a queer  
enactment in artistic research

*MODEL OF PALIMPSESTUOUSNESS*

## Model of Palimpsestuousness

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<a href="#">The Palimpsest Model</a>	<a href="#">3 - 10</a>
<a href="#">Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.1.0)</a>	<a href="#">11 - 17</a>
<a href="#">Failure and Disorientation</a>	<a href="#">18 - 29</a>
<a href="#">(v.2.0)</a>	<a href="#">30 - 36</a>
<a href="#">Wearing</a>	<a href="#">37 - 42</a>
<a href="#">Cyborgian <i>parrhesia</i></a>	<a href="#">43 - 61</a>

## THE PALIMPSEST MODEL

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An abstract machine in itself is not physical or corporeal any more that it is semiotic; it is *diagrammatic* (it knows nothing of the distinction between the artificial and natural either). It operates by *matter*, not by substance; by *function*, not by form. The abstract machine is pure Matter-Function – a diagram independent of the forms and substances, expressions and contents it will distribute.<sup>1</sup>

As already/will be discussed, we arrived at the place where we commit palimpsestuousness to speak about a type of translucent density of space that is invoked by my performance-based practice. In this writing I will discuss my first attempts to realise the materiality of such density, by returning to the conceptual usage of the palimpsest that emerged in archaeological studies.<sup>2</sup>

This first temporal construct was originally intended to become a marker of this research that would be used for future investigation. In that sense, it was supposed to function as a model with clearly marked references and inhabited logic. Instead in becoming such a structure something unexpected came to light and with it I was challenged to renegotiate the materiality of it. This unexpected event arrived whilst trying to articulate the way it can function as a methodology for practice –led research.

What will be presented in this part of the submission is not necessarily a form of representation of this methodology, but rather an attempt that, as to its queer origins, had to produce an interruption and through it allow me to formulate the final version of this model. At the same time this discourse is not an attempt to grasp (and as we will

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<sup>1</sup>G. Deleuze, F. Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi, (London, New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), p. 141.

<sup>2</sup>Gerald Genette, *Palimpsests – Literature in the second Degree*, trans. Channa Newman, Claude Dubinsky, (Lincoln, London: University of Nebraska Press, 1997). The conceptual palimpsest is a reference here to the studies on narrative in literature by Gerald Genette. In this book, he draws a methodology of text through reading of the relationships between texts of preface, introduction etc. and the main text of the literacy body. He presents this methodology as system of revealing and hiding that produces a transtextual experience.

see later the 'grasping', or 'holding' will become crucial in developing this model) or to measure, and make a representational product of knowledge. It is through the constancy of the space/site of palimpsestuousness that even the making of this model needs reflection.

Through the history of enquires into the palaeographic palimpsest and its subsequent becoming as synonymous with a type of layered entity, the materiality of this parchment was deconstructed, moved to other perspectives, rearranged and re-introduced as a concept that speaks of layers in relation to the causal understanding of history.<sup>3</sup> It is through that conceptualization of this materiality, which favours the layers of erasure and superimposition, that rethinking the heteronormativity of thinking and making is necessary. It allows for us to re-write palimpsestuousness and through it call into question the interruptive and odd spectrum of epistemologies.

This enactment is due to an understanding of palimpsestuousness both as a queer phenomenon and queer object. Queer theory renegotiates the constructs of familiarity, socio-political notions of power, and allows for art to enact in matter forms of edginess, excess, impossibility and in-linearity. This is picked up by Karen Barad in her understanding of the term 'queer'. She writes:

“Queer” is itself a lively, mutating organism, a desiring radical openness, an edgy protean differentiating multiplicity, an agential dis/continuity, an enfolded reiteratively materializing promiscuously inventive spatiotemporality.<sup>4</sup>

Barad as a queer feminist, quantum physician and philosopher, presents us with queer as promiscuous spatiotemporality. One can read this promiscuity as a form of mis-

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<sup>3</sup> Paleographic palimpsest / material palimpsest is referenced here to the entity of palimpsest; the historical erased and superimposed structure of the parchment. The most famous example of such materiality is *The Archimedes Palimpsest* discovered in 1998. <http://www.archimedespalimpsest.org/> - accessed on 01.02.2016.

<sup>4</sup> Karen Barad, "Intra-actions" in *Mousse* vol. 34, 2015, p.81.

behaviour, but as already discussed, queer as a term carries with it an experience of life produced by desire for sexual difference.

Palimpsestuousness then, could be seen as spatiotemporality that directly focuses on the aspects of sexual and erotic praxis, especially when thought through these as creating a type of homosocial bond. In relation to artistic research it allows us to realise a new way of discussing interruptive and unexpected materialities of art practice. Such spatiotemporality is visceral and sensual. One can and needs to feel it; similarly, to the way I discussed the density of *AIR* in Fassbinder's film, to produce a sense of difference. But, unlike to the evaluation of *AIR*, palimpsestuousness as seen through this research does not necessary need a priori marker of belonging to produce a meaning. It functions as a sensual and temporal disruptor that transports us into a spatiotemporality, in which only incestuous interactions produce a sense and quality matter of art. Barad refer to this state as *intra-actions*, that she describes in relation to notion of interactions as:

(interaction) assumes that there are individual independently existing entities or agents that pre-exist their acting upon one another. By contrast, the notion of "intra-actions" queers the familiar sense of causality (...), and more generally unsettles the metaphysics of individualism. According to my agential realist ontology, or rather ethico-onto-epistemology (...), "individuals" do not pre-exist as such but rather materialise in intra-action.<sup>5</sup>

Barad shows that queer theory creates a difference not only in relation to the presumed normativity and in interaction with it, but it is another dimension all together. One that operates by its constant reconfiguring. When, as Barad writes, *matter becomes a phenomenon of intra-action*<sup>6</sup>, I tremble with desire to revoke earlier writing in this thesis and join in with palimpsestuousness as such phenomena. Yet, something stops

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<sup>5</sup> Karen Barad , "Intra-actions" in *Mousse vol. 34*, 2015, p.77.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p.76.

me and keeps me at the level of realising the actual, physical presence of palimpsestuousness. It seems that through the method of *wearing* as discussed in my texts, Barad's notion of intra-action needs to be challenged and renegotiated. As such I will proceed here with the discussion of the emerging *Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.1.0)*, which will allow me to create a discourse on issues arising from Barad's thesis.

As a site and space palimpsestuousness, not only refers to the phenomena of intra-action as described by Barad, I contend it also becomes a methodology for performance-based art practices. Lovett/Codagnone, even in their artistic name, cannot be separated and individualised. They only make sense in the spatiotemporality of their performance, and it is my task to bring such spatiotemporality to material realisation. To achieve this I will look at the way that archaeology has designated and used concept of the palimpsest in its methods of the excavation of a historical site. In *Archaeological Survey* by A.E. Banning, *The Palimpsest Model* (FIG.1), is used to create a border and frame of archaeological "site", which Banning describes as:

[A] high-density cluster of cultural remains (...) a set of overlapping distributions, each representing a different activity or set of activities at different times.<sup>7</sup>

In other words, this type of "site" is created when the elements (artefacts) from many different historical periods are found scattered around smaller zones, and it is only through the density of these findings (where 'they' gather) that the general frame of the "site" becomes established. This model's shape and realisation depends on density. In a similar vein, one can argue in a much more visceral way that a sensual translucent density of *AIR*, can take shape and in turn into a model, and model future enquiry into

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<sup>7</sup> Banning, E. B. "The Palimpsest Model" in *Archaeological Survey*, (New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum, 2002), p. 18 - 19.

palimpsestuousness. I have already recognised queer palimpsest as a density that produces a sense of spatiotemporality; a dimension of sorts. Now we will try to navigate the mattering of this density, through the way it creates an incestuous bond.

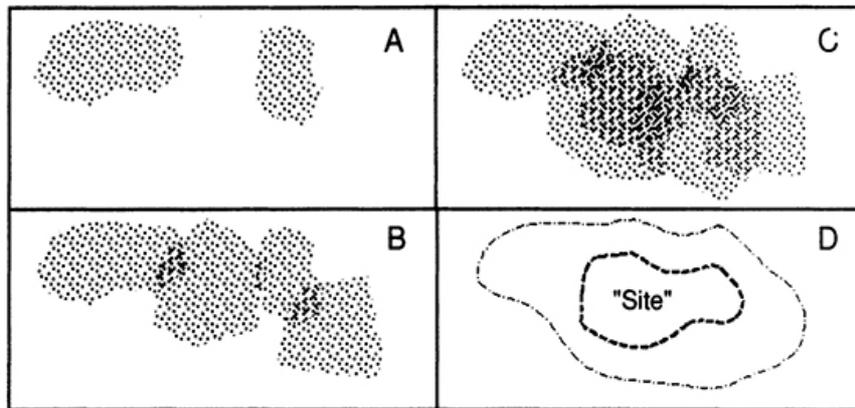
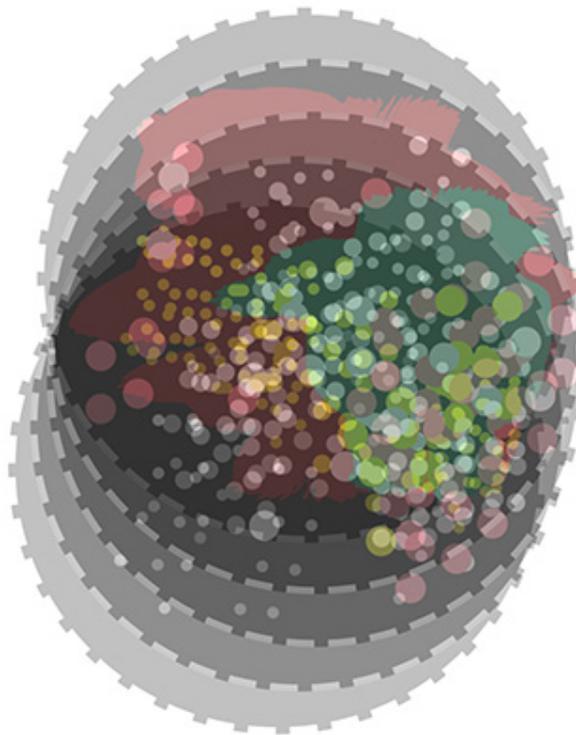


FIG. 1 - E.B. Banning, *The Palimpsest Model*, 2002.

*The Palimpsest Model*, as shown in the image above, develops its shape and structure through the agential praxis of archaeology. As such we observe through steps A to D, that “site” and its border emerges from such praxis, rather than being superimposed. It is also hard not to notice that fact that the image itself heavily relies on the layers as to produce darker shades that suggest more dense clusters of artefacts.

*My Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.1.0)*, as already discussed, needs to be developed through a sense of dimensional space rather than a flat surface. It is as though palimpsest needs to be re-made through all the dimensions, as to incorporate its performance-based connotations. I will repeat again – the palimpsest as a traditional matter is a surface (flat) that is made from the erased and superimposed layers of text. It is also because of those layers that it creates an illegible manuscript, harder to read the more layers it involves. Palimpsestuousness is a dimensional, sensual and translucent space, that can be experienced and produced by sexual and erotic

incestuous bonding. It also, produces meaning and has a meaning only in this bondage <sup>8</sup>. This 'meaning' is a synthesis of matter and meaning produced when one experiences a disorientation created by the queer object and its transgression.



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<sup>8</sup> Purposeful play on the word bondage in relation to S/M practices.

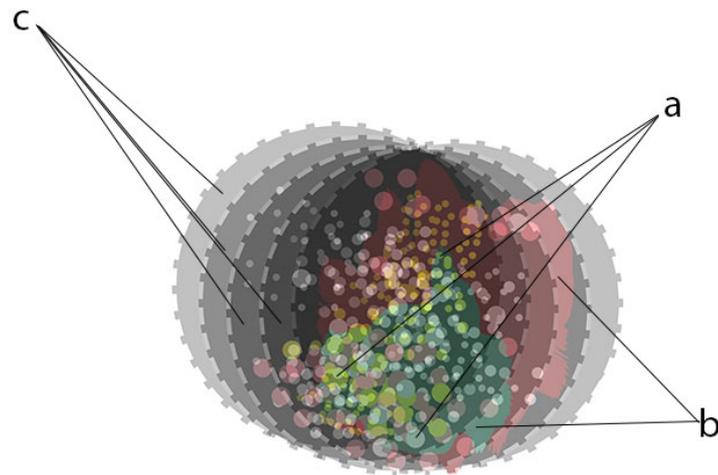


FIG. 2 - Jakub Ceglarz, Palimpsestuous model and Palimpsestuous model with lines and letters, 2015.

In July of 2015 I revamped Banning's model (FIG.2). *Palimpsestuous model* is composed out of overlapping, flat densities. As we can see, this model refers in its aesthetics to the stages C and D in *The Palimpsest Model*, at the same time its reference nodes speak directly to the first instance of palimpsestuousness. What I mean by 'first instance of palimpsestuousness' is a clear reference to *palimpsestuous reading* as presented by Dillon and Genette. As Dillon writes in relation to Genette's work:

(Palimpsestuous reading) seeks to trace the incestuous and encrypted texts that constitute the palimpsest's fabric. Since those texts bear no necessary relation to each other, palimpsestuous reading is an inventive process of creating relations where there may, or should be none.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Sarah Dillon, *The Palimpsest: Literature, Criticism, Theory* (London: Continuum International Publishing

The above model still operates in a sense of layers – it represents (a) improvised and sometimes-ambiguous actions in the praxis that do not always appear to be connected to artistic making, yet still manage to become fractions of the whole system. The nodes gravitate towards each other to assemble into something to take on a new form in the network of *palimpsestuous reading* as identified by the letter (b). In this case, what emerges is the materiality of invisibility – an embodiment of a space/site – identified here by the letter (c) -that allows for such previously unseen elements to realize another sense of materiality.

This diagram, occupies a relation of my early work *Landscape of Leather* with the relation to the space of my home. As already mentioned, my home – my apartment, became a figure in this research, by allowing me to experience a different matter of spatiotemporality. It was a place of pleasures, research and art practice – all combined and bonded in non-hierarchal way. In later versions of this model, the meaning of the singular parts of it becomes irrelevant, yet at the same time still present. It happens in a similar way that palimpsestuousness is still, even if only through the spelling, associated with the palimpsest.

## MODEL OF PALIMPSESTUOUSNESS (V.1.0)

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Invisibility ... gives one a slightly different sense of time; you're never quite on the beat. Sometimes you're ahead and sometimes behind. Instead of the swift imperceptible flowing of time, you are aware of its nodes, those points where time stands still or from which it leaps ahead. And you slip into the breaks and look around.<sup>10</sup>

As this research developed so did my fascination with creating a model of palimpsestuousness; a non-representative node of entanglements that this research speaks of. To call palimpsestuousness a dimension, or spatiotemporality an analysis of temporality is necessary. The timely understanding of this site suggests that the performance-based actions that operate within it break out from a chrononormative narrative, which as per Elisabeth Freeman, is a type of materiality of time which privileges the concreteness of identities that work with it.<sup>11</sup> The palimpsest as a matter both reassures the linear narrative of time, and to an extent challenges it. In the palimpsest, past is bonded to the present. The layers, in their mutual presence create an illegible surface that comes forth from the bonding of two, or more instances of writing.

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<sup>10</sup> Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*, (New York: Signet Books, 2003), p. 5.

<sup>11</sup> Elisabeth Freeman, *Time Binds – Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), p. 10.



FIG.3 - Nguyen Tan Hoang, *K.I.P.*, still from the video, 1981.

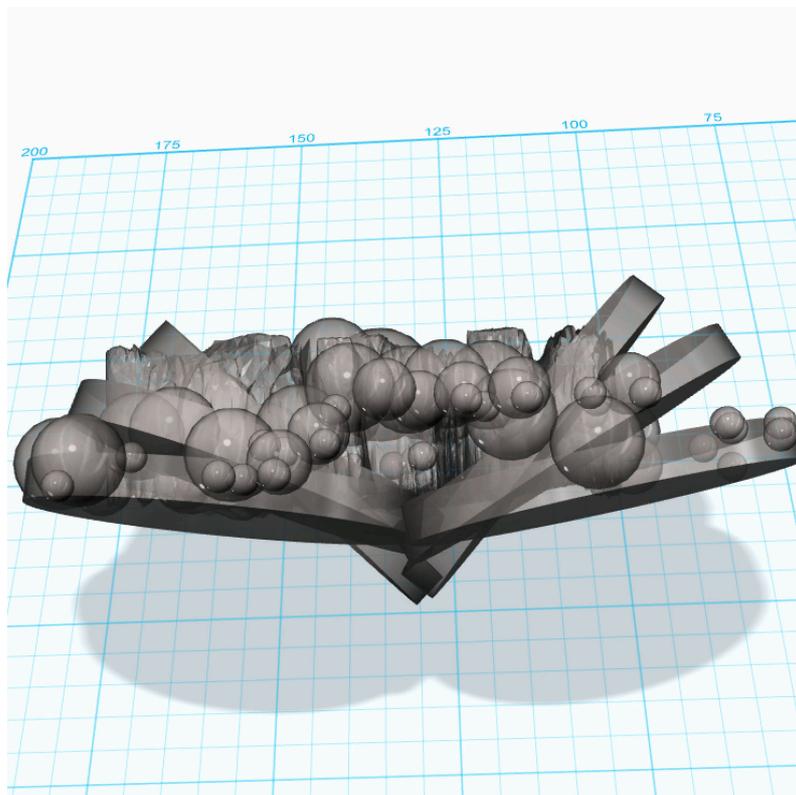
Freeman, in her book *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories* renegotiates the value and matter of time and temporalisation in relation to queer theory. We already discussed Freeman's concept of *chrononormativity* as a usage of time as to organise human experience and privilege productivity. Her argument in realising another version of temporality arises when she confronts queer erotic and sexual praxis as to consciously use the body and pleasure to de-synchronise causality and linearity of history. As she writes in relation to the Nguyen Tan Hoang's video *K.I.P.* (2002) (FIG.3), in which the artist records his reflection in the screen of television that plays a pornographic video called *Kip Noll Superstar Part I* (1981):

By portraying the reciprocal derangement of bodies and sequences, *K.I.P.* offers a through-the-looking-glass view of how time *binds* a socius. By "binds", I mean the way that human energy is collated so that it can sustain itself. By "time binds", (...) I mean that naked flesh is bound into socially meaningful embodiment through temporal regulations.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Elizabeth Freeman, *Time Binds – Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), p.3.

The past and present collided in *K.I.P* directly invoke the palimpsestic surface. Yet the method of producing this video - Hoang watching and filming the pornographic film, becomes palimpsestuous. The palimpsestuousness then is a time of praxis and spatiotemporality of it. It is both a process and an artwork, especially when confronted with my research that attempts, and in odd way succeeds, to materialise this phenomenon.



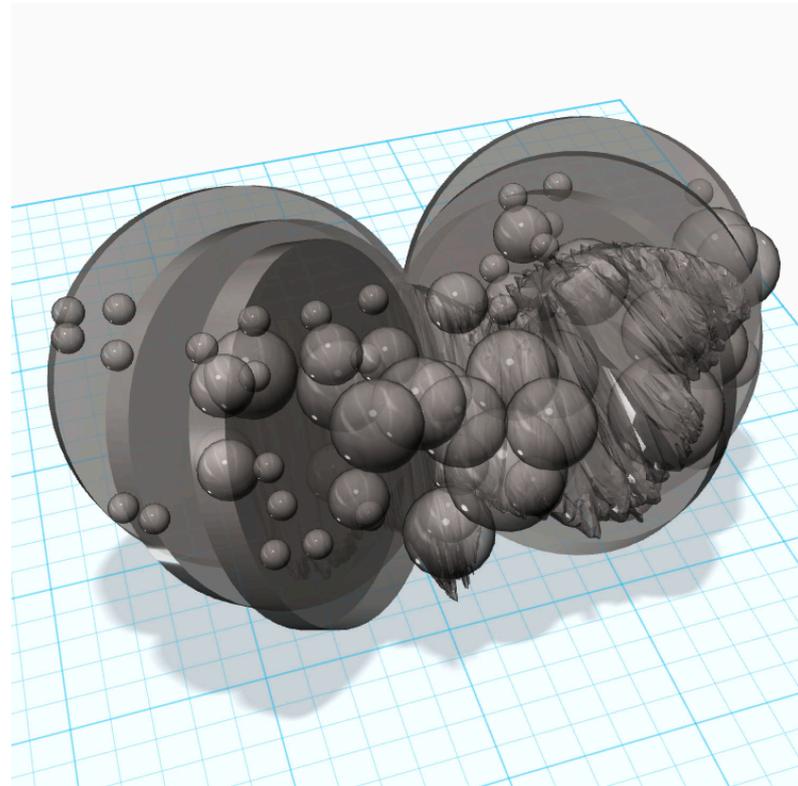
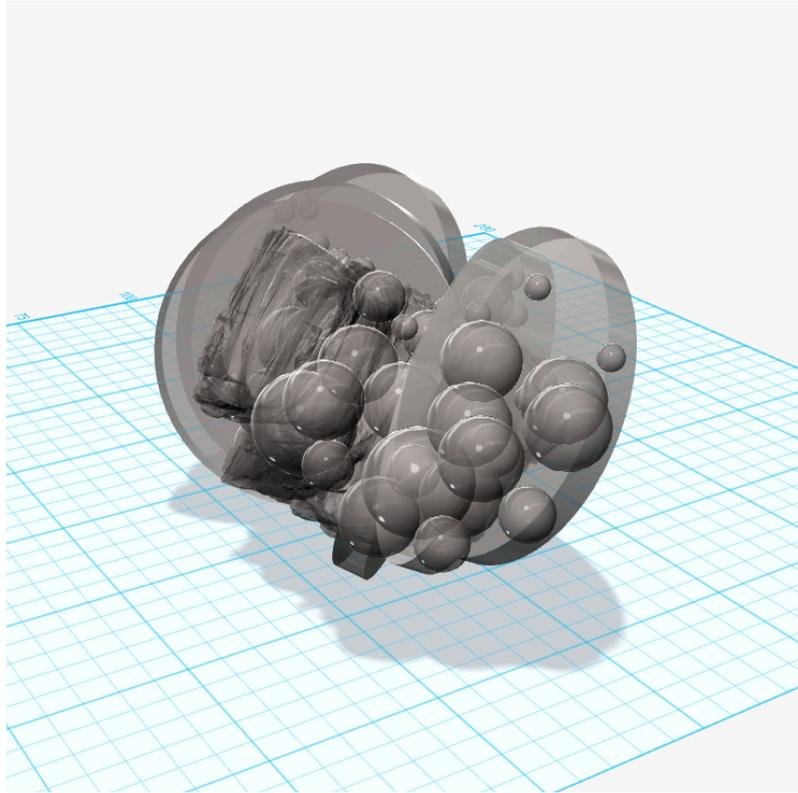


FIG. 4- Jakub Ceglarz, *Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.1.0)*, 3D rendering, 2015.

The experience of spatiotemporality, became essential when experimenting with production of a *Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.1.0)*. It became clear, from the investigation of *AIR*, performance-based practices of Lovett/Codagnone and *The Palimpsest Model* that to realise this *Model of Palimpsestuousness*, one needs an object that occupies a space. This led me to create a 3D rendering of the earlier attempt.

We might argue that this palimpsestuousness needs a degree of separation in that it existing in virtual space, but as my performance-based practice embodies *naked flesh*, as in *Landscape of Leather*, and bodily contact created by *wearing*, this model requires to be brought out of the virtual. Freeman references to an agent-human as *naked flesh*.<sup>13</sup> This phrasing allows her to argue the necessity of visceral knowledge in relation to experience of spatiotemporality. It is not the objectification of one's body that happens here – rather I would argue that we are presented with an *objectivated* body. Vivian Sobchack in her book *Carnal Thoughts: Embodiment and Moving Image Culture*, writes:

(...) objectivation as a concept allows a distinction between the *necessary* and *intersubjective* experience of having the capacity to see oneself objectively as one might be seen by another self (that is, as a material, substantial, embodied self intentionally occupying space as well as time) and the more alienated, distanced, and merely *sufficient* experience of the subject *reduced to object* as an effect of a particular economic and social formation.<sup>14</sup>

As we look at the images of the rendering above (FIG.4), we can experience its translucent materiality, as well because of the presence of the grid underneath it, the potential space that it can occupy. At the same time this model is secluded in the digital sphere, unreachable, only mouldable through the technology that allowed for its production. Even though it appears to be fragile and smooth, without involving the

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<sup>13</sup> Elizabeth Freeman, *Time Binds – Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), p. 96.

<sup>14</sup> Vivian Sobchack, *Carnal Thoughts: Embodiment and Moving Image Culture*, (Barkley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2004), p. 182.

sensual *naked flesh* that bounds to it, the necessary incestuous relation is almost beyond one's reach.<sup>15</sup> This rendering of the *Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.1.0)*, needs to “come out”, or become a *glass closet* that challenges the *naked flesh* into a new *objectivated* synthesis of a matter and meaning of a ‘moment in space’.

Deleuze and Guattari interpreted a similar entity when discussing the *rhizome* as a pattern created and realized by movements. They visualise it as a series of lines that: *unlike the structure that is designed by the set of points*, allow for thinking of an *acentred, non-hierarchical, nonsignifying system without a General (...) defined solely by a circulation of states*.<sup>16</sup> The concept of *rhizome*, by name referencing the organic mattering of a specific root (e.g. Ginger plant) (FIG.5), is at the core of their philosophy. It asks for a radical change in the economy of life, one that escapes binary essentialism and metaphysical notion of selfhood, and instead promotes a constantly, occasionally randomly, growing materiality made from movements and actions. Yet, it is through its visualisation as a ginger root, that my attempt to sculpt the *Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.1.0)* moved forward.

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<sup>15</sup> I do need to apologise for the low quality of those images – the data collected at time of this entry into my research was unfortunately lost, leaving me with only a low-quality reproduction – this also led me to remake and to re-render model again.

<sup>16</sup> G. Deleuze, F. Guattari, *A thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi, (London, New York: Continuum, 2004), p. 21.



FIG.5 – Image of a ginger root.

Ginger roots grow by the clustering of the fibres, and through it achieves its distinguishable organic shape. Each root looks different, as its shape only depends on the random bulging of its components. One might argue that *The Palimpsest Model*, as presented by Banning, grows in a similar way if reading it through focus on the densities and clusters of archaeological artefacts that give shape to the site of a dig. *Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.1.0)* and its future (*v.2.0*) needs to grow and keep on developing in its practice of materialising. In the first instance, it only reproduced Banning's model. Later it inhabited a virtual domain, as to embody a sense and character of dimensional and translucent *AIR*.

In the next part of this writing I will show how the sculpting of this model created a moment of disorientation, and even an experience of failure, which I will analyse in relation to the body and the agent (me) that tries to sensually grasp and materialise something, which, as will be discussed further in this document, requires a much more radical and contemporary approaches to making.

## FAILURE AND DISORIENTATION

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Foucault while writing on the practice of Maurice Blanchot suggests a way of re-thinking the status of subjectivity in writing, literature and representation so as to explore the notion of a 'neutral' voice that arises from what he thinks of as 'outside'. He writes:

A thought that stands outside subjectivity, setting its limits as though from without, articulating its end, making its dispersion shine forth, taking in only its invincible absence; and that at the same time stands at the threshold of all positivity, not in order to grasp its foundation or justification but in order to regain the space of its unfolding, the void serving as its site, the distance in which it is constituted and into which its immediate certainties slip the moment they are glimpsed — a thought that, in relation to the interiority of our philosophical reflection and the positivity of our knowledge, constitutes what in a word we might call "the thought from the outside."<sup>17</sup>

Foucault presents a possibility of renegotiating the parameters of subjectivity in relation to production of meaning. He is not only calling the subject to re-think its ground, but also he requires one to form a relation with the supposed *outside*. Foucault; and that is present in most of his writing,<sup>18</sup> wants to establish and give meaning to a form of economical *province*, in which the subject cares and becomes responsible for its interrelations.

One of the way to describe such deterritorialization is to refer to Ahmed and Freeman. Ahmed calls it phenomena of disorientation, which, as already mentioned earlier in this thesis, challenges the heteronormative stability of the subject. Freeman, as per her discussion of queer theory in relation to temporality, uses the term *queer*

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<sup>17</sup> Michel Foucault, "Maurice Blanchot: The Thought from Outside" in *Foucault - Blanchot*, tran. Brian Massumi, (New York: Zone Books, 1987), p. 15.

<sup>18</sup> I refer here to the work Foucault developed in relation to the concept of power in relation to the forms of social exclusion of prisons and mental institutions. My thesis touches upon this topic in discussion of *subjugated knowledges*, yet at the same time through my writing I am developing a form of discourse that does not require constant reaffirmation by reference to the *power*, which subjugates.

*asynchronies*.<sup>19</sup> Freeman writes:

Each chapter of this book (...) explores not only the shrapnel of failed revolutions but also one or more moments when an established temporal order gets interrupted and new encounters consequently take place: (...) I focus on textual moments of asynchrony, anachronism, anastrophe, belatedness, compression, delay, ellipsis, flashback, hysteron-proteron, pause, prolepsis, repetition, reversal, surplice, and other ways of breaking apart what Walter Benjamin calls “homogenous empty time”.<sup>20</sup>

Freeman, Ahmed and as mentioned to some extent Foucault, want to change the site of narrative, both in its physical meaning; as per Foucault and his writings on prisons and mental institution, and in conceptual terms, Ahmed’s approaches to entanglements with *queer objects*.<sup>21</sup> What emerges from Ahmed and Freeman is the need to challenge not only the parameters of the site of meaning production, but also temporality. This is what I call a ‘moment is space’ and what Barad reads as spatiotemporality. Those propositions affected my further experimentation with the realisation of the *Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.1.0)*. This affect as it will become clear, becomes a productive version of a failure.

The model at this stage is a digital reference, to something that needs to step into the visceral contact with the *naked flesh*. To do that I decided to shape it out of clay, cut the circular places, roll the spheres in different shapes and mould the space the space of their clustering. In this reproduction, I achieved a small sculpture (FIG. 6).

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<sup>19</sup> Elizabeth Freeman, *Time Binds – Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), p. XXII.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. XXII.

<sup>21</sup> Sarah Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham, London: Duke University Press, 2007), p. 57.



FIG.6 – Jakub Ceglarz, clay reproduction of *Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.1.0)*, 2016.

The pictures above show it as rough and dirty matter, that after passage of time mixed with dirt and plaster in the workshop. This sculpture is fragile and difficult to handle. The black plasticine that fills the dents and empty spaces of the model was placed there as to prepare it to be cast, and reproduced again. In FIG.7 we can see the plaster casts of this model, originally intended to be a 'try-out' before casting it in translucent acrylic.

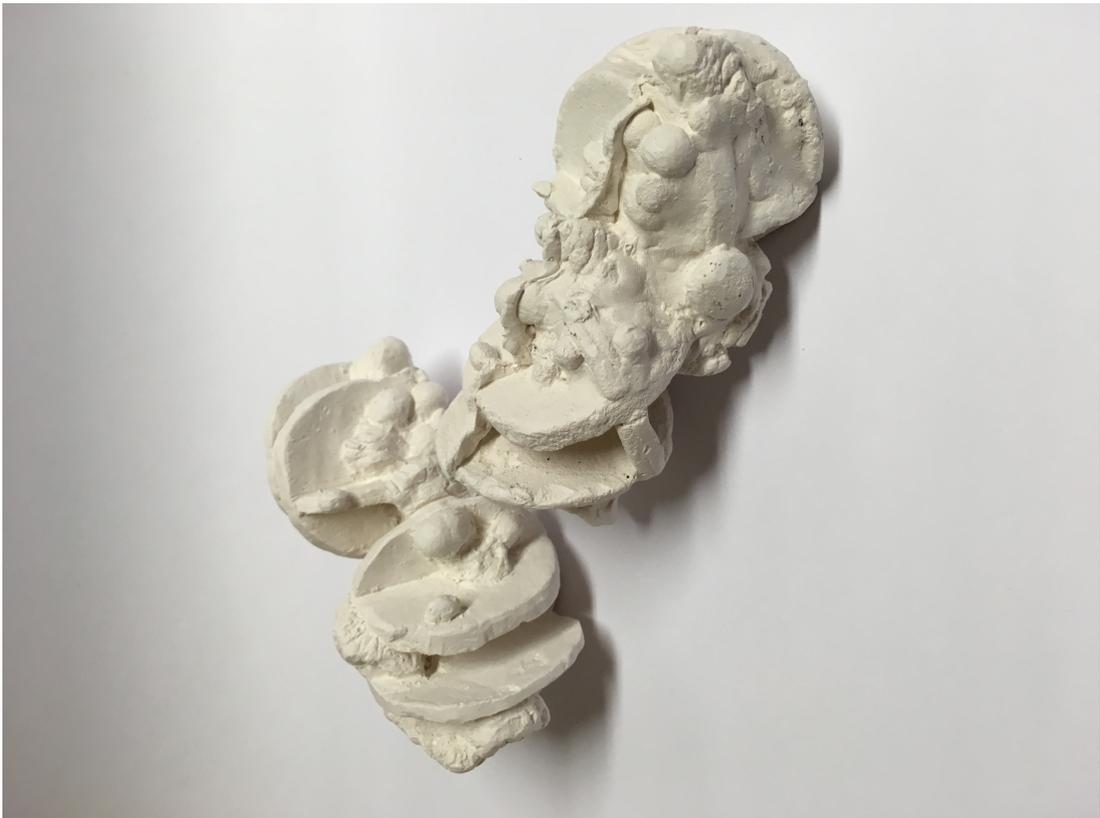


FIG.7 – Jakub Ceglarz, plaster casts of the reproduction of the *Model of Palimpsestuousness* (v.1.0), 2016.

The organic form intended by the visualisation of the rhizome, is very much present. The model now is reminiscent of a cast of an internal organ of the body. A strange growth, irregular in shape and in texture. The plaster allows me to see through the shadows all the air bubbles, and nooks between elements of this model. Even with its organic-like quality it still feels foreign and distant.

Palimpsestuousness depends on an incestuous relation that makes things sexually and erotically familiar with each-other. William Haver in his book *The Body of this Death* describes a similar social network when writing about the history of the AIDS/HIV epidemic in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century among gay subculture in the Western Society. He writes:

(...) the body of this death is at once singular and multiple. In both its singularity and its multiplicity, but above all in the essentially erotic conjunction of its singularity and multiplicity, the body of this death is an impossible object for any apperception, any phenomenological apprehension, any auto-affectivity, any specular capture.<sup>22</sup>

The relationship between the *objectivated*<sup>23</sup> *naked flesh* of my body and the object of the model does not produce an experience of impossible yet material multiple singularity. In some way, even the glossy digital rendering of this model is closed in delivering such an incestual entanglement. Barad deals with this impossible materiality of 'multiple singularity' by renegotiating intra-actions in non-human biology. She writes:

About the amoeba colonies: Slime moulds (of which so-called social amoebas are classified as one kind) are amazing critters. They have the ability to morph from a seemingly uncoordinated group of genetically identical single cells to an aggregate "slug" with an immune system, muscles and nerves with ganglia (that is, simple brains) and other organismic functionality characteristic of

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<sup>22</sup> William Haver, *The Body of This Death – Historicity and Sociality in the time of AIDS*, (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. XI.

<sup>23</sup> Vivian Sobchack, *Carnal Thoughts: Embodiment and Moving Image Culture*, (Barkley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2004), p. 182. – the term *objectivated* refers to the body seen as an object without the cultural and social forms of shame and degradation. This will be further developed in this piece of writing.

multicellular species with different roles played by identical cellular units.<sup>24</sup>

For Haver the social experience of AIDS in relation to sexual identity creates a type of unrepeatable bond. <sup>25</sup>One might argue, that because of the social stigma of AIDS, infected bodies become non-human, and as per Barad, create a *colony*, a new body with its own sensual and visceral function. The task of the *Model of Palimpsestuousness*, both v.1.0 and v.2.0, is to create such disruption of body. One can call it a transgression, but this type of transgression does not set up a binary opposition, even though it can be mis-understood as such. Instead it provides us with an opening into meaning and matter production. This emerges from reading Foucault who describes transgression as:

Transgression, then is not related to the limit as black to white, the prohibited to the lawful, the outside to the inside, or open area of a building to its enclosed spaces. Rather their relationship takes the form of a spiral, which no simple infraction can exhaust. Perhaps it is like a flash of lightning in the night, which from beginning of time gives a dense and black intensity to the night it denies. <sup>26</sup>

Transgressions, interruptions and disorientations perform two functions – one they make subjugated economies visible and through it can deliver a critique of the supposed forms of normalisation. By doing so, they allow us to question the experience of spatiotemporality, and, in relation to artistic research, provide us with an opportunity to synthesise matter and meaning.

The unexpected result of the modelling of the *Model of Palimpsestuousness* (v.1.0), comes from the sense of destabilisation that accompanied its failings. It is through the process of making it and its failure in sense of sustainability that I was able to assess and question the integrity of my objectivated *naked flesh*; integrity of my

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<sup>24</sup> Karen Barad, "Intra-actions" in *Mousse Vol. 34*, 2015, p. 76 – 81.

<sup>25</sup> William Haver, *The Body of This Death – Historicity and Sociality in the time of AIDS*, (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. XI.

<sup>26</sup> Michel Foucault, "A Preface to Transgression" in *Language, Counter – Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. & trans. D.F. Bouchard, (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1977), p. 35.

humanism. Because of the lack of experience of incestuous, sexual and erotic relation to the emerged model, I decided to go back and re-do the clay sculpture (FIG. 8).



FIG.8- Jakub Ceglarz, second attempt on clay reproduction of the *Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.1.0)*, 2016.

As we can see in the image above, the product is broken. By focusing on producing details of the model, the model itself became even more fragile; the simple task of holding and grasping it in my hands made it fall apart and crumble. In trying to force a bondage incestuous relation I held it close to my naked flesh. Gently protecting it in my nervous, shaky and unsure hold. I managed to produce an image that was supposed to embody the instability I was experiencing.

*In-Body* (2016) (FIG.9), is a digital print created from a square cut of a bigger photograph taken whilst holding the second experiment of making the model. The photograph is of low quality as it was produced, just like the photographic triptych of *Landscape of Leather* by me setting up timed camera in my apartment, in which I could easily expose my *naked flesh*.



FIG. 9 - Jakub Ceglarz, *IN-BODY*, digital print, 2015.

Holding of this fragile model is a movement, that challenges the sureness and confidence of my body, as such it is the critical understanding of that movement that delivers a still present distance between my flesh and the object. As Deleuze and Guattari write in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* in regards of the further development of rhizome:

There are only relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness between

unformed elements, or at least between elements that are relatively unformed, molecules and particles of all kinds. There are only haecceities, affects, subjectless individuations that constitute collective assemblages. Nothing develops, but things arrive late or early, and form this or that assemblage depending on their compositions of speed.<sup>27</sup>

The movement of holding creates a sense of hierarchy. I am holding the thing that should escape the grasp. It is through this *holding* that my body feels a bit queer; disorientated and unable to make sense of this performance-based practice.

Haver evaluates this kind of disorientation by reading Butler's concept of the performative self<sup>28</sup>, in that she understands as the method to produce a *practical constitution of being* that designate effects of a rigorous thought of material existentiality.

He writes:

For if being exists nowhere outside of, least of all priori to, its articulations, then to be is to be at the limit, to be nothing but a certain 'be-ing at the limit'.<sup>29</sup>

It is through the experience of the shaky body that cannot grasp and hold the model, that the embodiment of *be-ing at the limit*, as described by Haver allows for realisation of a way to materialise palimpsestuousness. As had emerged from my performance practice; *wearing* is a method of producing an incestuous relation, that is crucial for palimpsestuousness as a spatiotemporality.

Through this productive failure to materialise palimpsestuousness, what "comes out" is an enactment of *wearing* that enables an incestuous relation. Erin Manning, a performance and dance artist writes about this sense of transgression of the body in relation to a construct of a critical form of subjectivity. He writes:

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<sup>27</sup> G. Deleuze, F. Guattari, *A thousand Plateaus*, trans. Brian Massumi, (London, New York: Continuum, 2004), p. 266.

<sup>28</sup> Judith P. Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1993), p. 21-121.

<sup>29</sup> William Haver, "Queer Research; or, how to practice invention to the brink of illegibility" in *The Eight Technologies of Otherness*, ed. Sue Golding, (London, New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 280 - 281.

it is not 'I' who is in the process of creating the dance, but the dance itself that is in the process of creating 'me', a 'me' that is in its 'bodying' will wonder the world directly. The 'I' is in the movement, active in worlding (...) attuning to its tendencies – to – form.<sup>30</sup>

The lack of an attraction between flesh and the object, as presented above, leads towards the need to rethink not only the way that a *Model of Palimpsestuousness* can become a matter, but also allows me to question the movement of *wearing* rather than *holding* as that, which can establish a necessary intimacy for the incestuous relation to occur.

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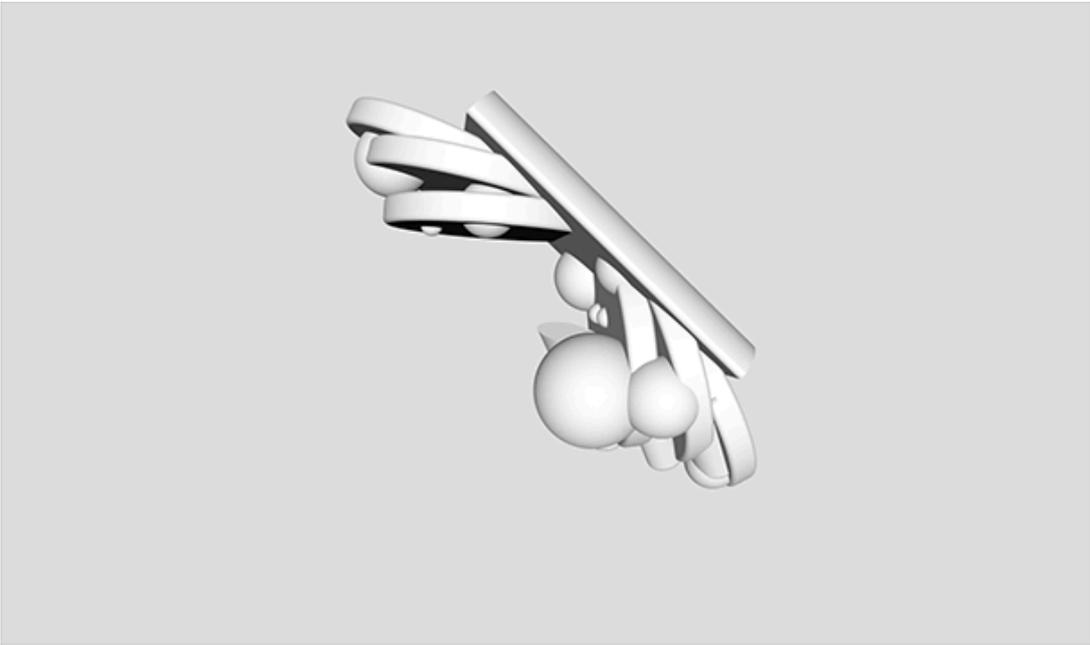
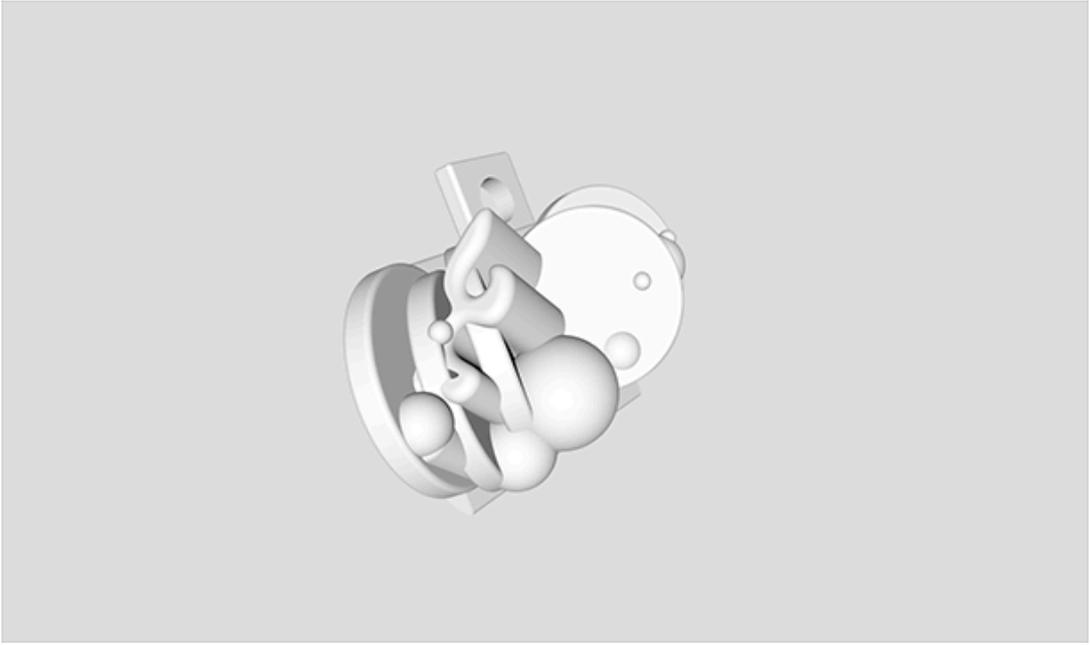
<sup>30</sup> Erin Manning, "Three Propositions for Movement of Thought" in *Performance and Temporalization – Time Happens*, ed. Stuart Grant, Judie McNeilly, Maeva Veerapen, (London, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), p. 116.

Palimpsestuousness never achieves finitude, it is always in the making, twisting and turning, continuously moulding its own meaning and its own materiality. The crash, and failure of its previous model brought with it the sense of loss of stability of one's identity and allowed me to re-inscribe the structure of the model again. This need for the constant re-inscription of its meaning is necessary as it can never set, it always needs to stay in the movement. As such the model needs to be re-done, expanded upon and re-evaluated. The dimension of *home*, as discussed in *At Home* piece of writing, suggests a type of matter that holds in its economy a possibility of incestuous relation. As I started developing an actual, palpable model of palimpsestuous space, through evaluating *The Palimpsest Model* as described by E.A. Banning, I was able, through its somewhat creative failure to realise the necessity to renegotiate and develop concepts around my methods of practice. As such, I realised through my performance work and through my video practice, that palimpsestuousness needs to incorporate ability to be *worn*, as to develop its portability in relation to *naked flesh*, and to be *sliced*, as to escape the notion of chronologically established time. It is through those methods that we can speak of palimpsestuousness as a spatiotemporality that emerges from contemporary discourses on queer theory.

Through the analysis of my own practice, and with the *crystal* of heterotopia as described by Foucault,<sup>31</sup> I decided to develop this model as a form of jewel that can be attached and easily removed, and with it by my side I was able to further develop my artistic practice.

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<sup>31</sup> Michel Foucault, *Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias*, trans. Jay Miskowiec, (*Architecture/Mouvement/Continuite*, October 1984), p. 2-3.



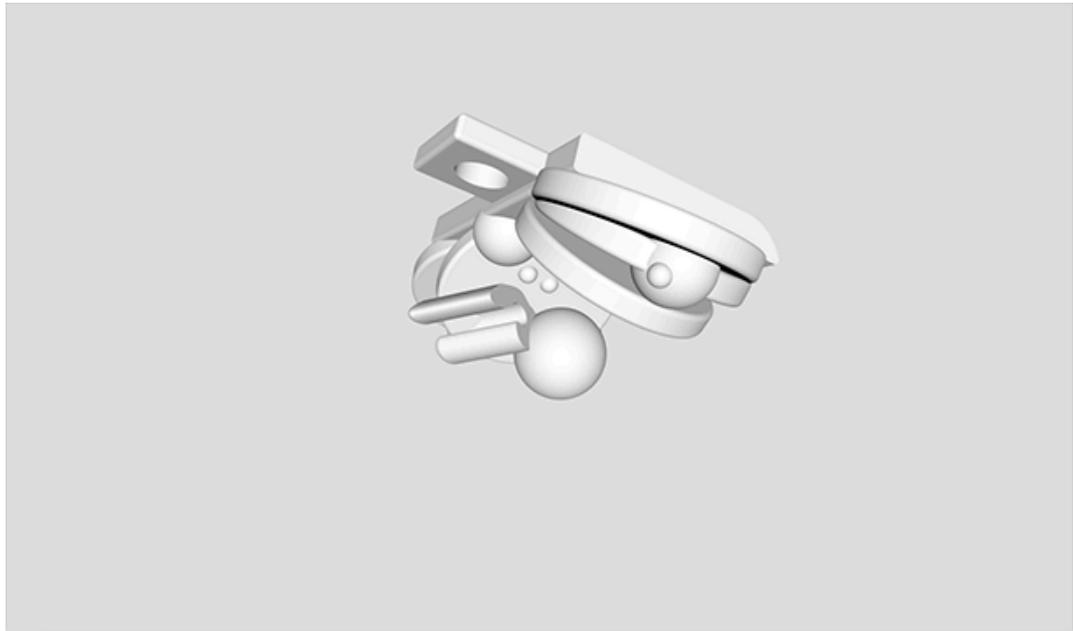
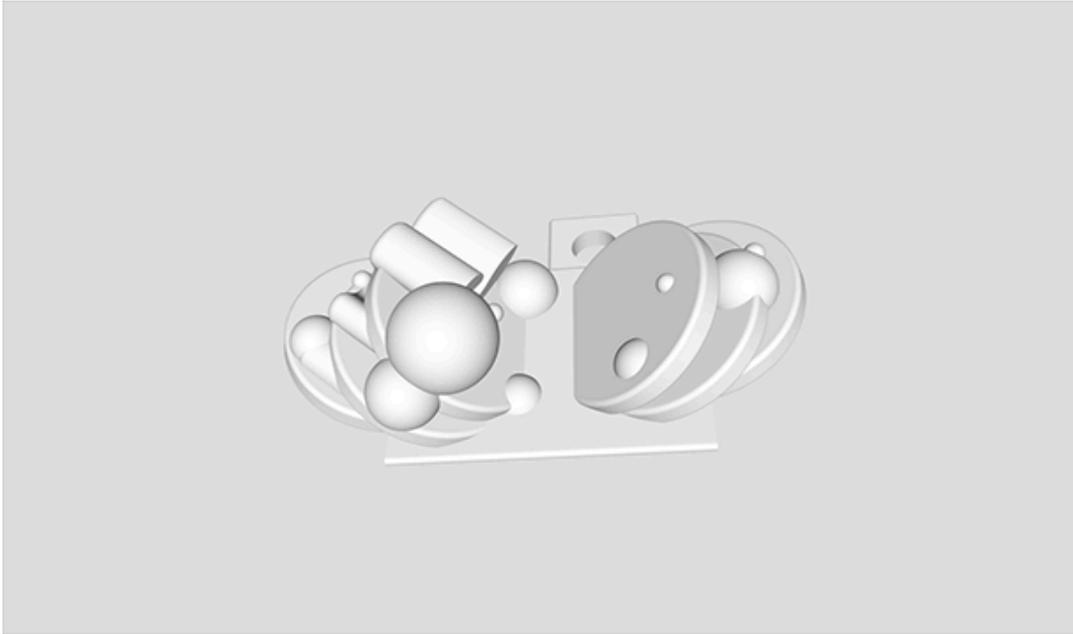


FIG.10 - Jakub Ceglaz, Design of a *Model of Palimpsestuousness v.2.0* – 3D rendering, 2016.

Presented above (FIG.10) is a second attempt of producing the model. We can notice a certain “simplification” of this rendering. This was caused by the fact, that at this stage of my research I was trying to 3D print it, and as such certain restrictions came to realisation. But as said before, *Model of Palimpsestuousness*, requires one to constantly re-do and re-inscribe the way it materialises. The influence that this “simplification” produced enabled the quality of the material to be more visible and more sensual.

The 3D printing offers one an opportunity to develop the materiality that penetrates the dimensions – it is through the processes of design, computing software and final workings of a printer that the virtual becomes almost teleported, and through it enables one’s senses of touch to produce another way of knowing this object. The constant re-doing and re-inscribing of the qualities of this model delivered a sudden realisation. This model, other than a name and maybe through sort of glimpses of narration created by this thesis, is at *odds* with the palimpsest that I evoked at the beginning of this research. I argue that, through this constant re-doing this model inhabits what Barad calls a methodology of diffraction. In her text *DiffRACTing*

*Diffraction: Cutting Together-Apart*, she defines such methodology as:

(...) Not a singular event that happens in space and time; rather, it is a dynamism that is integral to spacetime mattering. Diffractions are untimely. Time is out of joint; it is diffracted, broken apart in different directions, non- contemporaneous with itself. Each moment is an infinite multiplicity. ‘Now’ is not an infinitesimal slice but an infinitely rich condensed node in a changing field diffracted across space-time in its ongoing iterative repatterning.<sup>32</sup>

Reading through the diffraction as per Barad, speaks directly to the investigation of speed and interruption as presented in relation to my performance-based practice at *home*. The palimpsestuousness and its model functions as such an event; it challenges the normative cause – effect ontologies and rather focuses on liberating from the causality of the field of history.

Barad puts forward diffraction as a methodology that is a queer “counter-point” to the methodology of reflection.<sup>33</sup> For her, reflection produces knowledge by always returning the idea of selfhood that is grounded and priori to interaction. Diffraction

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<sup>32</sup> Karen Barad, “Diffracting Diffraction: Cutting Together-Apart”, *Parallax vol.72*, 2014, p. 169.

<sup>33</sup> Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. 2nd ed. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), p.89 – 90.

however, and she borrows strongly from Haraway here, allows for meaning and knowledge to become a phenomenon of intra-actions; an entanglement of superpositionality that does not require priori self to construct knowledge.

This view, even though it might sound similar, argues the position of time as Aion, as presented by Deleuze in his *Logic of Sense*. As he writes:

In accordance with Aion, only the past and future inhere or subsist in time. Instead of present which absorbs the past and future, a future and past divide the present at every instant and subdivide it as infinitum into past and future, in both directions at once.<sup>34</sup>

The composition of a matter of spatiotemporality as presented by Deleuze creates a violent enactment of transgression, not so different from the 'lightning' like transgression in Foucault's writing presented earlier. Barad on the other hand reads the function of time and matter as those which can produce a certain non-linear and multidimensional formalisation of thinking-as-making-as-research. If that is the case, the palimpsestuousness of a matter of the *AIR* and a speed that distresses time can be read as an event of intra-action.

This comes from the fact, as mentioned in earlier paragraphs, *Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.2.0)*, cannot be returned to its supposed "origins", even though this thesis seems to suggest that some sort of chronology is being narrated. What is established here, is not a visible and recognisable model that can be later 'followed' and disseminated, but a matter of thinking-and-making that attaches itself to the disorientated naked flesh, and through that attachment formulates and enables artistic research to expand. As per Freeman, this investigation is embracing *ars erotica* that Foucault speaks of. It is through using the flesh one develops a critical space. As she

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<sup>34</sup>Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, ed. Constantine V. Boundas trans. Mark Lester Deleuze, (London: The Athlone Press, 1990), p.164.

writes:

The *ars erotica*, as Michel Foucault has called them, are ways of intimating, of understanding and constructing knowledge with body as instrument. (...) As a critical technique or mode of analysis enacted with the body erotic (...) sadomasochism offers up a temporal means for reconfiguring the possible: the “slow time” that is at once modernity’s double and its undoing, the sensation that discombobulates the normative temporal conditionings that serve as status quo, the deviant pause that adds a codicil of pleasure to the legacy of suffering.<sup>35</sup>

With Freeman one sees the necessity of sexual and erotic responsiveness of a *naked flesh*, to change the speed of time and with it bring out the queer materialities that are in fact a synthesis of matter and meaning.

Throughout this research I tried to develop palimpsestuousness, by constant moves of ‘adding up’ to give the sense of its density and that qualities it has. By that method, I do not argue a Deleuzian reflective experience of Aion against the diffracted event of Barad. As Palimpsestuousness is a matter of a dimension, and is a matter that changes its dimensions as it responds to the connotations with both Deleuze and Barad, who might not necessary set up a similar notion of understanding of temporality, but what they both realise is that it is through an experience of time and temporality we can ground the notion of artistic research. Lucinda Parisi in her essay *The Adventures of Sex* writes when comparing thoughts of Deleuze and Barad:

While Barad’s relational ontology is implicated in a phenomenal account of real intra-actions which themselves produce phenomena, the abstract materialism of Deleuze and Guattari points not at the phenomena as constitutor of reality, but at the distinctive yet coexisting planes of virtual and actual materialities as felt in experience, otherwise termed abstract machines.<sup>36</sup>

Deleuze and Guattari’s abstract materialism speaks clearer to the reimagining of the

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<sup>35</sup> Elizabeth Freeman, *Time Binds – Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), p. 169.

<sup>36</sup> Luciana Parisi, “The Adventures of sex” in *Deleuze and Queer Theory*, ed. Chrysanthi Nigianni and Merl Storr, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), p. 81.

way the development of this model came to be, yet at the same time, Barad's understanding of reality as phenomena gives my practice a sense of speed and focus on the development of incestuous intra-actions.

It is especially constructive when the 3D print attaches itself in some position to the body that is always in flux. The constant falls and breakage of the fragile model (v1.0) allowed for the body to realise its materiality which is that of vibration. This instability, or rather transgression of causality changed the body itself. No more an agent of making and thinking, but an (in)cestually entangled phenomena in the wearing of the model. The latter requires one to literally move beyond their human fleshiness, by enabling the portability of palimpsestuousness and its way of establishing incestuous relations.

## WEARING

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As I was writing earlier in relation to my work in performance, and how it helped me to realise the necessity of flesh-to-object contact in realising palimpsestuousness. In 2017, I was invited to present some of the objects used in my performances at the exhibition *Provocations* in Blackpool, UK. This was the first time that these artefacts were presented without the attachment to a body in an exhibition space (FIG.11).





FIG.11 – Jakub Ceglarz, Objects from performances at ICW, Blackpool. Pictures courtesy of Garth Gratrix, 2017.

As this exhibition was a quite recent one it led me to understand differently some of my practice produced at the beginning of my research. The relationship between my practices and domesticity of my apartment did not only influenced my film series called *Heterotopias*. In 2014, I developed two photographs that dealt directly with the imposition of home-quality objects onto my face. Similarly, to the *Landscape of Leather*, these performance-based images aimed at producing a sense of bonding between flesh and the space around it. The difference comes from the intention that also asked questions about identity and selfhood as attached to traditional figural representation.

*Bust with Spoons* (2014) and *Bust with Book* (2015), in fact enabled me to gain a deeper understanding of the *intra-actions* as per Barad. It seems an obvious practice; with the bunch of spoons from my kitchen drawer and with a tape I created a sculpture that was suspended on my face, covering it up. In a similar manner *Bust with Book* was

developed by tearing pages of an old book, wetting them and then taking my own photograph against the wall of my kitchen.

*Bust with Spoons* (FIG.12) deals with the transgression of non-reducibility by creating a surface of the photograph that melts the recognizable elements of the domesticated object of the spoons with the figuration of a male body. This weird merger transforms this identity into that of a beast-spoon-man – a creature of unknown origins and ineffective in normalisation. Similarly, in the second image *Bust with Book* (FIG.13), the subject/artist/maker loses its face to give more matter and with that visibility to the surfaces of the wet pages of the book that are reminiscing the material palimpsest by making the textuality of it unreadable through layering and translucency of pages.

Those practises remove the subjectivity from the patterns of making knowledge, yet at the same time these moves operate in very much binary model to the already constructed phenomena of the form of a bust as that which represents a subject. When confronted with such mattering one feels the sense of negation and assimilation rather than otherness. The function of those images is not enough – it does not fulfil the spectrum of palimpsestuousness and falls back onto the binary logic of traditional epistemology and making in relational position of subject - object.



FIG.12 – Jakub Ceglarz, *Bust with Spoons*, photograph, 2014.



FIG.13 - Jakub Ceglarczyk, *Bust with Book*, photograph, 2015.

At the same time these images are developed in the sense of multiplicity and palimpsestuous intimacy. But as in the case of the previous models of palimpsestuousness, they subscribed to the dominant ways of epistemology. The sense of masking, hiding and protecting as presented in the photographs above, suggests that it is through the revealing, de-layering and extortion of the hidden truth that one produces a quantifiable, referential and linear narrative of knowledge. At the same time, when thinking through the practice that emerged from these images we can escape this dominant layered based knowledge and instead focus on the performativity of a method of *wearing*. This method instead of producing and multiplying the stability of a subject, instead opens-up the discourse by re-thinking the need for a subject and orientated identities to be necessary described and calculated.

To question the subject of the photography and to analyse the identity doesn't allow for the palimpsestuousness to occur, or to become a type of matter of intra-action. It is then a necessity to further rethink this *naked flesh* and with it the way that palimpsestuousness becomes portable site of art and research practice.

The necessity of an incestuous relation, when dealing with the synthesis of matter and meaning in palimpsestuousness, emerges throughout the method of wearing especially when associated with the sexual and erotic thought one can inhabit. What becomes realised is a different sense of self – not a necessary priori substance that allows for the logic to become valid and sustainable, but rather a form of material movement, which presents with itself a different and queer sense of logic and experience of spatiotemporality. Here I will argue that through the practice of *parrhesia* one can develop a trust, care and responsibility necessary to perform a *wearing* as a method of queer enactment. At the same time, I will argue that when reading Foucault's conceptualisation of *parrhesia* through the emerging critical field of post-humanism, we can talk about this practice as that, which can be understood as incestuous (producing a sense of familiar belonging) entanglement with non-human.

Foucault, in his reading of *parrhesia*, a concept that he appropriates from ancient Greek philosopher Euripides, describes it as a specific version of speaking the truth that creates a density of a relationship between humans. As he writes:

(Parrhesia) is a kind of verbal activity where the speaker has a specific relation to truth through frankness, a certain relationship to his own life through danger, a certain type of relation to himself or other people through criticism (...) and a specific relation to moral law through freedom and duty. More precisely, *parrhesia* is a verbal activity in which a speaker expresses his personal relationship to truth, and risks his life because he recognises truth-telling as a duty to improve or help other people (as well as himself).<sup>37</sup>

Per Foucault, *parrhesia* becomes a site of practice of truth, that obligates one to experience a risk when one shows truth. We can read it in relation to producing art in a

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<sup>37</sup> Michel Foucault, *Fearsome Speech*, ed. Joseph Pearson, (Los Angeles: Semiotext, 2001), p. 19.

sexual and erotic spectrum, especially by connecting this concept with my practice of self-nudes that occupies my performances, videos and photography. "Truth" can be read as form of art, an intensity of telling one's knowledge through illegible *act of resistance*, as per Deleuze. It puts one in position of social humiliation, as the nude flesh performs and creates an intimacy. Yet, I would argue that *parrhesia* can be also read as a relationship with an object, especially as Ahmed would call it a *queer object*.

Through their performances and photography, Lovett/Codagnone an artist performance duo, create a sense of mis-matches and mis-belonging by using S/M gear in domestic and mostly family orientated situations. Yet, as we can see there is another form of practice of post-human *parrhesia* that seems to be attached intimately to their practice, especially in relation to their photographs (FIG. 14-15).



FIG. 14 - Lovett/Codagnone, *Palm Island Honeymooners*, c-print, 1996.



FIG. 14 – Lovett/Codagnone, *The Mall, Allentown, Pa*, c-print, 1996.

The camera that is present in their photographs by them using a shutter extension, reveals to be a significant presence in their work. Not only, similarly to my own work, as they produce their photographs by themselves, we can also say that they are performing an artistic form of *parrhesia*. By contrasting their S/M bodies with what appears to be normative landscapes, they experience a sense of risk. This risk, is associated with the fact that S/M praxis brings with itself a series of *subjugated knowledges*, that in the formalisation of their photographs stands up as foreign. It is then a task of their camera to reshape the space and site that they occupy. It is in that reshaping that we can read as establishing a sense of responsibility and care, and even friendship between their flesh and the machine of camera.

In this process, not only through wearing S/M gear, their bodies change. The chimeras of humanism and S/M, suddenly become a version of Cyborg as described by Dona Haraway. In her *A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, technology and socialist-feminism in the late twentieth century*, she describes such phenomena as:

The cyborg is resolutely committed to partiality, irony, intimacy and perversity. It is oppositional, utopian, and completely without innocence. No longer structured by the polarity of public and private, the cyborg defines a technological polis based on a revolution of social relations in the *oikos*, the household.<sup>38</sup>

Throughout this written submission I attempted to establish the specific re-evaluation of a site/space/dimension that allows for the erotic, sensual and sexual praxis to be developed into a type of innovative methodological materiality of palimpsestuousness. The importance of such a site, or as referred to in *At Home* section of my submission, of

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<sup>38</sup> Dona Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, technology and socialist-feminism in the late twentieth century" in *The Cybercultures Reader*, ed. David Bell and Barbara M. Kennedy, (London, New York: Routledge, 2001), p. 292-293. – In her essay Haraway creates a metaphor of the Cyborg, as to realise the Posthumanist notion of a hybrid-like (monstrous) discontinuity that challenges the historicity of humanism as essential in creating knowledge and meaning.

*home*, is that it allows for the artistic research to disjoin itself from the traditional segregation of notions of epistemology, ontology, ethics and aesthetics. Those 'traditional' conceptualisations are not discarded and argued with as 'wrong', but rather through the interrogation of queer sexual praxis one can find the limits of them and because of that produce a 'making-of-sense' where there is not, or should not be one.

Lovett/Codagnone's practice becomes a version of *parrhesia*, as it develops in an intimacy of relationships, cares and friendships, that requires risks and potential humiliation as part of speaking truth and making art. This type of relationship, in fact, is for me an incestuous one; it removes hierarchy and supposed way of practice in relation to taking one's photograph. It sets up a site of trust, and with it disorientates the flesh at risk as to give it a different sense of belonging.







FIG.15 - Jakub Ceglarz, Images of 3D printed *Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.2.0)*, 2017.

As such I developed a matter of palimpsestuousness (*Model of Palimpsestuousness, 2.0*) (FIG.15) – an object/reference, which when near the flesh can create a sense of cyborgian and intra-active phenomena. This phenomenon as discussed in Barad’s work is an intra-active-spacetime mattering, which is created out of quantum understanding of the implications of superposition. Superposition as such, is an understanding of a phenomena (relational ontology), which doesn’t allow for the breakage of the (incestuous) entanglement into separate (priori) entities, but always starts, or rather matters already in-the-phenomena. Such an indication of the mattering suggests inseparability of the things in entanglement. Per Barad in her *Posthumanist Performativity: Towards an Understanding of how Matter comes to Matter*:

The world is an ongoing open process of mattering through which “mattering” itself acquires meaning and form in the realization of different agential possibilities. Temporality and spatiality emerge in this processual historicity. Relations of exteriority, connectivity, exclusion are reconfigured. The changing topologies of the world entail an ongoing re-working of the very nature of dynamics. In summary, the universe is agential intra-activity in its becoming. The primary ontological units are not “things” but phenomena – dynamic topological reconfigurings/entanglements/rationalities/(re)articulations.<sup>39</sup>

*Agential realism* presented by Barad, functions in the constant embodiment of the movements. The phenomena do not possess a commodity of matter, but rather become a matter in their entangled state of becoming. Such an outlook at the notion of the phenomena can be considered as very queered, especially when aligned with the research on the mattering of the palimpsestuousness. As Ahmed writes in her *Queer Phenomenology*:

Moments of disorientation are vital. They are bodily experiences that throw the world up, or throw the body from its ground. Disorientation as a bodily feeling

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<sup>39</sup> Karen Barad, “Posthumanist Performativity: Towards an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter” in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, Vol. 28, Number 3, (The University of Chicago Press, 2003), p. 801 -831.

can be unsettling, and it can shatter one's sense of confidence in that the ground on which we reside can support the actions that make life feel liveable.<sup>40</sup>

In some way, Barad's intra-action matter of the phenomena becomes such a *shattering experience* when confronted with the notion of disorientation as a form of queer enactment proposed by Ahmed. It becomes such, and in part I dealt with it when discussing a constant failure to produce a *Model of Palimpsestuousness v.1.0*, because it removes the need for the priori condensation of the identity that acts upon the object. Instead it creates a translucent matter of entanglement that, as a ground, allows the researcher to produce a body of knowledge without appropriation of the subjectivity as that, which is required to 'know' first.

That is also a place where certain problems occur, especially in relation to the philosophy by Deleuze. As I mentioned earlier in discussing the relevance of the Deleuzian *abstract machine* to the making and developing of the *Model of Palimpsestuousness*, the matter of 'translucent (Crisco)' as a sensuous, sexual and erotic un-graspability could be read as both form of *agential realism* and matter of *abstract and incestuous entanglement*. This understanding comes directly from reviewing the comparison between both sets of matter, or rather matterings of matterings as presented by Luciana Parisi. As she writes:

(...) The composition of an abstract machine entails the togetherness of heterogeneous regions of spacetime that are virtually real and yet not realised. Far from implicating an agential realism, all be it a composite agency made of phenomena-in-things, an abstract machine rather distinguishes between degrees of intensive and extensive materiality. It is not possible to account for becoming

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<sup>40</sup> Sarah Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*, (Duke University Press: Durham, London: 2006), p. 157 – Ahmed in her book brings to attention a notion of orientation as to realise the sensual need to create and establish relation-based knowledge. In some way using the term 'orientation' rather than more commonly associated term 'attitude' allows Ahmed to connect the sexuality, performativity and queered notion of selfhood as necessary attributes to deal with the notion of Phenomenology.

in an all-encompassing identity, analogy or verisimilitude between phenomena and things.<sup>41</sup>

Parisi throughout her writing seems to be orientating the notion of queer as a synonym to the Deleuzian disjointed materiality of time. The queer theory for her is a stadium of a matter of temporality, and an 'other' dimensionality. This seems to be extremely like the queerness of the quantum and Posthumanist as presented by Barad.

Palimpsestuousness then can be seen as a plasticity of three conceptualisations – a spacetime mattering of 'other', non-binary dimensionality of making sense, a model and body that functions in relation to the "mechanistic materiality" of Deleuze and Guattari (*Model of Palimpsestuousness v.2.0*) and finally a notion of queer and incestuous relational mattering of praxis that affects the structure and form of an entangled phenomena in relation to their temporality (*parrhesia*).

When discussing the works of Lovett/Codagnone's practice as a form of *parrhesia*, what occurred to me was the certain immediacy of the production/capture of the image and the instant reminder of the matter that emerges. Lovett/Codagnone deregulates the traditional subject/object ontology and methodology of taking a photo, by their rigour of homespun making. By referring to this rigour as homespun, I mean practices, which are formed in and through a sense of intimacy. This resonates with the approaches that Deleuze has towards the matter of the cinema, or as he writes:

The plane of immanence is the movement (the facet of movement) which is established between the parts of each system and between one system and another, which crosses them all, stirs them all up together and subjects them all to the condition which prevents them from being absolutely closed. It is therefore a section; (...) it is not an immobile and instantaneous section, it is a

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<sup>41</sup>Luciana Parisi, "The Adventures of sex" in *Deleuze and Queer Theory*, ed. Chrysanthi Nigianni and Merl Storr, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), p. 83. – Parisi negotiates the way that notions of gender and sex seen through social queer perspective actually affect the bio-power of the material body. She argues Karen Barad's call for quantum queer materiality by reminding Deleuzian focus on the parameters of the falls, gaps, and interruptions as those that make sense.

mobile section, a temporal section or perspective. It is a bloc of space-time, since the time of the movement which is at work within it is part of it every time.<sup>42</sup>

Deleuze in his text on cinema removes the medium of film (movement-image) from the pre-supposition that it evolved from the photography. I would like to set up another version of this argument in relation to photography understood as a slice of time.

If, as I argue, palimpsestuousness is an enactment and an experience of a sexual and critical dimension, then it needs to operate by production of a different sense of temporality. Deleuze in his understanding of the medium of cinema produces a way of thinking about *slicing*, as a method of bringing things together, to the degree of producing difference in experiencing time. I would argue that this *slicing*, is also a form of *wearing* as described earlier.

As Deleuze is trying to distance his cinema practice theory from the medium of photography, he subsequently delivers a discourse on contemporary photography practice in digital age. I cannot help but notice that this *slicing* as that which challenges the experiences of temporality and with it experiences of speciality can be understood in reference to Haraway's *Cyborg Manifesto*. By using the metaphor of the Cyborg, she establishes a new form of humanism and feminism – not as that, which functions as a clear-cut opposition, but rather as that, which creates and allows for the other and multidimensional/multi-sensual forms of meaning to be established. This move beyond and outside of the identity politics that often inform the common understanding of the fields of feminism discourse and queer theory creates a flexible and material space of praxis – especially for artistic research – as it gives an opportunity to be able to

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<sup>42</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1: Movement-Image*, trans. H. Tomlinson and B. Habberjam, (London, New York: Bloomsbury, 2015), p. 66 – 67. – It is important to stress out the fact that in this research the 'photograph' as a medium refers to the action of the 'taking-of-the-photograph'. Such move allows to see that the palimpsestuousness depends on the flux and multiplicity of actions rather than on the expected material results.

renegotiate the ways of making sense. This directly influenced the formalisation of the model (v2.0) as a 3D print, made from a milky and semi-translucent acrylic material. As the first model was not graspable, I began thinking of a way that this *portable fire* could find another form of interaction with the body that interrupted both the sense of border of a flesh and with it the *logos* of ethics that place human as the centre of making sense. As such I designed the model to feature a suspending mechanism that would allow me to use this model as a form of extension of the body and, in some way like the way that the dress became a matter that changed the body into that of *Fatima*, to produce the phenomena of the queer cyborg.



FIG.16 - Anastasjia Starikova and Jakub Ceglarz, wearing *Model of Palimpsestuousness v.2.0*, 2017.  
FIG.17 - Jakub Ceglarz, *Cyborg of Palimpsestuousness*, 2017.

The *Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.2.0)* becomes an attire - a wearable jewel (FIG.16-17) and as such it both became an excess and a mundane precious materiality, that in some way allowed for the body to extend and change. It is *heterotopian crystal*, an *abstract-machine* that transforms the sensing of spatiality, temporality and the embodiment. In a similar 'beheading' manner the model transformed the thinking head, by means of *slicing* and multiplying, creating an image that inhabits practice associated with the space of palimpsestuousness. It's emergence as such, creates a sense of radical logic of sexual, sensual and erotic praxis as those that create an intimacy where *parrhesia* can be understood as a form of incestuous relation.

In his works Genet never misses the opportunity of reminding the readers that the queerness of self is very much embedded in the political discourses on sexuality, especially in proper or regulated activities. Yet at the same time, he doesn't argue directly with heteronormativity. His gay male subjects are living, breathing and thinking with their sexual desire present at any time. As he writes:

I saw clearly (...) what that room and those men were, what role they were *playing*: it was a major role in the march of the world. This role was the origin of the world and at the origin of the world. It seemed to me suddenly, thanks to a kind of extraordinary lucidity, that I understood the system. The world dwindled, and its mystery too, as soon as I was cut off from it. It was a truly supernatural moment, similar, in respect to this detachment from the human, to the one I experienced when Chief Warrant Officer Cesari, at the Same Prison, had to write a report on my sexual practices. He said to me: "That word (he didn't dare to utter the word 'homosexual'), is it written as two words?" And he pointed to it on the sheet with his forefinger extended...but not touching the word.<sup>43</sup>

The confrontation of the pleasure-becoming sense of identity, with the non-subjugated heteronormativity, as shown above, allows Genet to realise the importance and the mattering of the sense of sexual, sensual and erotic practices without the necessity of

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<sup>43</sup> Jean Genet, *Our Lady of the Flowers*, trans. Bernard Frechtman, (Paris: The Olympia Press, 2004), p. 114.

creating and multiplying the binary systems of knowledge. It is in a similar way that Haraway presents and sets up her argument around feminism. What she asks is the allowance to realise the potential of post-humanist materiality of feminist discourse that does not need and does not relay of subjugating to traditional forms of discursive conditions. In my work, I tend to stick to the production of photographs that are taken and posed by myself. The becoming of the photographer and the objectivated flesh of the subject of the photograph allows me to see and experience the multiplicity of becoming.

The methods that emerged from my performance practice (*wearing*) and from my *Heterotopias* series (*slicing*), when used in relation to producing a digital print disrupt the image by means of multiplicity. It is multiplicity that, differs from the palimpsestic layered structure. It is a multiplicity of palimpsestuousness, that as an economy of making allows one to establish an art practice from a contemporary reading of Michel Foucault's concepts of *ars erotica*, *subjugated knowledges*, *heterotopia* and *parrhesia*.

I do not mean here that my practice represents those concepts by means of art, rather it is through this research and emerging matter of palimpsestuousness, that I manage to inhabit those concepts, in and through my *naked flesh. Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.2.0)*, in part also inhabits those concepts, but as it changes from the palimpsest and its layered structure, so these concepts change, as to speak to the most contemporary questions on queer theory.

*Wearing* and *slicing* as methods that emerged from my practice, through digital manipulations can develop a further visual culture of my own work. The series of digital prints called *Pluralities* (2017), emerged from embodying a cyborgian attitude of

making (FIG.18). By this attitude I mean a certain openness to the possibility of losing oneself and becoming a non-centric phenomenon of intra-action.

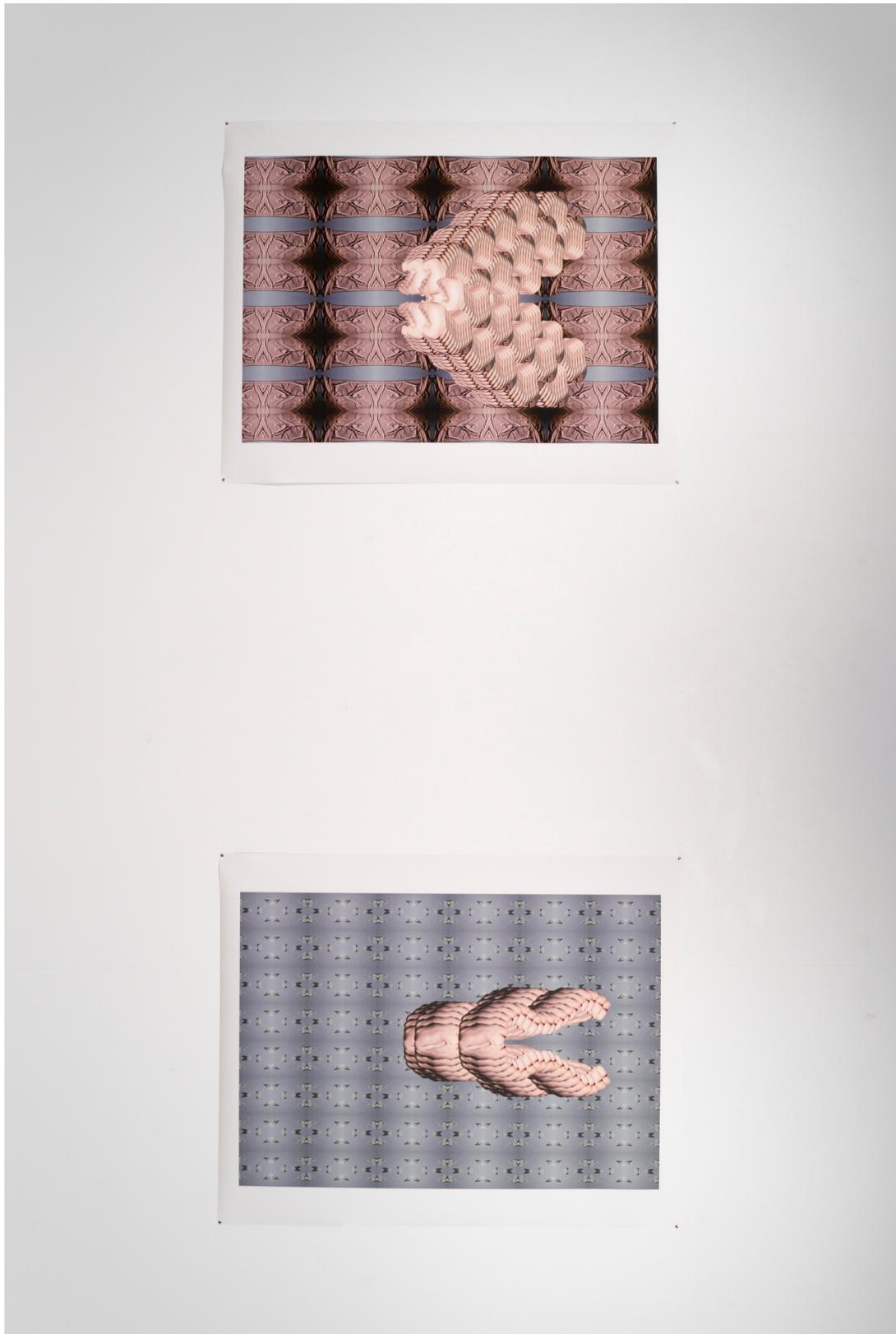


FIG.18 – Jakub Ceglarz, *Pluralities* series, digital prints, 2017.

In these prints the constant moves of digital slicing and digital wearing, changes the fragments of the bodies and the objects that formulate a pattern to, which the body belongs, create a visual uncertainty. They are figurative, yet because of the continuous movements of those two methods, they lack representative value. One could say that they become abstract, but with it one must acknowledge that the meaning and methodology they are using still function on the binary logic.

The camera provides my body with a new Cyborgian sensuality of making. This camera is an extension of the body and at the same time the only reason for the body to become anew. If, as suggested by Haraway and Barad, one removes the subjectivity of humanism from that which is required and singular logic of making sense, the intra-action of the phenomena of taking the photograph sexually, erotically and sensually entangles the body and the machine (camera) and produces a Cyborgian way of understanding intimacy of *parrhesia*.

# MATERIALIZING PALIMPSEST

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Interrogation into *palimpsestuousness* as a queer  
enactment in artistic research

*AT HOME*

## At Home

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### THEWIDTHOFTHEROOMTHATCANHOLDSOMUCHPLEASUREINSIDE

Lovett/Codagnone, *The Width Of The Room That Can Hold So Much Pleasure Inside, 2004* – lettering to match the exact length of the wall.

Lieven De Boeck, a Belgian conceptual artist, during a five-year period embarked on a project that dealt with the notion of identity and a space of housing. For this period, he moved from friend's place to friend's place, from neighbourhood to neighbourhood. He archived his belongings, the architectural plans of the houses and apartments that he stayed in, as well as writings created by his friends that he stayed with. An edited version of his archives was published in 2003 in a form of a book called *HOUSING*. His archives become a dictionary of a space, both in an architectural and conceptual way.<sup>1</sup>

During the period of the last three years I have lived in small studio apartment near Edgbaston in Birmingham, UK. It was the first time in my life that I lived completely by myself – with no roommates and with very pleasurable ability to close the doors and not let anyone in. Even before my PhD research the place where I lived marked a presence in my practice; mostly through my self-made photographs (my timed camera often rested on a stack of books, desks and even hanging from the doors). As already discussed in relation to my *Landscape of Leather* triptych and *IN-BODY* print, most of my performance based photographs and films show my naked flesh in interaction with found object(s). In case of *Landscape of Leather*, it was a leather sofa, and in case of *IN-BODY* it was a clay sculpture of the *Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.1.0)*. This interaction, as per my performance work, is associated with the movement of

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<sup>1</sup> Lieven De Boeck, *HOUSING*, ed. Lieven De Boeck, (Maastricht: Jan van Eyck Academie, 2003), p.3.

*wearing*, by which I understand as the movement of challenging the stability of a naked flesh by bondage with another object and/or *objectivated* body.<sup>2</sup>

Having the privilege to be able to practice this performance based art and artistic research in a space, (however small), has allowed me not only to negotiate the role my apartment has played in this research, but also – and this is crucial – allowed me to experience a conceptual move from palimpsestic layers to palimpsestuous spatiotemporality. This move, as I argue in *(Another) Introduction to palimpsest*, is where I argue one can find emerging palimpsestuousness as a queer enactment.

I did not, as De Boeck has produce an archive of maps and dictionary entries about the changes that housing can produce in relation to identity – rather I developed five short films that I call *Heterotopias*, so as to acknowledge the relation to Foucault’s concept.<sup>3</sup> Before I navigate the way those films function in this research, I want to focus on the experience of the space of home through a homosexual (gay man) erotic and sexual praxis. In this text, we will travel to prison, from which we will teleport ourselves into a *plane of immanence*, then we will enable a new body of space to emerge from the darkrooms, bathrooms, catacombs and artistic studios. Through those examples, I will argue and propose an expanded understanding of a concept of *home*, as a palimpsestuous spatiotemporality of sexual and erotic praxis.

Jean Genet, 20<sup>th</sup> century French novelist, poet and playwright; known for his work to celebrate crime, sexuality, homoeroticism and violence, often places his characters in a specific and highly suggestive environments and economies. Even though he is mainly recognised for his writings; and I will be discussing these later, here

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<sup>2</sup> Vivian Sobchack, *Carnal Thoughts: Embodiment and Moving Image Culture*, (Barkley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2004), p. 182

<sup>3</sup> The relationship to Foucault’s concept of *heterotopia* will be discussed later in this writing.

I want to focus on his only film work – a 28 minutes long black and white feature titled *Un Chant de Amour* (Eng. *A Song of Love*) from 1950 (FIG.1).

In this film, we follow an erotic relationship between two prisoners, one older (only credited as Java) and one younger (portrayed by Andre Raybaz) whom are placed in neighbouring cells. We do not know any history or priori connections between them, there is only the story of and in the prison. This already suggests that we encountering a representation of a certain spatiotemporality. The main characters communicate between each other through the small hole by passing between themselves smoke from a cigarette while rubbing their genitalia. Therefor it is not only in their encounter that the homoerotic and homosexual energy is visible.





FIG.1- Jean Genet, Stills from *Un Chant De Amour*, 1950.

In one of the scenes we follow the guard, who looks at the prisoners through the peepholes in each cell doors. He looks as each prisoner masturbates and dances in nude. He is aroused by what he is witnessing, and seems to be specifically obsessed with the younger prisoner played by Raybaz. His homosexual desires are fed by the continuous

gazing on exposed prisoners. The Guard also exposes himself as a jealous type – when he notices that there is a form of relationship between younger and older prisoner – he enters the older prisoner’s cell and puts his gun in his mouth in rather sexual and suggestive way.

Because Genette focuses on the portrayal of the homoerotic and homosexual encounters, the space of this prison becomes a space of sexual praxis. But the prison is not the only space, or site that we witness in this film. In the encounter between the older and the younger prisoner the space of the tiny hole in the wall becomes crucial in their desire for each other. As the smoke passes between their mouths, the older prisoner imagines himself running away with the younger one into the field where they finally can be together. I would argue that this hole and the field are in fact the same spatiotemporality. This shift of dimension allows changes in the form of intimacy between the lovers. The hole-as-a-field becomes a space, in which their visceral desire for each other takes place; away from the gaze of the Guard and away from the homoerotic economy of this prison. At the same time, it is because of the homoerotic economy of prison that one is able to perform this ‘teleportation’ of sorts.

Throughout Genet’s writings this homoerotic economy of prison takes even further shaping. For him, especially in *Our Lady of the Flowers*, prison is a form of transgressive spatiotemporality created in and through homosexual desire. Readers can experience that in the structure of narrative that Genet creates – the story of Divine, Darling and Our Lady jumps around and escapes linearity of progression. Instead we get glimpses and instances of their stories; Genet almost in a playful manner – travels around those events in his prison cell. Intertwined in the story of *Our Lady of the Flowers*, are Genet’s autobiographical experiences of being imprisoned. and through

that disregards the causality of time and gravitas of the space. As he writes about his life in prison we can get a sense of a feeling of domesticity. He writes:

What if I am condemned? I shall don homespun again, and this rust-coloured garment will immediately entail the monastic gesture (...) I shall feel myself becoming humble and glorious, then snug under my blankets (...) I shall, for the enchantment of my cell, refashion lovely new lives for Darling, Divine, Our Lady and Gabriel <sup>4</sup>

Genet's description of prison becomes envisioned as *home*. Similarly, for me, my apartment became *home* too; not because of the sofas, bookshelves and tiny kitchen; but because this space allowed me to produce art practices through sexual and erotic praxis, and gave me a better understanding of spatiotemporality in relation to palimpsestuousness. *Home* that I speak of is both - spatiotemporality and a teleportation device. It allows one to experience palimpsestuous *AIR* and creates it through the artistic research and performance-based practices that occupy it.

Genet captures such re-imagination of *home* not only through his description of prison, but also when writing Divine's room, when she was a little boy. He writes:

Culafroy would enter his room. (...) He lays his bag, which is crammed with books and pads, on a straw chair; from under the bed he pulls out a case. Old playthings pile up, torn and dog-eared picture albums, a scarfed teddy bear, and from that bed of darkness, from that tomb of still fragments and radiant glories, he pulls out a greyish violin, which he himself has made. His hesitant gesture makes him blush. He feels humiliation (...) that he had felt when putting it together – though not while conceiving it – just about a week before, with the cardboard binding of the picture album, the piece of broom handle and four white threads, the string. It was a flat grey violin, a two-dimensional violin, with only the soundboard and the neck, and four white strings, geometric and rigorous spanning the extravagance, a phantom violin. <sup>5</sup>

The correlation between experiencing humiliation and artistic practice, as Culafroy (Divine) did when creating a *phantom violin*, can be directly related to my practice in

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<sup>4</sup> Jean Genet, *Our Lady of the Flowers*, trans. Bernard Frechtman, (Paris: The Olympia Press, 2004), p. 117.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. p.41-41.

relation to being nude. It is only because of the character of the translucent atmosphere that creates a bond between flesh and an object; that a new *phantom queer object* can come to realisation. The roughness described above of a *homemade violin*, not only speaks about a quality of it, it also speaks about such an object becoming a type of prosthesis. It changes Culafroy into a violin player, that he sees himself; changes the room into another dimension and another site of possibility. In a same way, *Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.1.0)* changed the *naked flesh* that it was in contact with. It is essential to remember that by describing something as “domestic” or “homespun” I do not pass judgment onto the product and even its aesthetic quality – what I rather do is a form of rigour. This rigour is a form of ethical and aesthetical practice. Foucault would refer to it as a form of *parrhesia* that functions by bringing together *bios* (life) and *logos* (speech).<sup>6</sup> As I discuss in *(Another)Introduction to palimpsest*, my practice of art emerges from interactions between sexual and erotic praxis and the economy of day-to-day life. It is through those interactions that an experience of palimpsestuousness, as a different form of spatiotemporality emerges.

This type of rigour that I speak of is formulated from the interrogation of my performance-based practices of photography and film. It is also what rigour Johnny Golding describes as *portable fire* in her poetic intervention published in the book *HOUSING* by Lieven De Boeck. In there she writes:

In any case: let us dream it as a kind of sumptuous, generous portable fire! this home, this banquet! And when necessary, let it leap from our brains, and desires, and pleasures and wants so as to become some kind of permanent structure, some kind of perimeter, ready and able to hide, contain, reframe that fire, that ice, that wind, that drought, that crazy kind of nourishment! (Perhaps this is what Lyotard meant when he so quietly wrote: “Who knows not how to hide, knows not how to love.”)

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<sup>6</sup> Michel Foucault, *Fearsome Speech*, ed. Joseph Pearson, (Los Angeles: Semiotext, 2001), p.89-160.

Housing-as-hiding-as-home: mutant knowledge, shape shifting to fit the needs of its inhabitants.<sup>7</sup>

To characterise the space of *home* as “portable” means to understand such space as movable and attached to the person that occupies it. The space of *home* that I inhabit both refers to the actual physicality of my apartment, but also to the sense of space that is being established in my performances. As discussed earlier in my performance *Fatima* and its relation to the conceptual underwriting (*scriptio inferior*), I am not surprised to find Golding using, the now famous quote by Jean-François Lyotard *Who knows not how to hide, knows not how to love* published at the beginning of his text titled *Libidinal Economy*.<sup>8</sup> Both Lyotard and Golding deal with the distinguishably visceral and sensual type of economy. This economy is one that creates deregulation and, similarly to the emergence of *scriptio inferior* to the surface of an otherwise readable text, a form of interruption that disorientates the experience of typical spatiotemporality. To put it differently – palimpsestuousness as a type of space, requires a domestic type of rigour that protects, and enables an incestuous intimacy to occur.

In next part I will discuss versions of this *home* that directly speak to the palimpsestuousness, yet before that I will discuss a vital concept of *heterotopia* as produced by Foucault and expanded on by Golding.

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<sup>7</sup> Johnny Golding, “INTERVENTIONS (it’s a wonderful life)” in *HOUSING*, ed. Lieven De Boeck, (Maastricht: Jan van Eyck Academie, 2003), p.7.

<sup>8</sup> Jean-François Lyotard, *Libidinal Economy*, trans: Iain Hamilton Grant, (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993) - Lyotard’s “libidinal economy” is a creation of erotic praxis that is not-yet-recognized and not-yet-formed. It shapes and bodily disfiguration restructures the priori though and gives it a sensibility of a desire rather than a need. To recognize, or represent is to create logic, which favours modes of discovery rather than sensibility. It is per Lyotard, a mode that excludes the spillage of “invisible” materiality. It is through the engagement with the “sensually inappropriate invisibility” (a type of matter which seems to be unable to become appropriated when approached as that which is not dissimilar to the palimpsest) that the practices of art create a sense of spatiality and temporality, which needs to be investigated.

## SLANTWISE TO OTHER SPACES

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How I long to dwell there by lingering on the folds of the materials that surround him. How I long to hear about the objects that gather around him, as “things” he does “things” with. This is not a desire for biography, or even for an impossible intimacy with a writer who is no longer with us. This is, rather, a desire to read about the particularity of the objects that gather around the writer. It is also to imagine philosophy as beginning here, with the pen and the paper, and with the body of the philosopher, who writes insofar as he is “at home” and insofar as home provides a space in which he does his work.<sup>9</sup>

Our domestic life and the law of our Homes do not resemble your Homes. We love each other without love. They do not have the sacramental character. Faggots are the great immoralists.<sup>10</sup>

Previously I described spatiotemporality of my *home* as portable, translucent, and erotic. These are the same qualities I read in Foucault’s concept of *heterotopia* as described in his text *Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias*. As per usual Foucault way of practice philosophy – *heterotopia* as a term is created by him to describe a geopolitical place that are a counter-sites to the relational spaces of power. What he means by counter-sites is twofold. One, it describes a space that has its own perimeters established by a voluntary and involuntary set of practices (e.g. Prison), and two, it creates a sense of belonging through having a set of *subjugated knowledges*, which I argue are essential in being-in *heterotopia*. As such, heterotopia can be understood as a space where the unheard and unrecognizable, disorientated and illegible produce a logic and economy. As he writes:

(heterotopia) the space of our dreams and that of our passions hold within themselves qualities that seem intrinsic: there is light, ethereal, transparent space, or again a dark, rough encumbered space; a space from above, of summits, or on the contrary a space from below of mud; or again a space that can be

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<sup>9</sup> Sarah Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham, London: Duke University Press, 2007), p. 29.

<sup>10</sup> Jean Genet, *Our Lady of the Flowers*, trans. Bernard Frechtman, (Paris: The Olympia Press, 2004), p. 29.

flowing like sparkling water, or space that is fixed, congealed, like stone or crystal.<sup>11</sup>

For him *heterotopias* are embodied spaces, that through the sense of belonging and slantwise common ground create a sense of mattering, which produces a *congealed crystal*. As it will become clear, this reference to the density of the space of *heterotopia*, will play a bigger part in understanding the *Model of Palimpsestuousness (v.2.0)*. For now, what I want to point out is the growing metaphors in describing palimpsestuousness as a space. The *AIR/HOME/CRYSTAL* all give palimpsestuousness a sense of materiality, that is necessary to *wear it* – to create an incestuous relation where there was none.

Foucault recognises this type of materiality-as-spatiality when he discusses the event of *seeing self in reflection* in relation to creating a multiplicity. He writes:

I believe that between utopias and these quite other sites, these heterotopias, there might be a sort of mixed, joint experience, which would be the mirror. The mirror is, after all, a utopia, since it is a placeless place. In the mirror, I see myself there where I am not, in an unreal, virtual space that opens up behind the surface; I am over there, there where I am not, a sort of shadow that gives my own visibility to myself, that enables me to see myself there where I am absent: such is the utopia of the mirror. But it is also a heterotopia in so far as the mirror does exist in reality, where it exerts a sort of counteraction on the position that I occupy. From the standpoint of the mirror I discover my absence from the place where I am since I see myself over there.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Michel Foucault, *Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias*, trans. Jay Miskowiec, (*Architecture/Mouvement/Continuite*, October 1984) p.2-3. In some way this *congealed, like stone or crystal* space, also suggests a practice approach, which will be in the relation to the establishing the 'failed' model of palimpsestuousness dimensionality in a form of a jewellery functioning here as that which extend and an attempt to capture the spillage from the practices that were involved here.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4 – It seems like the problem in regards to the concept of *heterotopias* as another form of material dimension starts at the principle of one's *gaze*. This assumption that Foucault takes as a given breaks with the notion that self can, and should stop existing, as that which works in the privilege of having and possessing such *gaze* – the gaze which is, for lack of other words a representation of the heteronormative ontology. At the same time *heterotopia* never stands at the opposition, and does not create binary model of inner/outer, or public/private in relation to such traditional *gaze*. Foucault understands that, even though never fully realize, that to a space to become a type of *heterotopia* it needs to be established by the social body through the movement and Deleuzian *desire-machine* rather than as a site that is given with already set rules of engagement.

An epistemological move in relation to spatiotemporality proposed by Foucault, designates a selfhood or as per Foucault *care of the self*, as that, which allows us to develop a heterotopic space.<sup>13</sup> This is further picked up by Johnny Golding, who designates a 'darkroom'; space in relation of photography and space of specific sexual praxis; as a heterotopia. In her essay *After the Dark Room: Ana-materialism and the Sensuous Fractalities of Speed and Light (or does the image still speak a thousand words?)*, Golding deals with the ways of thinking about spaces that allow for specific, I would argue *subjugated*, knowledges to develop. As she writes:

Each of those darkroom spatialities (...) work off the collapse of the past and the future into an immediate intensity that draws together, and indeed swallows up, subject, object, anything in between or in its path; swallowed all up into a black-hole *cogito*, a black-hole *cogito* dot of a "being-there", right here, right now.<sup>14</sup>

In a move that challenges a very much geo-political version of space as per Foucault, Golding 'blames' time and temporality as that, which establishes an experience of difference in relation to space. As already discussed it happens similarly in relation to palimpsestuousness. As a queer object and queer space, palimpsestuousness works of being off-time. Yet, because my relationship with my apartment developed in my practice, the abandonment of the space for the sake of time seems incomplete. Hence we fall back to Barad, who looks at these concepts not as different to each other, but as the same *intra-action phenomena*.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Michel Foucault, "The Culture of Self", *Lectures Series at UC Barkley, California*, 12.04.1983 – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4QvSUYeEBQ>, accessed on 12.02.2016

<sup>14</sup> Johnny Golding, "After the Dark Room: Ana-materialism and the Sensuous Fractalities of Speed and Light (or does the image still speak a thousand words?)" in *On the Verge of Photography*, ed. Daniel Rubinstein, Johnny Golding, Andy Fisher, (Birmingham: ARTicle Press, 2013), p. 141-148. – Emphasize on cognito and gay room.

<sup>15</sup> Karen Barad, "Intra-actions" in *Mousse vol. 34*, 2015, p. 76-81.

Golding with her inquiry into photography, brings to attention the sensuality of a dark room in relation to the sexuality and erotic praxis. For her, both the darkroom of photography practice and the darkroom of gay sex life, have the same heterotopic quality. And it is in those dimensions that a queer (subjugated) knowledge gets established, and as I argue through the relationship to my apartment, also get materialised.

To bring together the sensuality of heterotopia (time) and multiplicity (space) that it produces I will look at the photographic practice of Robert Mapplethorpe, especially his work in Polaroid, which speak directly to the homespun rigour of art produced at *home* - at 'moment in space'. Mapplethorpe was most recognised for his celebrity photographs as well as homoerotic male nudes. In 2003 Sylvia Wolf – a digital photography art theorist – published a book that dealt with his less known practice of Polaroids.<sup>16</sup> In these photos, we can see a more direct fascination of Mapplethorpe with gay sex and male nudity. The pictures were often taken in between his 'professional' shoots and as such they possess a less cultivated structure. It appears that the pictures were taken in haste, but as there is no direct reference to it, it only might be a conclusion that it came from usage of the Polaroid camera. In any case, here I will look at the series of self-portraits taken in 1973 (FIG. 2). In those images, we can see Mapplethorpe's strip show. They start with a picture of a bathrobe, then we see Mapplethorpe wearing it and then – shot-by-shot – taking it off, finalising with his full nude with semi erect penis.

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<sup>16</sup> Sylvia Wolf, *Polaroids Mapplethorpe*, (Munich, London, New York: Prestel, 2008).









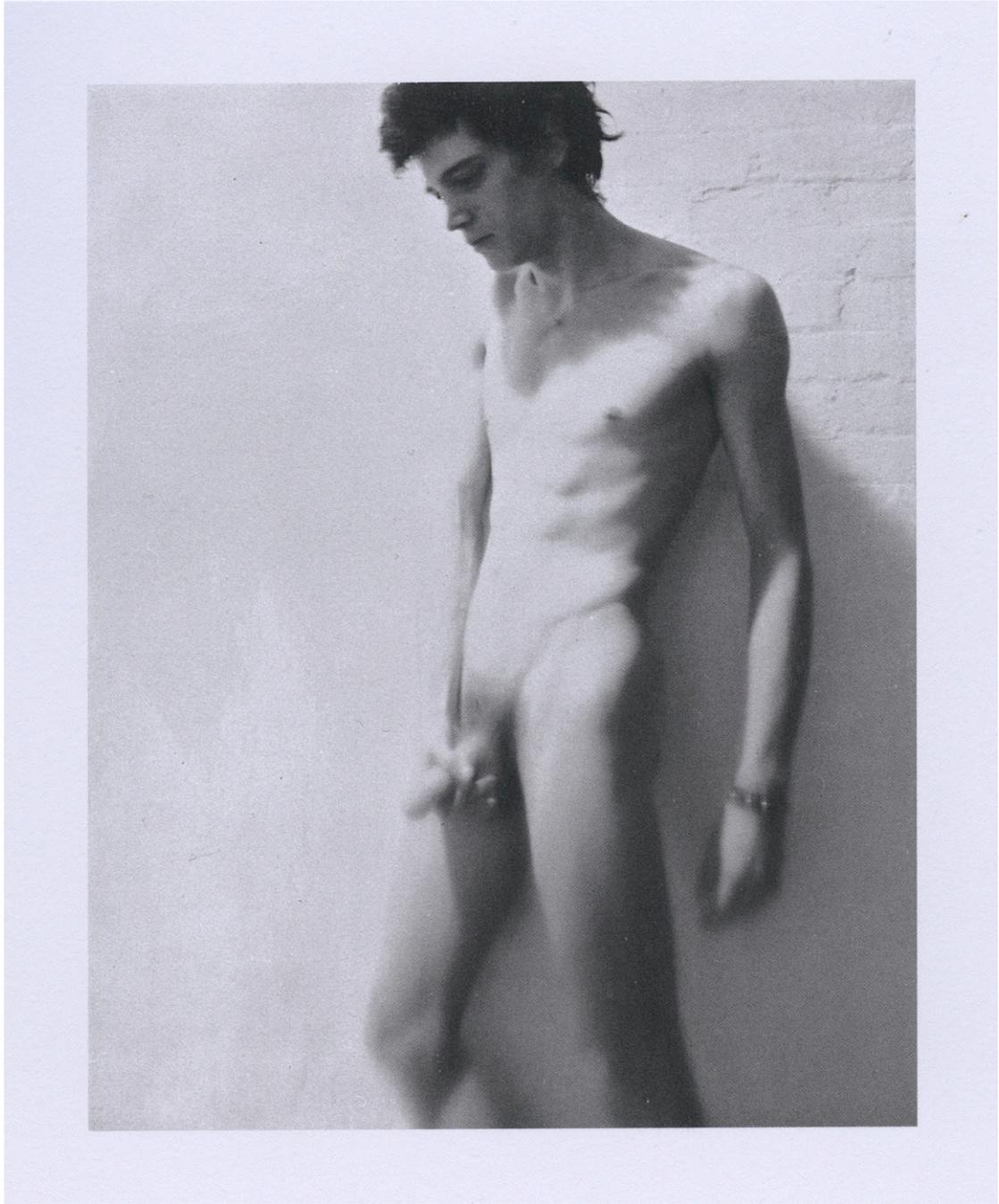


FIG.2 - Robert Mapplethorpe, polaroid, *Untitled (self-portrait)*, 1973.

As Genet observes when writing about young Divine's room, those images could appear shocking and almost perverted. Yet if we think about them not as 'revealing' and 'showing-off', but rather as a sexual and erotic praxis – *a homespun rigour*, we can think of them as images of a method of *wearing*; as a performance-based art practice.

It is not a wearing of the bathrobe that I mean. I argue that Mapplethorpe is wearing his *home* on his *naked flesh*. We see him, in what appear to be normally a humiliating and/or embarrassing moment. We see him in a *glass closet*, yet it is not the secret he is showing to us, nor is it the study of personality that should be assessed and calculated through his actions. Instead, through this series 'he', as a selfhood, disappears, as so are we. We land in *home*. A place of sexual and erotic art practice.

The studio, prison and darkrooms are just examples of how the erotic and sensual approaches to understanding heterotopia challenges Foucault's socio-political geographical enquiry. As presented above, through the rethinking of space as that which is made by homespun rigour, we can experience a matter of difference in relation to experiences and understanding of temporality and spatiality. I also want to argue the concept of time, or rather a, experience of time. We have already discussed the interruption that palimpsestuousness produces in relation to linearity of narratives. I want to propose that this queer interruption, or illegibility, is a version, and experience of a different 'speed'. Sylvia Wolf writes of Mapplethorpe's practice in introduction to her book:

Mapplethorpe said in 1988 that photography "was the perfect medium, or so it seemed, for the '70s and '80s, when everything was fast. If I were to make something that took two weeks to do, I'd lose my enthusiasm. It would become an act of labour and the love would be gone". Polaroid allowed Mapplethorpe to remain enthralled with his subject as he photographed the sexual energy between them. Arousal was heightened by working spontaneously. Moreover,

seeing in the moment allowed for a free access to feeling and thinking. Making pictures was not a measured or heavily considered activity.<sup>17</sup>

When Wolf describes Mapplethorpe's practice by referring to it as *arousal that was heightened by working spontaneously*<sup>18</sup>, I approach it as both referring to the homoerotism embedded in his images and a way of describing a speed of work. This can be further understood in relation to referring to making of his Polaroids as not *measured or heavily considered activity*. In a maybe paradoxical way, I argue that digital photography as used by me in relation to taking pictures at home and at *home*, creates a sense of similar spontaneity. The number of pictures that one can take with digital photography is potentially infinite – the constant erasure and superimposition of them on a memory card creates a sense of palimpsestic surface of memory. But to bring up this self-photography practice, one needs to look at the way that relationship of art and time can be understood.

In 1987 Deleuze expressed in his lecture *What Is the Creative Act* idea about art by paraphrasing words of Andre Malraux, a famous art historian, through which he states that *(art) is the only thing that resists death*.<sup>19</sup> Deleuze's interpretation of the Malraux words speaks of time and art. One can understand *death* as a type of finitude or a moment of transition that, similarly to the moment of birth marks the flow of the time, and frames it as a thing that operates in the line that goes from point A to point B. For art to resist death, through reading *death* as a cause-effect linearity of time, one must develop an argument that art practice is a practice existing away-from-time. It refuses a

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<sup>17</sup> Sylvia Wolf, "An Authentic Artlessness – Robert Mapplethorpe's Polaroids 1970 – 1975" in *Polaroids Mapplethorpe*, (Munich, London, New York: Prestel, 2008), p.32.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p.32.

<sup>19</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *What Is the Creative Act 1987* (English Subs)', *YouTube*, January 8, 2015, posted April 10, 2016, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a\\_hifamdISs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_hifamdISs). - in this lecture Deleuze tries to renegotiate and creative field of knowledge (including Philosophy) as that which is responsible (in practice) for setting up, and making concepts.

comfortability of meaning as communication, and instead exists outside of linearity. At the same time, art practices are somehow still grounded in a sense of temporality.

Freeman captures this sense of linear timelessness in relation to queer history. She writes:

Thus, unbinding time does not mean simply unleashing a biological instinct or psychic drive (...). Rather, unbinding time and/ from history means recognising how erotic relations and the bodily acts that sustain them gum up the works of the normative structures (...), by changing tempos, remixing memory and desire, by recapturing excess.<sup>20</sup>

Deleuze and Freeman, and Golding all find a space “at times”, therefore the relationship to the time and art practice becomes even more necessary.

Foucault’s *heterotopias* and its later temporal and sexual understanding by Golding, provide us with a unique opportunity to develop research and form new and radical possibilities in regards of reading spatiotemporality and queer research and matter. All these conceptualities speak directly to the development of my film series called *Heterotopias*, produced between 2014-2017.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Elizabeth Freeman, *Time Binds – Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), p.172 – 173– Freeman sense of time provokes further the narrative of incestuous entanglements in praxis that resonate with the work produced by Karen Barad. Rather than focusing on the “off-ness” of queer temporality as those that mis-belong, she finds “queer time” in the mismatches of fields that usually privilege their own history of becoming and by mixing them achieving possibility of other forms of temporality.

<sup>21</sup> The full video is a part of this written submission and is available on attached memory stick.

*There seems to be a space that I can be naked in. Waiting. Waiting. Wait for as long as I can. Am I waiting for things to change? What kind of change? Waiting for change; for difference; for someone else. Singularity is already way too many things. The room is quiet. Pixelalization of the screen doesn't allow for anything to become overly visible and sharp. I am at different times now. I should have used a better camera. But I had and have help.*

*I put my machine into his hands. Just for the minute or two. I wanted a short tracking shot of myself as I stand next to the window and melancholically smoke a cigarette. He doesn't smoke but me smoking does not annoy him. Who knows maybe he likes the taste of smoke when he kisses me.*

*But there is no kissing in here, instead I am trying to grasp this sex – his sex – my sex. I am playing games with my hands, just like an annoying child who just can't be satisfied. In one hand, nothing – just some air – and, again more pixels on the screen - in another hand, a crude drawing of the penis. Like those found in the bathroom stalls – a figuration of a certain affinity. The mirror helps, it multiplies and so singularity is no more. Wait. Again. The mirror helps, it multiplies and so singularity is even bigger now. Wait. Again.*

*This penis changes the hand and with it, it changes the space that this hand holds. I go to the bathroom to play a bit more, he (the kissable helper) follows me and listens to my every command. Yet at the same time he is doing everything wrong. I cannot trust another hand. Next time must do it myself.*

*So, I become reflection, or rather a further reflection, as I am already somewhere else looking at the self that is being filmed, and reflects in the mirror, and gets annoyed by the quality of this practice – more pixels.*

*And so, I lick the palm of my hand – attempting in some part to portray the sexual energy in the room – but it does not give anybody a hard on – no one is aroused, not me, not him not the drawing of the penis in my hand. I wonder about this space that those things take place. And about me moving in embarrassment when the camera is not pointing at me. Every object becomes a prop – and everybody becomes a reflection and the me here multiplies, because I am writing now, while remembering, while performing, while talking. What I got (now I am editing) is not what I assumed to get.*

*And now I am just bothered by pixels. But that space happened/is there/here.*





FIG. 3 – Jakub Ceglaz, stills from *Heterotopia in the palm of my hand*, 2014.

*Heterotopia in the palm of my hand* (2014) (FIG.3) was in a way a stuttering beginning of my work around the Foucauldian concept. It was directed in order to focus on the representing a body within a space of home. Throughout this short film we see my body standing, playing games with itself and licking a hand with a drawing of a penis on it. It is obvious and to some extent a failure. But as with most of my work continuity of practice, and engagement in producing a series rather than singular entries, it also made me wonder about the space of my apartment. In almost poetic way (and that is unfortunately reflected in above writing; part of the research journal) it lead me to formulate closer the relationship with my own apartment.

It clearly plays with Foucault's description of *heterotopia*, especially in the relationship to the surface of the mirror. *I see myself there where I am not*, Foucault writes, as he tries to explain the sense of multiplicity when realising dimensional aspect of his philosophy.<sup>22</sup> This is exactly where the problem is with this video; other than portraying the time and space of home, or rather apartment; it does not develop any further. Yet what I was left with, after the process of editing, is the realisation that this space, this *home* needs more work in it. It was not until almost a year later, when the most important entry to the series came out and allowed me to research through art practice the phenomena of *heterotopia*.

The idea to develop a series of videos, as part of the research was partially an enactment on the way that the text and textuality of knowledge can be inhabited and embodied, rather than just reproduced and re-written. What those videos as a series produce – and in no respect, I am claiming for them or giving them a name of art (at this point) – is a dimensional shift, a *slice of time of heterotopia*.

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<sup>22</sup> Michel Foucault, *Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias*, trans. Jay Miskowiec, (*Architecture/Mouvement/Continuite*, October 1984) p. 4.

The second research video presents with itself not only a way to map, or rather capture the daily actions of the body, but also a certain intensity of soft mould of the expanded understanding of the spatiality of *home*. The body seems contained in its movements, they are, after all, normative and nothing seems to be resolved or communicated. It is through the repetition of the narration that we think that there is something more occurring in this moving image.<sup>23</sup>

*Heterotopia Part 2: Soft, Soft* (FIG.4) became a first moment of thinking about the expanded economy of a concept of *home*. It became obvious that by mapping the space of the body that is in action, in the space of home, one can develop a form of multiplicity that is not layered in nature. This video gently and softly embarks on a mission to move the spatiotemporality of *home* towards that of palimpsestuousness.

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<sup>23</sup> To refer to this video as a 'moving image' means to think of it in more expanded practice of photography. As we notice that the apparatus of the camera does not produce any movement other than the engine sound of a machine of auto-focus. Not necessary intentional as such, but worth investigating, as it brings to attention an automated image production through the digital camera that is being used. The camera dictates the focus here – the processor, the algorithm of its "thinking" negotiates the importance of the image that has a movement of the body.

*soft soft*

*soft soft*

*soft soft*

*mushy squashy pulpy pappy*

*slushy sloppy squelchy squishy*

*oozy doughy*

*semi-liquid*

*gooey*

*gloopy*

*squidgy*

*Easy to mould - cut - caress or fold*

*Not hard or firm to the touch*

*soft*

*soft*



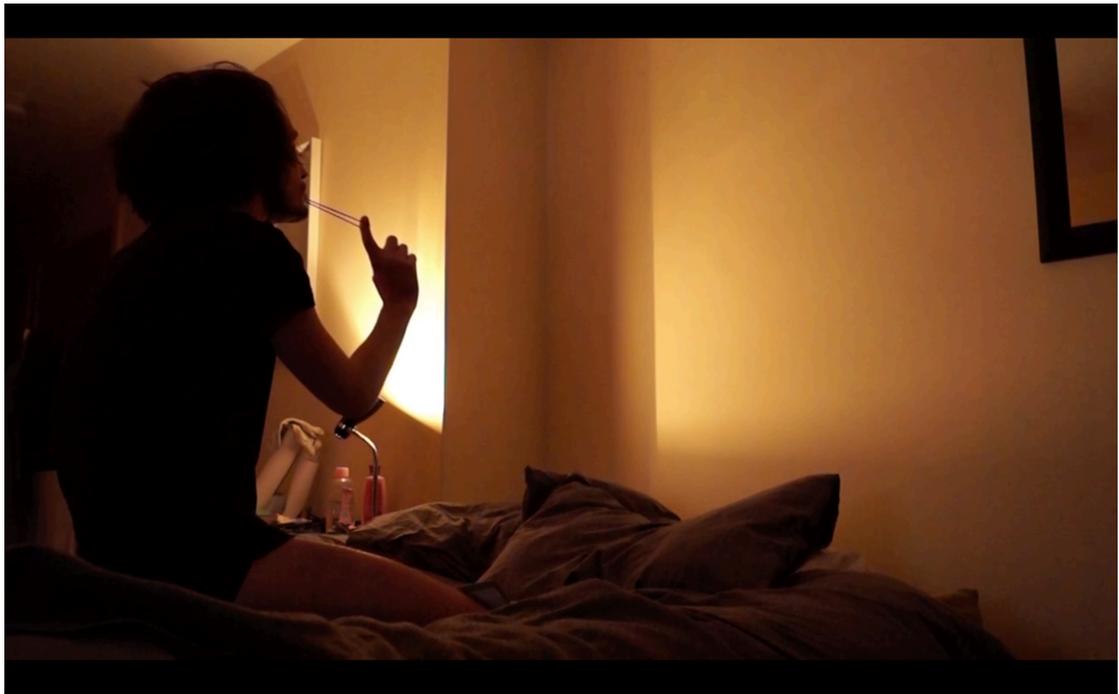
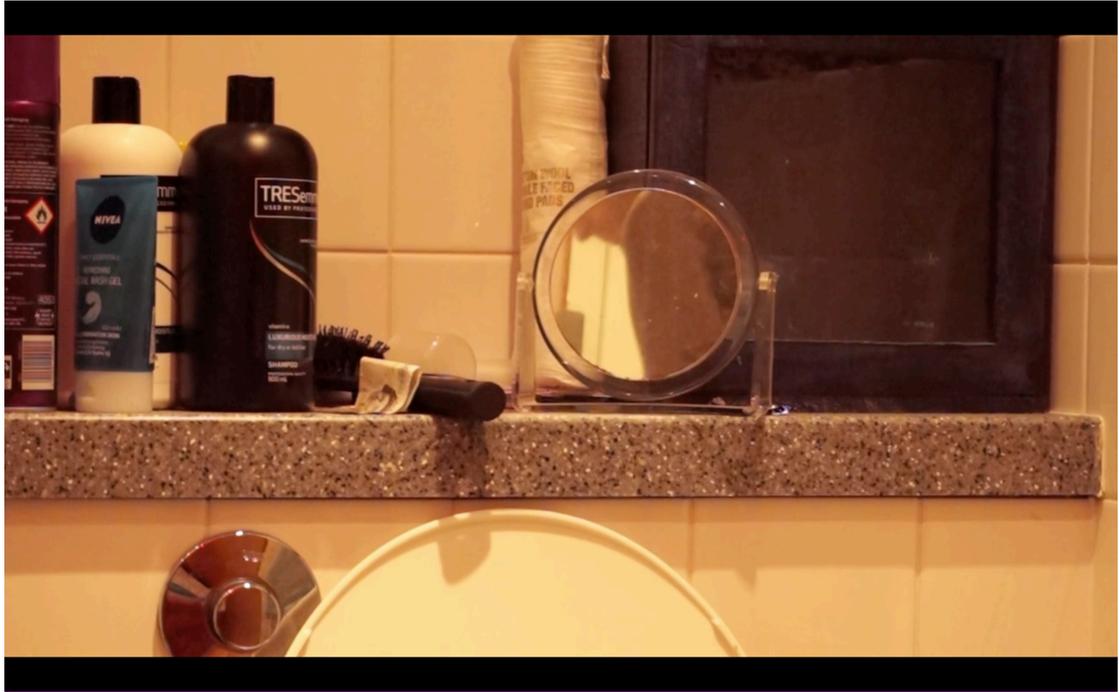




FIG.4 – Jakub Ceglarz, stills from *Heterotopia Part 2: Soft, soft*, 2015.

The production of this video focused on the notion of self-efficiency, meaning that it was filmed and edited and captured without involving anyone else. This allowed negotiating the cinematography with the existing tools that are 'at hand' and the physical structure of the objects that occupy the space of this apartment. As written in regards of the first entry of this series, the first heterotopia film was partially created by allowing a persona to take hold of the camera. This, and reading Jean Genet's *Our Lady of the Flowers*, made me realise that to produce a palimpsestuous heterotopia, one needs to be by himself. In the second film the humiliation associated with filming was gone. It is also in this video that another relationship peaks its monstrous head. The camera was without question an extension of my flesh, I needed to be there where I was not. This method of making creates, in a similar sense to the reflection of the mirror, a form of multiplicity, a way of discarding a sense of self as one, but rather it allowed me to see the possibility of *intra-action* as described by Barad.

The final few seconds of the video, sees the body standing next to the exit doors lighten by the red bulb (which was part of the performance work *Fatima*) and such presentation of the body argues and questions the beginning of the video in which the body does 'what the body suppose to' – it eats, smokes and watches TV. The body in its underwear, in the red light leans on the front doors to the apartment. It does not do 'itself' but rather is a body that emerges from the structure of the performance 'that takes place' in and at *home*.<sup>24</sup> Through that it creates an interruption of a queer

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<sup>24</sup> 'Taking place' here suggests and informs that the type of materiality of Home as written here, is obliged to mold itself according to the needs and functions of the body in it. Yet the problem that is being discussed in this text, deals with the idea that the spatiality of critical enquiry, through allowing the sexual and erotic, to become a necessary part of such space, is not a product of the action of the priori body, but rather is a erotic economy, that gives the body its embodiment and at the same time transforms into another form of dimension – another materiality of space – time.

enactment that produces a form of material 'moment in space' – and it is throughout the video that we can see the flesh-y necessity of understanding this type of solitude.

To summarise the necessity of these experiments in relation to this research. Palimpsestuousness, is a type of critical perverse space. It privileges the incestuous relations that produce a disorientation by interruption. As such it speaks about performance-based art practice that needs to be placed in the space of *home* as another economy of rigorous practice, that allows for the self to produce works of art embedded with sexual and erotic praxis, that otherwise would be deemed 'humiliating'.

When we think of a space of home, the usual argument speaks about a type of safe container that allows for the subjects to retrieve from the chaos of the life that waits outside. My argument takes this conceptualisation and renegotiates it through my performance-based practices. What emerges is a sense of space that is essentially dependable on a present naked flesh. At the same time, it still produces a certain soft and safe economy and with it a sense of rigour and special type of knowledge. It is only when that space becomes a portable; when it travels with the body; it develops into performance work that interrupt and produces disorientation for both audience and the understanding of selfhood.

Here, I will concentrate on the further navigation of the experiences of space and time in relation to practice, especially focusing on those related to sexual praxis. As we discussed there are two components of seeing *home* as heterotopia; one from, which Foucault speaks about the actual sense of space that surrounds a body, second as per Golding who speaks about a moment that is a temporal shift in relation to chrononormativity. It is my task to synthesise those two into a spatiotemporality, as to achieve a matter of palimpsestuousness.

Freeman looks at the relationship between queer and time by referring to the way that history in a normative sense needs to be rethought through the erotic body. She uses the example of S/M sexual practices to develop a concept of a *deviant pause*, a sexual interruption both from linear time and from normative spaces. Jonathan Kemp in his book *The Penetrated Male*, develops similar argument by dealing with the representation of the behind/anus as another form of sexual disruption towards the

normalization.<sup>25</sup> In his argument, he proposes that the sexualized male body, as constructed through Western socio-political history, can create a new form of matter when confronted by the desire machine of the anal/gay sexual pleasure. At the same time his investigation falls back into the familiar and restrictive area of Oedipal figuration, by producing a thinking figure of anally opened male figure that is an *embodiment of erotic thought*, and through that becomes always representative and/or a representation.<sup>26</sup>

Yet what we are left with, from both of those writers, is a very clear connection between sexual and erotic praxis as that, which both produces its own spatiotemporality and a difference in embodied knowledges. As discussed in the text that focuses on the *Model of Palimpsestuousness*, when using palimpsestuousness as a way to describe a type of dimension which allows for a queer spillage, a queer body of knowing, to establish its own way of critical making and thinking, the most important element that produces the sense of such criticality is a necessity of inclusion of sexual and erotic praxis. especially that which functions on the edges of recognisability. These practices produce a form of a translucent erotic economy, that for the normative eye would be deemed inappropriate and transgressive in nature.<sup>27</sup>

A *home*, then, as read above from both Freeman and Kemp is being understood as space of work/praxis of certain version of everyday-ness that inhabits a transgressional attitude of specific sexual and erotic praxis. The movements of domesticity somewhat become transformed in relation to the position of sexuality. The

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<sup>25</sup> Jonathan Kemp, *The Penetrated Male*, (New York: Punctum Books, 2013).

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p.215.

<sup>27</sup> The phrase 'erotic economy' refers to the title of Jean-Francois Lyotard's *Libidinal Economy*. The difference, as will be further explained in the main text of the thesis, is in understanding the way that such economy allows for the creation of a sense of possibility of loosing and mis-placing subjectivity and understanding the sexual events as those which allow for another dimensionality to be created through the research.

assemblage of everyday-ness, the way it makes one's space as a space of both practice/research and practice/becoming, mutates into the new form of spatiotemporality. When the mixture of both parts presented above becomes a form of reality of making research, the knowledge produced does not need the traditional ontology of layers (palimpsest) to become effective. At the same time, it requires a type of multiplicity – not of a plurality of beings, but rather a mouldable, material mass in constant movements of intensities of intimacy.

To refer to *home* as a dimension means to perform a type of leap, which allows for the further dissemination of the sense of time and space and the way that sexuality provides a way to interrupt the assumption of linearity of time and a cause-effect based logic. Such a rethinking of knowledge, especially in relation to the politics of sexuality, can be seen in the investigation of the economy of pleasure that allows for type of translucent *AIR* to set up a culture and economy. In her essay *The Catacombs: A Temple of the Butthole* Gayle S. Rubin writes:

Once you made it to the Catacombs, you entered an environment that was both intensely sexual and positively cosy (...) As one regular put it, sex in Catacombs was about “fit, comfort, rhythm, and grease.” Sex at the Catacombs meant different things to different people at different times. The Catacombs was dedicated to adult recreation and having a good time, but for many, the sheer intensity of the activities in which they engaged added other dimensions to their experience.<sup>28</sup>

The Catacombs as a space, were a gift by Steve McEachern for his lover. Based in the basement of his Victorian house they became a 70's 'go to place' for gay men in San Francisco who practiced fisting. It both became a literal and conceptual extension of a

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<sup>28</sup> Gale S. Rubin, “The Catacombs: A Temple of the Butthole” in *Deviations: A Gayle Rubin Reader*, (Durham, London: Duke University Press, 2011), p. 224-241. – Gayle Rubin wrote her thesis on anthropological research around the S/M gay subculture in San Francisco in 1960-1990, at the age when a social attitude towards homosexuality (pre-AIDS and after-AIDS) drastically changed. The safe homes, such as Catacombs or bathhouses, slowly transformed from the protective and accommodating entities, into the spatialities of freedom and heterotopias of knowledge building.

space of *home*. The space itself was set up as to provide the most amount of comfort and relaxation as possible to remove elements of normative judgment and superimposition of shame. In this space the secret knowledge of fisting praxis was accessible and materialized through and in pleasure, and at the same time it did not require a revealing, which allows for the making of the sense of that space to be directly attached to the inner workings of The Catacombs.

Rubin explores The Catacombs with the reader, developing a melancholic note in her writing. As she describes the experience of this space, she recognises a materiality and sensuality that the praxis of fisting brought into this space. She writes:

Vast quantities of Crisco were essential to Catacombs experience. Crisco was a lube of choice. Nothing ever removed the pervasive layer of Crisco that coated every surface. (...) Crisco greased the asshole. It greased whole bodies. It greased the walls. It greased the way for smooth and easy contact.<sup>29</sup>

The Catacombs as presented here can be described as capable of producing a synthesis of matter and meaning. In a way, the Crisco inhabits such synthesis, as it both creates a sensual translucent materiality, which occupies the space of sexual praxis, but also allows one for the possibility of slippage into the erotic economy of knowledge associated with fisting and other S/M sexual praxis. This “grease” not only transforms the actual space of the Catacombs but also expands the sense of another form of dimensionality that this space brings with its establishment.

*Crisco* also is a matter of *subjugated knowledges* as presented by Foucault. The praxis of fisting, and the co-relation established through it, is developed from and only in such praxis. It involves objectivated *naked flesh* to embark on the operation, which changes its function. It, as Anderson observed in relation to glory-hole sex, creates a

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<sup>29</sup> Gale S. Rubin, “The Catacombs: A Temple of the Butthole” in *Deviations: A Gayle Rubin Reader*, (Durham, London: Duke University Press, 2011), p. 250.

*body without organs*, as per Deleuze and Guattari.<sup>30</sup> This *body without organs* is a creature, a monstrous inhabitant of sexual spatiotemporality that functions as the thing, which spins itself into appearance of being, but never achieving a complete, formulated and causal logic. It rather keeps on transgressing through the constancy of actions. Through the slippage of *Crisco*, it changes and challenges change at the same time, without the opposition of any sort, but rather as the other – the queer enactment and perversion of making/thinking in incestuous entanglement.

*Heterotopia* of the Catacombs lies directly in the way that it creates a series of *subjugated knowledges* of specific sexual praxis. Within it, the incestuous relationship based on trust and care, gets established as it makes individuals deeply familiar with each other. The incestuous here is that which attracts sameness, and further – it creates sameness, a familiarity between practitioners. In this way, incestuous as an adjective, even though still relatable to its origins associated with the taboo sexual practice, creates a logic of belonging together in a ‘moment in space’. Deleuze through his dealing with Arthaud’s writings and performances, from which he steals the “body without organs”, and through which he calls Arthaud a schizophrenic says:

There is no longer anything to prevent propositions from falling back onto bodies, and from mingling their sonorous elements with the body’s olfactory, gustatory, or digestive affects. Not only is there no longer any sense, but there is no longer any grammar or syntax either – nor, at the limit, are there any articulated syllabic, literal, phonetic elements.<sup>31</sup>

The field in Genet’s movie, the *Crisco* that covers the space in the “temple of the butthole” and molecularity of BwO made through events of specific sexual encounter

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<sup>30</sup> Don L. Anderson, “The Force that Through the Wall Drives the Penis: The Becomings and Desiring-Machines of Glory Hole Sex” in *Rhizomes: Cultural Studies in Emerging Knowledge*, ed. Michael O’Rourke, Issue 11/12, 2005/06, <http://rhizomes.net/issue11/anderson/index.html>, accessed on 12.10.2016.

<sup>31</sup> Giles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, ed. Constantine V. Boundas trans. Mark Lester Deleuze, (London: The Athlone Press, 1990), p. 91.

that is contemporary in relation to sexual identity, all name a matter created through engagement with sexual and erotic praxis as that which holds things together. It is also in that togetherness that a sense of the space emerges. This sense, then can be applied in my understanding of a *home*. Through these materialities we can understand workings of palimpsestuousness and, to borrow Barad's phrasing, its radical proposition of *ethico-onto-epistemology*; a perverse cluster of things in common.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Karen Barad , "Intra-actions" in *Mousse vol. 34*, 2015, p.78.

## **GAY AU BAIN**

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Here I will focus on the two works that place emphasis on the relationship between the spatiotemporality of *home* and homoerotic visual practice. This will lead me to critically engage with the last three *Heterotopias* films I produced during this research.

In 1884 Gustave Caillebotte painted *Homme au bain* (Eng. Man at His Bath). In this image, we can recognize the male figure standing in the bathroom and drying his back with a towel (FIG.5). For today's eyes, such an image might not cause any difficulties to understand, but if related to the period of the Impressionists figural paintings one must notice that the representation of a nude male figure, especially in domestic environment is very rare.



FIG.5 – Gustave Caillebotte, *Homme au Bain*, 1884.

This painting captures a domestic situation, that seems to represent a daily routine. Yet, for the erotic investigation, one focuses on the homoerotic connotation of this domesticity, especially in relation to the time this painting was produced. I do not aim to “out” the author of this image, instead what becomes a fascinating phenomenon is that, that in the space of the painted bathroom the nude male flesh merges with its environment. This seems to be an inspiration for Christophe Honoré, who in 2010, directed a movie that directly refers to the Caillebotte’s painting. The movie stars François Sagat, a known figure in gay porn industry and Omar Ben Sellem. The film focuses on Sagat’s character finding himself at the loss of selfhood when left by his partner, his daily routines and excessive sex practices and self-reflection (the literal and conceptual). The story happens in two places in Paris and New York, as we stay home with Sagat, we also travel with Sellem to New York, where he falls in love with another man who is much more visibly and characteristically like him. Sagat, on the other hand, cannot accommodate and find a familiarity with any of his sexual encounters. He hustles day by day, entangling his daily routines with sexual adventures (FIG.6).



FIG.6 – Christophone Honoré, stills from *Homme au Bain* (Eng. Man at Bath), 2010.

Sagat becomes distressed, losing his head, and it is through that desynchronization, that his environment changes. His attitude moves in post-humanist direction where his singularity exposes him to experiencing an attachment with the object of his apartment.<sup>33</sup> What I mean by post-humanist attitude is a way of making sense that does not place human at a center of possible ways of developing logic. Instead in this framework, focus is on the forms and matters of interactions. It is like he is wearing his *home*. Through this he embodies elements of palimpsestuousness, by exhibiting a rigor of his troubled life.<sup>34</sup>

Jonathan Kemp, as already mentioned in relation to Elizabeth Freeman, does define the sexed-anus as that which develops another form of matter of thought. Yet at the same time his text and methodological attitude doesn't promote the integration of such energy into the possibility of notions of making sense in research. His notion of representation does not produce a multiplicity but rather succumbs to the tendencies of reading the traditional matter of the palimpsest, as to use anus in a form of yet another 'provocative' orifice. In both the painting and movie, the notion of representation is very much present, yet at the same time it is the relationship of a sexual and erotic flesh with the spaces that it occupies, which provides us with an opportunity for a new critical analysis.

To summarize the findings that this research offers. Homoerotic and homosexual desire opens new ways of inhabiting *subjugated knowledges*. It is that inhabitation that transgresses the binary system of epistemologies, allowing for a matter of sense to

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<sup>33</sup> Patricia MacCormack, *Posthuman Ethics – Embodiment and Cultural Theory*, (Durham: Ashgate, 2012), p.1-19.

<sup>34</sup> This film became an integral part of the *Heterotopias* series. In the *Heterotopia Part 2: Soft, Soft* we can see and hear the film in the background of a few shots. Similarly, the *Fifth heterotopia* borrows the imaging from both Caillebotte and Honoré of a male body drying its back in the bathroom. This attachment is not an accidental one as in this film lots of attention is put onto filming the Sagat within the space of the apartment, any other shots show him leaving or coming back to the flat only.

emerge through practice. As such one discovers that a space of *heterotopia* is a combination of different sensuality of space and time. It creates a spatiotemporality, which through performance art and performance-based art practices becomes portable and *wearable*.

## HETEROTOPIAS

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In the *Heterotopia: Praggstraat* (FIG.7), a third video in the series, I travel to Belgium to try and renegotiate the level of portability of my *home* in relation to performance-based practices. In this video featuring Anastasija Starikova, I use my friend's apartment to see if I can recreate the intensity produced in the previous parts of the series. In this video, I wear a pink glittering mask with the word "BOOM" embroidered on it (FIG.8). The same mask was used in my performances that can be found in text *Palimpsestuous Palimpsest*. My nude flesh wanders around the apartment, looking for some moments of familiarity with the surrounding objects. Anastasija is repeating the same walk, but as it is her apartment, she performs more domestic interactions. As such, this video is trying to check the perimeters of the portable *home*. At the same time, during post production, I chopped frames and combined them in relation to Anastasija's movements.





FIG. 7 – Jakub Ceglaz, Anastasija Starikova, stills from *Heterotopia: Pragstraat*, 2016.



FIG. 8 – Jakub Ceglarz, *Boom Mask*, ready-made, 2016.

This video allowed me to realise, that even though my *home* did not travel to Belgium with me, it was with me when editing collected clips of the film. The chopping of the frames, allowed me to create a multiplicity of images that happened at the same time in the film, and because of my nude body, they remade the space that it occupies, as it becomes ‘fit’ to host my practice.

This can be further observed in *Heterotopia-n*, a fourth entry in the series. As the series progressed I focused on experimenting with the slicing of the time-line in the video and imposing multiple times into one frame as to create the further sense of the multiplicity of making. In this video (FIG. 9) I attempt to map the confusion that emerges from the possibility of enacting an “off-beat” temporality through changing the visibility of the body. The queer monster talks at the same time, reflecting itself in a difference and his body appears to be at the odds with the traditional imagining.



HETERO  
TOPIA-N



FIG.9 – Jakub Ceglarz, stills from *Heterotopia-n*, 2016.

This video allowed me to investigate the need of confusion, to break the pattern of recognisability, by which I mean to produce a representation of the body that experiences a changing sense of spatiotemporality through the sexual and erotic praxis.

Palimpsestuousness as a temporal space is embedded in the production of knowledges that needs the subject to realise its own instability, or rather a subject that is disjointed from the perspective of representation. At the same time *Heterotopia-n*, as presented here, is a creature that inhabits its own sexuality. The video produced a series of problems when dealing with slicing as a method of producing “off-beat” temporality.

This issue arises in regards to approaching the philosophy of Deleuze in relation to the making of the “off-beat” temporality that slides away from binary understanding. As discussed earlier, the concept of art in relation to this temporality, is seen by Deleuze as an act of resistance, or rather, to create a connection with the work of Foucault and keeping with the performance-based practice, art can be seen as a *temporal aberration* - a form of transgression, which is not a clear-cut opposition or unlawful enactment, but rather becomes responsible, in its own way, for creating a possibility of expanding discourse around queer temporal and methodological enactments.<sup>35</sup>

As such I decided to introduce a concept that I refer to as **(af)-finit**y, by which I mean a method of slicing and restructuring images to confuse and disorientate the representation of a flesh.

The practice of art-as-research in the living-in-tempo-reality of the mundane sexual, erotic and sensual enactments slices and deconstructs the term *affinity*, which speaks of things as having a certain similarity (familiarity). This allows me to perform

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<sup>35</sup> Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: The Will to Knowledge: V. 1: The Will to Knowledge*, trans. Robert Hurley (London: Penguin Books, 1998), p. 43. – The way in which Foucault enquires into the birth of the modern homosexual allows him to distinguish the institutionalises personage/identity of homosexuality from the historical ideas about homosexual behaviour which he refers to as *temporary aberration*, a type of enactment that reconfigures the power relation without creating a sense of identity.

slicing as an enactment, that produces an “off-tempo-realities” in photography, film and performance, and in relation to the cartography of the concept itself. To imagine (af)-**finity** we need to associate the palimpsestuousness of the incestuous entanglements with the provocation of temporality which, and here we need to borrow words that seem more articulate than our own, *is (...) at odds with the normal* (supposed), *the legitimate, the dominant* and through it being a form of transgression that allows for the creation of the methodological investigation.<sup>36</sup>

In the text, titled *Model of Palimpsestuousness*, I deal with the introduction of the model of the palimpsestuousness that operates as the expansion of the materiality of the palaeographic palimpsest. This model focuses on the critical form of spatiality, and because of this focus, that palimpsestuousness evades the representation, as it makes sense in the necessary flux of its sliced matter.<sup>37</sup>

Through the research on the material conceptualization of the palaeographic palimpsest, one finds that thinking and making cannot escape, as suggested by the presence of the *scriptio inferior* (underwriting in the palimpsest), a loop of past – present and possible future. Yet it is not the case per se. The realization that the traditional sense of time can be, and is, disrupted by the queer praxis of art that allows for the reconfiguration of a suggestive layered structure of the formal palimpsest. It is then that one can come to the realization that the enquiry needs to focus on things that are a movement and nothing but movement, and that one thinks and makes in the “off-

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<sup>36</sup> David M. Halperin, *Saint Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography* (London, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 65. – I added term “supposed” to this definition as to emphasizes the correlation between “legitimation” and seemingly like hood of something occurring.

<sup>37</sup> Judith P. Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of ‘Sex’* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1993), p. 228. - Judith Butler sets up the term ‘queer’ as that *which is, in the present, never fully owned, always and only redeployed (...) in direction of urgent and expanding political purposes* – together with the definition provided by Halperin it allows for the somehow un-suspected research to create a discourse that in turns informs and expands the field of queer theory especially in relation to art practice.

beat” economy of created by method of slicing time - (af)-finitude. We can see, that the formalisation of the *Heterotopias* as research experiments in relation to my apartment as a site of art and research practice, can only become another form of palimpsestuousness, when discussed through the possibility of experiencing the sense of temporality.

Deleuze in his *Logic of Sense* develops a similar understanding of producing a difference in relation to temporality by describing two ways of looking at time. As Deleuze writes:

(...) Past, present and future were not at all three parts of a single temporality, but that they rather formed two readings of time, each one of the which complete and excludes the other: on the one hand, the always limited present, which measures the actions of bodies as causes and the state of their mixtures in depth (Chronos); on the other, the essentially unlimited past and future, which gather incorporeal events, at the surface as effects (Aion).<sup>38</sup>

(Af)-finitude as a method of slicing Chronos, in effect creates an enactment of Aion, onto a surface of time. This is picked up by music theorist Greg Hainge, who in his essay on the concept of the loop in relation to Deleuzian philosophy and the matter of sound practices of Phill Niblock writes that: *time flies at the same time as the minute drags*.<sup>39</sup> He clearly recognises the need to recognise artistic practice as a practice of speed, that challenges time.

This method produces a type of temporality; no-beginnings and no-finitude, a non-dialectical but rather a rhizomatic temporality that is always in the movement. This temporality of speed allows one to re-think the palimpsest and realise the possibility of

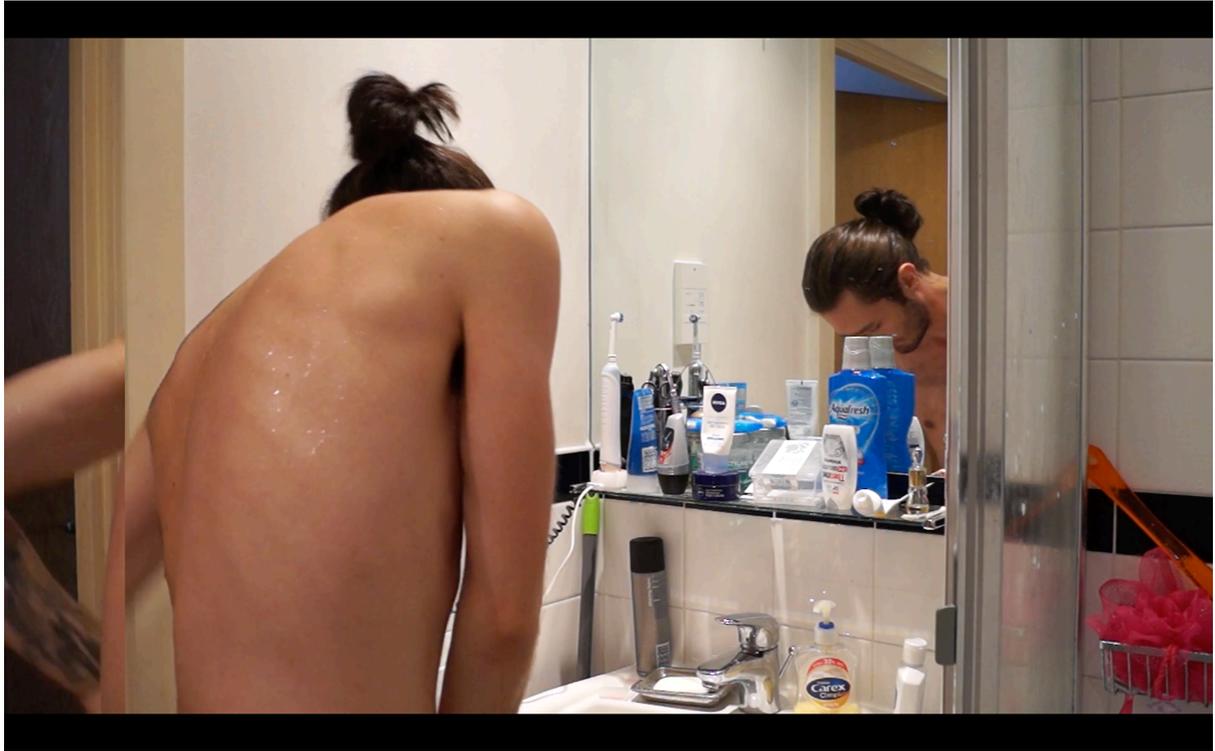
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<sup>38</sup>Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, ed. Constantine V. Boundas trans. Mark Lester Deleuze, (London: The Athlone Press, 1990), p. 61.

<sup>39</sup>Greg Hainge, “The Sound of Time is not ‘tick tock’: The Loop as a Direct Image of Time in Nato’s *Endless Loop Edition (2)* and the *Drone Music* of Phill Niblock, in *InVisible Culture: An Electronic Journal for Visual Culture*, Issue 8, 2004, P. 4 – 5, <http://ivc.lib.rochester.edu/skills/issue-08/>, accessed on 14/06/2016.

palimpsestuousness as a methodology that through methods of *wearing* and (af)-finitude establishes different sense of spatiotemporality, as it affects the speed of practice.

In the video called *Fifth Heterotopia* I attempted to produce a sliced timeline by imposing a delayed and sped up elements of the visible in the frame (FIG.10). This film starts as a homage to Caillebotte's painting by visually referring to it. Slowly, the speed of the corners of the frame changes, disrupting the body in action. Those changes are brought by the method of slicing time and renegotiating the seed of such slice. The later shoots, that refer to the previous entries to the series, are steadily more and more changed through the enactment of (af)-finitude, culminating in similar frame to the final shot of *Heterotopia Part 2: Soft, Soft*. Such practice furthered the materiality of speed as that, which plays an internal part in dealing with creating interruptions and disorientations. It is also through the fact, that all scenes remain filmed by myself in rigorous homespun way (e.g. the last frame was shot while my camera was resting comfortably on the drying rack set up in the corridor).



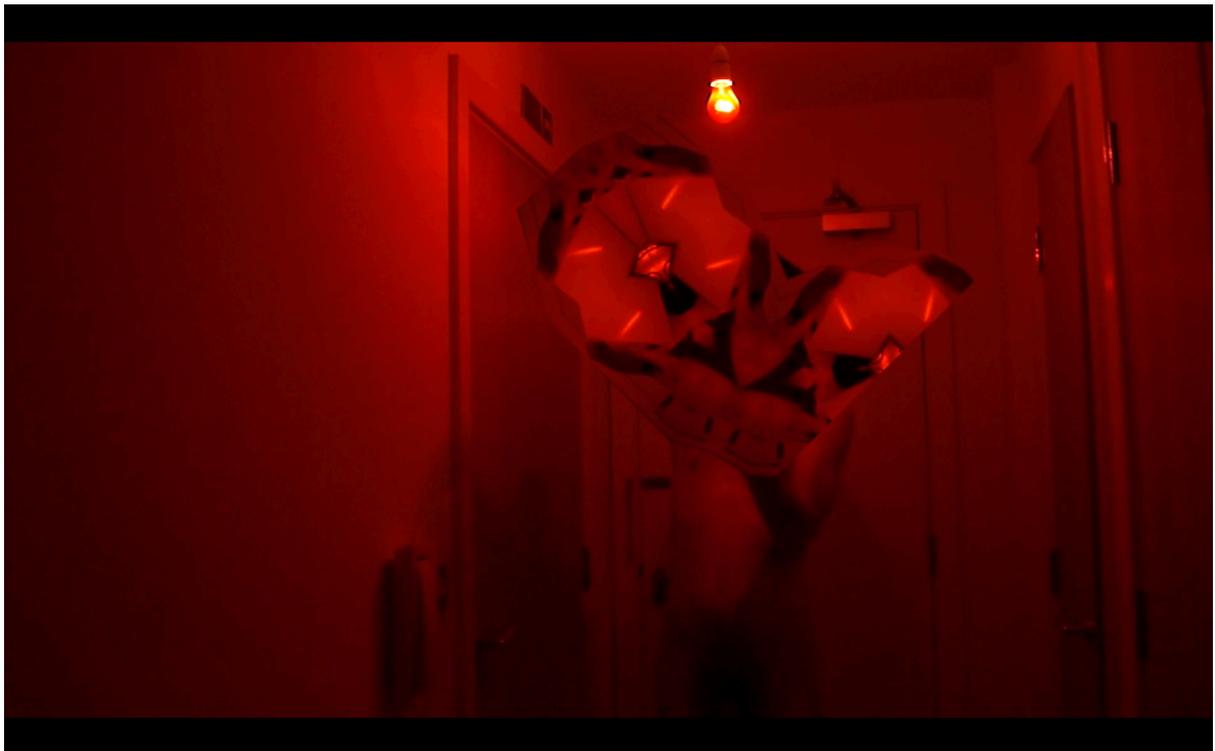


FIG.10 –Jakub Ceglarz, stills from *Fifth Heterotopia*, 2016.

It is through the intension of this performance-based practice, that another incestuous relationship gets established here. It is a relationship between me and my camera. Throughout my submitted texts I discuss it closer the further analysis of Lovett/Codagnone's photography practice, and the post-humanist theory that occupies the writings of Haraway and Barad. *Heterotopias* series, similarly to my performance art practice, allowed me to develop a meaning of the methods that I am using. Even though I do not consider this series to be a work of art, what emerged from it; series *Pluralities* (2017), became an example of the method of slicing time and space producing a work of art.