



**THE
ABUNDANCE
CHAMBER
WORKS
ALONE**

anna gurton-wachter



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#92

ESSAY PRESS GROUNDLOOP SERIES

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For Vanja,
who sees something ancient
in every word.

CONTENTS

PREFACE ❧ xi

PART I ❧ 1

Maya Deren Lives Forever
in the Speedboat at Night

PART II ❧ 11

A Development Proposal
for the Center of the Earth

PART III ❧ 21

Instances of the Corpse Flower Pose,
a Study Group

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ❧ 33

AUTHOR BIO ❧ 34

FILM STILL FROM MESHES OF THE AFTERNOON, MAYA DEREN 1946



"A new theory is a new language."

—Ian Hacking,
Representing and Intervening

PREFACE

There are competing visions of the swamp. Females deposit their eggs in a parasitic territory for gratification alone. The intruder salivates. An act is magnified by formal study. End scene. Later, back at the lab, the summer spirit remains unknown. Parasites surround the forest. What we call a self-created memory worthy of the father and worthy of the mother and worthy of the mountain of golden guts. What we call, "lurking in the water," or "stable speech acts." The world is sufficiently killable as the squatters can attest. The abandoned critters are so modest and struggle to become a symbol for the cosmos, seeping through the soil deep inside the earth.

I want to know how to feel when I wash ashore. What to communicate first. You might find yourself the viewer, the violent concept, alive to the spill of sight as it tries to expire. The viewer is meant to experience a faint memory comprised of all possible readings. To feel like the act of reading has accomplished a tunnel display of denied tenderness. You might find yourself inside this lonely boycott state, active inside a motionless pit.

PART I

Maya Deren Lives Forever in the Speedboat at Night

Enter the homeless poet. The homeless poet believes he is too famous to do X, Y, or Z. The homeless poet was not always homeless. Some poets remember the feeling when they first saw that the homeless poet was truly homeless. I underline all of the poet's words that have to do with reclining, being horizontal, lying down. I pass the poet on my commute. I see the poet lying down, examining the world from below. In my bag the book *The Animal is in the World Like Water in Water* digs into my side, unread. I am speaking only to the poets when I say no language is ever an act of real remembrance.

I created a space for reenactment, interpenetration of slippage and home. In the first scene, I want Maya Deren to multiply. To exist in multiple is to be sincerely possessed. I want her aesthetic to triumph and surpass all of the poets and non-poets alike. Maya Deren lifts a crane. She becomes a construction worker concept. She says, "Why does nobody build anything anymore?"—"Why is my account of freedom all that is left in the world?"

To enter the realm of writing one must take one's self to divorce court. I'm sorry it has to be this way. The re-education of my working eye winks. To enter the realm of writing is to suffer losses. Run off other sufferers, run off. I wanted to but could not say run off. I need someone to pet me until I fall into a lava tank engine love. The construction worker concept is just an unused drill by the side of the road. The well-lit crane sways in my direction. The trial of the snail is set to begin. Take your time. The trial of the elephant is told to us by the parakeet mind.

This is how I arrive, lawyer-less, accompanied by no one. If Maya Deren is the concept of clock-time despair. If it pleases the courts let it be known that my only reference point for pleasure is a speedboat at night and I wasn't even there. I didn't show up. That's how little I know of true abandon. Valerie Solanas throws up quietly in the corner. It's all coming out now. Maya Deren says anyone who wishes to accomplish one singular act may eat from her carved out tongue. Somebody just give me a room for each moment. So that I can have some structure to rage against. The dismembered tongue will take over writing from here. I can't do it myself. Maya Deren says to me, "Poetry is a secret, it stings."—"Anarchism is not enough," she says. Nothing ever is.

The poets and the non-poets share an event space. In the event space Maya Deren is writhing around in a pile of crumbs. Her tool belt is being auctioned off stage left. I start to write a letter in my mind. A bucket of fake flowers is dumped on top of her. One of the poets whispers to me, "Look at how well she reimagines her most famous films." Her writhing act continues in the lengthy tradition of knowledge and creation. No letter or poem appears and other problems persist.

The poet tells me he found an animal skeleton in his room. Not sure which animal it once was. A strange rash is growing all over his arm. He scratches his head. He says he will be evicted soon. "I know what you mean," I respond, "all of us are kind of lip synching to our own voices, watching our own performances from above. Tell me, how is it that you are both inside and outside of the frame?"

The poet says to me, "Remember the line of Virgil where a man hits a woman over the head with a lily flower and she shatters?"—"Probably a metaphor."

Ha ha ha. I smile and nod. A poet is always waiting for someone to offer sex up. For someone to redefine productivity. For someone to finally call out: "What is it that you really want you fucking creep?!"

I say, "Depends what is meant by shattering."

"Or woman. Or flower."

The room is misty. Greenhouse room garden amalgam. The telephone rings and when I answer it a voice says, "Sometimes gardens resemble gardens in the era of delicate indecision." The poet Virgil will take over writing from here on out. In the corner of the misted room there is a woman. I recognize her. Maya Deren has traded in all of her tools for one large drill. She uses the drill to empty the earth of its contents. Now she can begin to destroy her system of symbols, swerve, loosen her attention upon the plumes of vacancy and finally prove that a pigeon is really a rat and a rat is the lowest form of carrier. All of our multiples spooled off somewhere along the trail. Isn't that what you wanted? Deep in the soil she looks up at me to say, "Not much is left of gesture, am I right?"—"Not much is left to distinguish an author from a work of art." The soil is starting to cover her mouth as it falls back in on itself. The last words I hear her say are these: "I wanted to play and to have a play area yet I also wanted relief from play and relief from all that is termed an area of play."

Maya Deren do you remember me?

Of course I remember you. We can't talk here. Come. Let's find somewhere we can talk freely. Down the hallway. Down the spiral stairs. Is the basement level low enough? What is meant by shattering. What is meant by soil. Of course I remember you. You are lost in yourself today. You are fractured and you are flow my tears—both command and description.

PART II

A Development Proposal for the Center of the Earth

I like that death is plural. Keeps happening. All of my phrases are windows drawing screens against the city. An executive walks in. Blazer suit, hair pulled back tight. The idea of an executive who continues to be an executive even when there is nothing left to execute. She takes out her agenda. She takes out her proposal. Competitors are all doing X. This is because we need to be doing Y. There is always something left to disperse and break down. She says in her head, “When it is time for you to present, authentically communicate your ideas with those who can bring your ideas into reality.”

The executive speaks, “The concept of prewar only makes sense once a war happens. What we will do is this, we need to drill a hole straight through the earth to the other side and call it a portal. This is how we can become contained. Through purposefully falling apart.”

What she might have meant by “place,” “placement,” “pacified.” What she might have meant by her glance full of gods. I stand in the doorway, deciding when to enter the meeting. Whether to enter. The glance had access to some divine council. The water flowed parallel. To be broken through a sustained leap. The office of lost reach will not be diminished. All efforts will continue as planned.

“Why do we name tropical storms and hurricanes?” she asks. “We name them to avoid confusion and to streamline communications.”

(She looks in my direction.) She says, “All of my mouths are accounting.”—
“I came here to purge an observer out of the observed.”

This is when I hear the ground shaking. These are the sounds of abrasion as the ground breaks. Or—I am the ground and she is talking me through the center of the earth.

“This is how you will become contained,” she repeats, “by falling apart.”

“Let me live. Let me live and call it spring,” I respond. Imagination is never naked. It always echoes through the thought of a room.

A room is created for me to contemplate the infinite within. By what happy agreement is there comfort in ambivalence? I want to be in so many places at once. Every second that I stand in the doorway is another second that I forget to participate. What it means to be an actor without a stage, to transcend words and let the props of my life speak for me.

The executive convinces me to let go and plummet. The executive creates a new definition of vulgar success. Hers is a makeshift beauty in rotation, dims the sun, prevents the union of thoughts. Her beauty is an echo chamber that hisses all the way to another planet. How far away can you be and still see her catching in her cunt the ejaculate propelled towards some distant dirt? Hers is an echo chamber that crumbles and reforms in a steady rotation. She undoes the rent spell. She redoes the rent spell. She watches me dangle. "What is a volunteer?" she says to her boardroom. "What is a drought?" Wastefulness is to waste as X is to Y.

This room is vacant. You can sleep here for now. At night the cranes might lift you into a new apartment. You might hear screaming inside your plastic skull. It is possible that you will come to feel like a block of ice in the ice block factory.

What did you mean when you said vastness was an inhalation?

What is the quality of the air?

Some day you might wake up and call out, "Is my mess my dream state?"—"Is that my body that just went by?"

You will forget the sea of definitions as they foam over you. You and the women and the horses and the goats and the grains will bathe in the same water. Those fugitive acts. Those fugitive acts.

It's true: in the morning all of the development firm's employees will be fired. It's true: I am witness to this meeting. Some part of me is present. Nobody can decide who should be held accountable and so we all have to go. "You all have to go," someone says. "But who will you get to work so deep within the earth's core?" one of the workers responds. We hear the phrase, "All life is inscribed," as god-breath, gaining sentience, a network of possibilities. The list of volunteers is longer than anyone expected. A volunteer is a solo act before the invention of being held.

This room is vacant. You can sleep here for three more seconds. Three, two, one.

You might find that in this room you start to fantasize about falling through the floorboards. You will probably start to crave the falling rush of an external articulation. Voiceover breaks in above all previously recorded material. You must keep in mind that some day you will delete the parts you most meant to keep.

The executive continues, "My advice is to bury your computer. Remember that I have carried the spittle out of your mouth, sucked you dry. I have created new definitions of compassion and yes, I created this concept that I gift to you of underground splendor."

PART III

Instances of the Corpse Flower Pose, a Study Group

Green is gods and gardens and here I am again speaking my double. In place of speech the purge, the color purge. On my computer screen an ad pops up that says, "The corpse flower is about to bloom!" The conditions were created for the concept of pleasure to exist. If there are dissenters, let their poverty be voluntary. Let them educate and enchant us all. But what will we do without the concept of exhaust?

Or surplus?

Or cocoon?

Did I tell you already that I'm getting an advanced degree in cloud watching? In flames and ruby and fog? In cupped hands and surfaces and the concept of giving up? I am giving up my construction site studies. I will explain it all in a letter once my love of endurance subsides.

Here enters the world of Animal Studies. In Animal Studies we focus on astonishing inability. In Animal Studies there is a subtle othering of needs. Form speaks of formless coercion. Remember no exits like exits exhaust. But which world do we crave to sleep inside of today?

I had an impossible memory and then I slept inside the shell of a cobra.

The gardener says: "We broke those windows."—"Why aren't they broken?"

The gardener separates from himself to speak.

Animal Studies illuminates human beings and nonhuman possibilities. In *Animal Studies* my self-transcendence will survive me through being devoured. Delivered. I sleep inside of convergence where my two tongues meet. What I meant to say was this: "I could be a cobra, confessing to all of my rescuers, my ancestors." Couldn't I? I suck opportunity out of the pleasure husk. I open the window to breathe.

How long have you been here, mirror-writing bloom? If origin is still interesting then where do we go? Deliver the sugar rush. The corpse flower is about to bloom. But what is meant by the phrase "impossible memory"? Talk alternates sleep talk. There it is again: the horror of placating an image back into its signal. A voice says, "Cooperate."—"Decimate."—and then, "Quiet, the corpse flower is about to bloom."

It has been suggested to me that I allow myself to live en masse inside the waters at the god-crossing site. The entrance to Animal Studies is through animal doors. The structure bears down. This forum allows the authors of this book to become an index no matter what system it is running on. Command. Redirect. Populate. Another ad says, “Stinky corpse flower produces fruit.” In Server Studies the host is unpacked and stands alone. In Animal Studies we say the poets must unmask themselves before they can cross at the god-crossing site. I can’t help noticing the god-crossing site ahead.

Animal Studies engages nonhuman heartbeats and selfishness. Greed! Self-inflicted versus animal law. This moment knows not that much more than we pretend to know. The protest of studies is buried in studies. These gigantic flowers consume the concept “garden.” And the flowers, they grid me.

Definition work: to grid is to accept the aesthetic dimensions of any world.

Animal Studies says sanctuaries are self-affirming conduits. I begin to see my loneliness form. I picture myself speaking to a room filled with leopards. In this lecture I describe how the corpse flower, for example, suffers blooming blanks. Grids gold. Pulses green. Really the entirety of the lecture consisted of me saying out loud, “I believe in showing up and throwing up and giving up. Just show up and you will be fine.”

When you walked in on me just now, I was sitting on my bed remembering gambling. I am still coping with the shell. I want to face our feathers—I mean writing—I mean fathers. The mother and the father and the bucket of golden guts. All that came out of me. I swallowed a bird whole and spit up an elephant tusk. The loveliest ego whose name means “voyage inside of cobra.” My cobra flower dance has integrity as an object of study. I must insist. The object speaks “My contemporaries are body doubles in pursuit.” Withdrawn. This is just how I cope with the shell. Pleasure bestows pleasure-status, incoherence, the glory-world hole. Where is it stated that speech embeds action? The inaction of my name floating past me as I start to rehearse.

I am practicing my parakeet mind. Parakeet mind says: “If you are able to see the corpse flower, let yourself see it. Witness the gardeners, all logos, unconscious and primed.”

This is the assault of becoming a hostess to oneself. Lioness, my loneliness, I am exercising my right to be poured out like a liquid. It means an audience chases us like no other lost or lonely spring sprung up. Gambling is about to bloom luck. Check back here for more updates on the corpse flower blooming.

What organizes my thoughts is this: to bloom is to careen. To anticipate one's mind as ornament. I was worried about the authority one needs in order to smash an image and see if it holds another image inside. I said, "Deposit drawn." I said, "The well known concept of signage as value." You haven't said anything yet. And yet, and yet. There are things that I know. I know that a species is a marker drawn in chalk. A pioneer is a nonhuman sent to human school.

I started a sentence that went, "In defense of abundance..." The way that human futures are bets shared in the misplaced community. I think, "What else are we futuring?" Another voice rolls over concrete, lays some money on the table, chokes itself on thought-aromas escaping the body mouth to mouth.

When I open my mouth to speak a vine or stalk emerges.

"In defense of abundance..."

"In defense of abundance..."

Lesson one begins as recovery begins. As in Animal Studies we say a nonhuman likeness is a distinctive ability to see exhaustively. Precursors of writing employ my animal image. For some reason all of the corpse flowers are blooming at once. What else is there to say? Animal Studies says everyone lives in an abstract essence, a celestial impulse. All I want is at long last to be able to say with certainty, "THE CORPSE FLOWER BLOOMS!" Remember the gifted mouth? Remember the diving board? Welcome. Come in. Animal Studies says study reluctance and crust and let the worthy objects bleed.

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AUTHOR BIO



Anna Gurton-Wachter is a writer, editor and archivist. Her chapbooks include *Blank Blank Blues* (2016, Horse Less Press) and *CYRUS* (2014, Portable Press @ Yo Yo Labs). Other writing has appeared in *Elderly*; *6x6*; *No, Dear*; *The Organism for Poetic Research*; *The Brooklyn Rail*; and elsewhere. She was a contributor to the Essay Press digital collection of post-election writings *Radio 11.18.16*. Anna edits and makes books with DoubleCross Press and lives in Brooklyn, NY.



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