Across Bodily and Disciplinary Borders:

Hybridity as methodology, expression, dynamic

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Sixteen years ago, Romeo Castellucci (2004: 25) was asked whether a new theatre of the twenty-first century existed; he replied: 'it is a theatre that no longer has the problem of formal boundaries'. Whereas one may want to argue the degree of this freedom, the subtending assumption is important: formal and systemic boundaries can be problematic, for they easily become vehicles of normative attempts to polarize, enclose and isolate. A tactic that has high political currency today. This essay elaborates on hybridity as methodology, expression and dynamic that can discard bodily and disciplinary boundaries in theatre and performance. Hybridity here will be discussed as a gale, an invisible and more-than-real current of affect, that reanimates the performer's body, sweeps through non-human bodies and technological instruments, grazes the stage as if it was skin and shakes the physical and formal limits of theatre like bones.

Hybridity is a term bearing a heavy historical luggage of systemic, racial violence (Kuortti and Nyman 2007). In performance research and elsewhere, an appropriation of the term that elides its origin as a mark of enforced miscegenation may (even if in good faith) absolve whiteness of its abuses. For a generative and respectful investigation of hybrid embodiment to emerge, white researchers and practitioners, such as myself, must acknowledge this history of hybridity and work through it. Many tactics exist to confront white privilege and to disavow its desire of continuous hegemony over and parasitism of cultural practices. My interest is to combat the supposed universality of the white subject, that is, the still too

common assumption (of white people) that when speaking of, writing about or performing a human body, this is implicitly white, non-disabled and male. It is a logic of denial that collapses innumerable human specificities—of colour, of gender, of movement, of thought, of culture—into one, monolithic type of body—a mirage, in fact.

Among the possible paths to replace such logic, I take up Sabine Broeck's (2007: 52) proposal to 'examine whiteness as a white (wo)man's burden'. This essay, thus, sets out to analyse performance strategies that efface the universality of whiteness through modes of hybridization. This set of methods—observed through three practices of white artists working in European theatre—will help me delineate a possible use of hybridity as a methodology. Departing from acts of negation, re-assembling, subtraction and mutilation, the performative practices dissected here uncover diagrams that turn white bodies into bastard entities. On stage these acts take to pieces, almost literally, the white subject and its socio-cultural manifestations to reassemble it into hybrid forms and significances. The alleged impregnability of the white subject is negated, and its vulnerability affirmed. I argue that such hybrids, albeit incapable of erasing the mark of white privilege, may be able to expose 'the suppressions of white subject positions in culturally valent narratives' (56). This essay, therefore, is not simply concerned with defiling the pureness of the white subject, but rather with revealing that the very notion of pureness is in itself a fiction, constructed to inhibit the development of a multiplicity of actions and expressions beyond, and within, the borders of dominant cultures. What cultural, libidinal and sensuous potentials Western whiteness has buried to maintain the fiction of its integrity?

Weaving resources on intercorporeality and abjection from feminist, disability and posthuman studies, the essay proposes a view of hybridity as methodology for the creation and analysis of performance and theatre works that resist conventional scrutiny. The proposal is put to test by analysing the hybrid in transdisciplinary artistic practices: the theatrical living sculptures of Olivier de Sagazan, the dance-less bodyscapes of Maria Donata D'Urso and my own human–machine configurations in a collaboration with Margherita Pevere. The choice to discuss three case studies in the limited room offered by the length of this essay sacrifices longer analyses of each case. In exchange, though, it emphasizes that hybridity is not of one kind but takes on different forms and modalities according to that which it engages. In these case studies we will encounter hybrids enmeshed with earth materials, de-assembled and re-assembled with themselves, with computational machines and non-human organisms.

Hybridity through configuration

In neoliberal societies, hybridity is commonly seen as abject for its deviation from the foundation of white corporeal discipline.[1] State authority and media enforcement distribute coded sets of body images, to which one must supposedly submit in exchange for increased social or self acceptance. This forced contract, as it were, does not, however, account for the unregulated mingling of body images that all subjects partake in daily. By living, witnessing or participating in particular modalities of embodiment across interpersonal, institutional and cultural frameworks, one senses, learns and possibly introjects a multitude of body images that meld into continually morphing diagrams of one's own embodiment. It is a process of intercorporeality (Weiss 1999) that underpins regimental socio-cultural structures and, I propose, can be used to undermine them.

Theatre is an excellent ground for such an endeavour, for it enables audiences and performers to participate in intercorporeal transactions through the staging of imaginative embodiments that exceed frames of corporeal prescription. Theatre—intended as physical space, embodied practice and cultural institution—offers a stage where to configure 'non-docile bodies that resist the readily available techniques of corporeal inscription' (Weiss 1999: 67), where to experience and live the hybrid, where to inhabit it, as it were, even if only for the duration of a performance piece. Far from being a simple acknowledgement of difference, to inhabit the hybrid compels performers and audiences to question the wholeness of their own embodiment by performing the exclusions and reconciling with the abject. To that end, a performer must practise embodiment as a relational mode of being, fluid and malleable, which only exists through its relations to others. One must heighten an embodied reflexivity focused on the *felt* sensations and intensities exchanged between one's own body, other subjects (Kapsali 2014) and technologies (Donnarumma 2017).

Affect—this ongoing exchange of intensities—can be sensed and practised, but not rationally mastered, for it happens between bodies and without conscious engagement. It implodes the distance between self and other by activating and channelling felt sensations across bodies, human and non-human. Beyond certain thresholds, affect becomes a manifest influence on individual and collective psyche and habit (Blackman 2012), as a variety of relational phenomena indicate. Gut feeling, entrainment and automaticity—especially in relation to rhythm—are manifestations of affect that may be familiar to performers and theatre-goers. This also means that affect can be modulated but not obstructed by socially prescript moral imperatives, for it flows all around them. The

political implication is that normative conceptions of self-determination and othering become unsustainable: 'What is important is not separateness, but *rhythm* and the flow of rhythms from those you are in connection with, human and non-human' (157, emphasis in original). Self and other, then, can be grasped as co-constituting each other as they are swung and rocked by currents of sensations.

Crucial to the mobilization of affect in performance, to the activation of felt exchanges between performers and audiences, is the creation and practice of somatic techniques that psychically and physically train performer and audience alike in the *configuration* of embodiments yet to be. In my use of the term, configuration is the performative assembly of human and non-human parts to create alternate forms of embodiment (Donnarumma 2016: 110). Configuration is neither an addition of one thing to another, nor a coupling. It is an intimate intermingling of disparate bodies. The features of each body acquire new capacities by being brought together, and their ensemble constitutes, thus, an entity with particular affective qualities. To create a configuration is akin to weaving threads that may be significantly different in nature, but can be, nevertheless, enlaced. In this sense, configuration is a scaffold onto which hybridity can take root.

The remainder of this essay uses the tool of configuration to analyse the works of Sagazan, D'Urso, and myself with Margherita Pevere. In doing so, the essay traverses hybridity at two interrelated scales. One scale looks at how particular configurations emerge from, and establish at the same time, precise material relationships between human and non-human parts. By enlacing their respective qualities, the parts assemble into a body yielding hybrid forms of *corporeal expression*. Here, I eschew the term 'agency' to avoid a dialectic of intentionality, and I focus instead on distributed and conjoined qualities of expression. The expression I refer to is the way in which shifting modes of embodiment become manifest (Deleuze and Guattari 2013 [1987]: 50–3); it is not connected to an intention to express.

Taking a wider view, the second scale looks at how, in a given performance piece, a transdisciplinary configuration of elements coalesce into a hybrid aesthetics. I refer to this process as a *relational dynamic*, an impetus that instantiates concepts and symbols across artistic practices, generating a simultaneous multiplicity of forms, of readings, of possibilities.[2] I will flesh out these preliminary definitions of expression and dynamic in the dedicated sections below. What should be emphasized for now is that the two scales constitute themselves through each other. A particular corporeal expression enables a

distinct relational dynamic and, vice versa, a dynamic feeds back into an expression. It is a continuous folding of one into the other, unstable and situated.

Corporeal expression

A research strategy seeking hybrid corporeal expression questions what aspects of embodiment are normalized, by whom, for what reasons and in which context. It strives to perform the limitations and exclusions of corporeal instruction. In my reading of the three case studies, hybridity relies on working through the marks of the white standardization of the human subject so as to inhabit what they exclude, what they defer as abject to be obscured and refuted (Kristeva 1982). Such a method requires a performer to explore somatic experiences deemed abject by regimes of neoliberal normativity because they train in vulnerability instead of cementing self-determination. As the works will show, such training begins by exposing one's own corporeality to others—human and non-human, living and non-living.

Transfiguration (1998) by and with Olivier Sagazan. *Photo Didier Carluccio.*
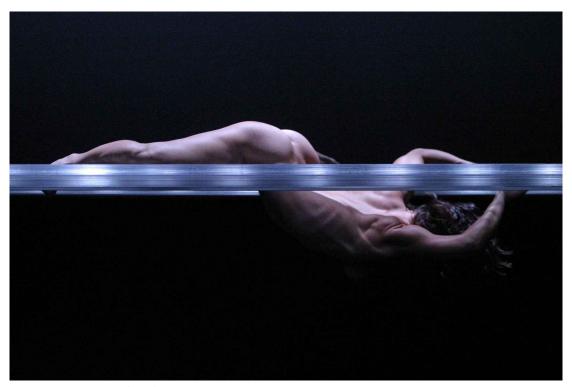
Sagazan's compulsive moulding of clay into flesh is a prime example of hybrid corporeal expression. His research thrusts somatic experimentation into an idiosyncratic, polyphonic

performance of hybridity. Originally a visual artist working first in painting and then in sculpture using mixed media, in the past twenty years Sagazan has developed a peculiar performance practice. On stage, he layers and manipulates clay, pigments and other earth materials onto his whole body so as to mould morphing sculptures out of his own anatomy. The face is of particular interest in his work. At one point in his performance *Transfiguration* (1998), a protruding, bird-like grey face emerges from stacked layers of clay he has skilfully manipulated.[3] The face replaces his head until, with a neat and abrupt gesture of a thin brush, a deep cut splits it in two. A wound or a mouth appears. Despite (and because) it is clear that the cut did not reach Sagazan's actual face, the gesture is shocking. His body is treated as a multi-dimensional canvas, abused through coded gestures that sculpt indocile identities. Clay, water and pigments blend with skin, sweat and saliva.

By reflecting on this hybrid body as a configuration—an interlacing of parts that are other to one another—it is possible to reveal the modalities of its expression. This is done by a) isolating the elements that compose its configuration, b) establishing their respective qualities and c) grasping how the latter interact with one another to realize a particular mode of affect. At a material level, Sagazan's hybrid is made of organic and earth matter, as in flesh and clay. Each has specific qualities that, during the performance, interact in affective ways. Whereas both clay and flesh can be physically cut, only clay does not suffer permanent damage or leaks vital fluids, and can be restored indefinitely. Hence, the performer's body can be constantly torn to pieces and re-moulded into a living entity that is other than human—with no more consequences than a poetic expression of exuberant body images—because it partakes of clay's plasticity, stickiness and porosity. On the other hand, while clay is biologically inanimate, 'the material is already something more or less alive; [it possesses] a kind of infra life' (Sagazan 2020). This kind of life thriving underneath human aliveness is implicit to clay and becomes manifest only when the material joins in the edginess and rhythmicality of the performer's body.

In *Transfiguration,* the capacity of the hybrid to affect and be affected relates to its capacity to mobilize a distinct form of abjection: the tension between inanimate and alive. By accounting for that which is partially dead *and* partly alive, Sagazan's hybrid performs a socially and self-averse embodiment that may violate or exceed the spectators' own morals. His mode of hybridity weaponizes the unproductive body—refuted and isolated in neoliberal societies of eternal growth—to attack the fantasy of self-sufficient vitality and absolute integrity of the white subject. Interestingly, Sagazan (2020) firmly states that his

work does 'most definitely not' address Western white strategies of cultural domination. Rather, he seeks to combine the animism found in his country of birth—he refers to the cultures of Kongo and Teke people in the Democratic Republic of Congo—with what he calls the 'gravity' (*pesanteur*) of Western culture. To that end he chooses a violent catharsis as 'a way of escaping the heavy forces of conformism and mimesis' (Sagazan 2020). At the scale of expression thus, hybridity in Sagazan's work can be read as an aesthetic and affective assault on the presumed integrity of the Western subject. It is not mere provocation, but enactment of multiple joint potentialities.

Collection Particulière (2006) by and with Maria Donata D'Urso. *Photo Yidohee.*

D'Urso's snaking dislocation of body parts offers a differently rich take on the configuration of hybrid corporeal expression. She is a performer and choreographer who, for thirty years, has been developing a unique movement practice at whose core is a rigorous and investigative somatic approach and a will to create, through her works, 'possible ways of questioning, rather than conforming' (D'Urso 2020). In her performance *Collection Particulière* (2006), her whole naked body repeatedly floats and sinks across an immovable, two-dimensional blue line.[4] What appears as a line is a pair of wooden planks carefully aligned with each other and held by bars to the floor; the body slithers through a gap between the planks. Slowly yet resolutely, the flesh mutates by an exponential

magnification of inhaling and exhaling movements. Across the stern line sundering the scene, her arms, legs, shoulders and neck overextend, overlap, overreach. Together, they appear imbued with an aliveness that is not entirely human. They attempt, as it were, to tear apart the stuff that stubbornly keeps them together by a very fine thread.

D'Urso (2020) describes the performance as 'involuntary' and 'unintentional' in the sense that it is her connective muscle tissue that performs; 'the body does by itself', she notes. As in the case of Sagazan, such affective expression of embodiment emerges from an exact material configuration. A particular care and preparation of both D'Urso's body and the prop is crucial to manifest the qualities of movement that characterize *Collection*. Before a show, she explains, parts of her body are cleansed of skin oil to increase their grip onto the prop's surface, while parts of the prop are smoothed and softened with rubber layers to lessen their friction against her skin. This material configuration of skin and prop affords the centimetric precision of the displacement of joints, hips and limbs. Movement qualities, as a result, are so extremely graceful and forcefully drastic that a spectator may be unable to map the moving body on stage to predetermined, socially normalized bodily forms. Her body becomes a diagram for corporeal forms yet to be; it yields generation through abjection.

D'Urso's work offers an important angle of reflection on hybrid corporeality. Her body is not configured with something other; it is reconfigured with itself, or, more precisely, with another form of itself that exists in the potentiality of what is excluded and awaits to be enacted. Here, the body is abject because it is other to itself. It perturbs the supposed order of human identity by its disavowal of self-recognition.

My own human–machine configurations confront the corporeal expression of hybrids made of flesh, sound and circuits. By testing somatic practices through technological engineering and biophysical music, in the past fifteen years I have refined a form of performance where human bodies and machines enter intimate relationships rooted in choreographies of coercion and modes of attunement (Donnarumma 2020). In *Eingeweide* (2018), Pevere's body and my own, naked against a black scene, seem to meld into each other, break apart and coalesce again in a process that is neither organic nor enchanted, but raw and abrasive.[5] The thorny movements incarnadines our flesh; skins gleam with sweat. Sounds from the contractions of our muscles are amplified and digitally manipulated, endowing each body with a sonic identity. Prostheses on our faces literally block our sight. A garment of biofilm, pasted to Pevere's face, undulates and leaks as she creeps across the

floor reaching out for coarse salt, as a plant's roots would for nutrients.[6] A robotic arm, jutting out of my head, intently seeks to touch or strike my body as I—akin to an eyeless animal scouting unfamiliar terrain—crawl across ruins of a computer server farm.

Eingeweide (2018) by and with Marco Donnarumma X Margherita Pevere. *Photo Giovanni De Angelis.*

In this configuration, Pevere and I must heighten our proprioception so as to attune to the sensations produced by the alien organs replacing our gaze. As Pevere recounts, the biofilm acts as an added skin, creating new senses in exchange of her lost sight: the translucency of the biofilm allows light and colour through it, which enables approximate orientation on stage; the wetness and smoothness of the biofilm's surface afford the gliding of Pevere's face across the floor; the tear resistance of the biofilm's structure protects her face from being wounded by the scraping of coarse salt. The robotic prosthesis engages in a similar sensorial stimulation with my body. Its motion is generated in real time by artificial intelligence algorithms that mimic the sensorimotor system of mammals.[7] The algorithms coordinate the articulation of movement by actuating six servomotors. As the motors move, their vibrations propagate through my face beneath the headpiece, thus hinting at the nature of my surroundings: no vibration means the prosthesis is still, computing; intensifying vibrations signify increased activity, the machine is moving freely; stutters indicate it has found a body part or a prop and is inspecting it.

The configuration at play in *Eingeweide* is of yet another kind than the ones in Sagazan's and D'Urso's works, in that it calls for abjection not by means of accumulation (of clay or curves) but through subtraction. Human and non-human parts are configured in ways that refute humans' basic, operative and symbolic functions. Not only vision is nullified; faces and heads are abrogated, taken over by bacterial and robotic others. The bodies on stage become abject because their sensorial and psychic borders are exposed and the stuff that makes them human is surrendered to that which is absolutely other—and yet, they act.

Relational dynamic

As noted earlier, hybridity in performance can be observed on two levels. The scale of corporeal expression, analysed above, and the scale of relational dynamic, to which I turn now. Whereas corporeal expression emerges from the configuration of materials within an artwork, relational dynamic emerges from the configuration of features—concepts, symbols, intentions or ways of dealing with them—which exist beyond the scope of an artwork in disparate artistic practices. As a hybrid performance unfolds, it lays out a cartography of conceptual and symbolic elements across other existing artworks that a witness can freely navigate by instantiating relations, or trajectories, between any sets of elements. By precluding a universal or obvious trajectory of interpretation, relational dynamic demands the witness to reflect, to ruminate, sometimes even after the performance has ended. In this way, relational dynamic endows the artwork with its aesthetics. Because the elements in the configuration are potentiated or undermined by their mutual relations—that is, relations that are laid out by the artwork and navigated by the spectator—the resulting aesthetics is a kaleidoscope of readings, rather than a univocal key. In this section I follow some of the trajectories traced by the dynamic of each case study, focusing on features of choreography and representation.

Analogously to his own body in *Transfiguration*, Sagazan's practice is a blank canvas onto which elements from several disciplines are configured. Readily apparent are the elements pertaining to his activity as sculptor and painter: gestures, materials, visual aesthetic. But beyond these obvious connections, it is significant to observe how the hybrid corporeal expression he performs publicly emerges from a loop of practices, where he reworks visual moments of his performances as paintings, which seem to inspire sculptures, which conjure up aspects of his performances, which inspire new artistic ideas and so forth. This performative configuration of elements allows his work to fit manifold domains, from body art to theatre and visual art. Perhaps unsurprisingly, he performs regularly at mime

and puppetry events, which demonstrates how his work resonates with the theatre of the unsaid, of the sign, of the animated inanimate.

Yet, the relational dynamic of *Transfiguration* clearly activates features of action art, especially as seen in the work of actionist Otto Mühl: the physical strain, the self-inflicted blindness and symbolic amputations, the joy of abjection, the critique of conformism. Differently from Mühl's actions, however, Sagazan sheds no real blood. Through the configuration of his body with clay and pigment, he performs a cathartic violence that is as powerful as most action art. Simultaneously, the performance remains a form of re-presentation, for it explicitly flirts with fiction, generally a nemesis to action artists. Thus, an interesting paradox arises: there is no lying yet no blood; there is real violence yet no permanent consequences. Theatrical representation is subdued and overblown at the same time. Here is the feedback, as an echo or a resonance, between corporeal expression and relational dynamic. Sagazan's hybridity plays with the body politics of action art to explode theatrical make-believe. Is he acting a character out, or is he performing actions <u>as</u> himself? Both and neither.

Whereas in *Collection* one recognizes foundational aspects of dance—historically intended as a purposefully selected sequence of movements with aesthetic and symbolic value—D'Urso's hybrid performance exceeds the discipline's established language. By shunning the physical capacities of the female body as it is often standardized in the very practice of dance—standards derived from broader normalization methods of neoliberal societies—D'Urso performs within her own unique and unfamiliar artistic domain, which does not adhere to familiar rules of interpretation and borders among disciplines. Of particular importance is how her work speaks back to painting—specifically Francis Bacon's use of pigment's materiality to characterize bodies—by the way it deals with flow. With the term 'flow' I intend a trained effortlessness in the execution of movement sequences that derives from physical strength and heightened proprioception.

In contrast to conventional dance techniques, flow does not extend spatially in D'Urso's work but compresses itself within her body, similarly to how Bacon's flow compresses in the materiality of the pigment he brushes away on the canvas. As flow amasses in the folds of D'Urso's flesh, muscles and joints produce the rhythm that spins each body part into spirals of becoming—the same periodic motion feeding the quasi-human aliveness of her limbs analysed earlier. Describing the piece, she draws from geometry to explain that her body has no lines but only 'envelopes', curves intersecting with other curves, enclosures

clinging to 'confront horizontality', musculature suspended (D'Urso 2020). This conjures up Bacon's own use of geometry to juxtapose the curving traces of his figures to the angular empty frames of his scenes. In both Bacon's and D'Urso's works, the force of movement, its trajectory and rhythm persist as sensations that animate an otherwise still body.

In an opposite fashion to Sagazan's work, and perhaps closer to D'Urso's, *Eingeweide* eschews fiction or speculation and is embedded instead in the roughness of reality. The piece owns its rawness to a strand of performance practice grounded in radical challenges to the performers' physical limits. Drawing in particular from the Butoh technique of Kō Murobushi—who 'challenged his physical integrity by not avoiding any hard impact on the ground' (Achatz 2018)—the choreography of *Eingeweide* requires performers to embrace the seeming impossibility of certain movement sequences so as to develop somatic modes that dispose of customs. Bodies must fall repeatedly and violently; faces must be dragged for metres across the floor; arms, legs and fingers must overstretch; breath must be used sparely; skins must bear the abrasion of salt. In other words, corporeal habits must be unlearned in order to inhabit what lies outside the systemic borders of embodiment.

Another feature of the relational dynamic found in *Eingeweide* is how it sweeps through artistic and scientific domains, mutually perturbing the enclosed systems of performance art, dance-theatre, computation and biotechnology. This path has been opened by several artists before me, such as Stelarc, Orlan, Marce.li Antunez Roca and Shu Lea Cheang, to whom I am indebted. In *Eingeweide* I sought, however, a kind of dynamic between somatic confrontation, choreographic provocation and experiential dramaturgy that positions the piece in a domain on its own. From one viewpoint, it is not dance; it is not theatre; it is not performance art; it is not musical concert. From another though, it is all of them at once. The configuration of the performers' bodies with non-human entities in a choreography of struggle creates a narrative on the one hand, yet it impedes unambiguous interpretation on the other. Comparably to *Collection*, the process of hybridization does not reach closure. The experiment is purposely left open, suspended, for its aim is to distribute waves of affect vigorous enough to be viscerally felt by performers and audience.

Seeds for radical body politics

Hybridity in performance can be read in a variety of ways. I suggested two scales or strategies of approaching it: corporeal expression focuses on the precise material configuration from which a particular manifestation of affect emerges; relational dynamic

addresses the configuration of transdisciplinary concepts, symbols and modes of reflection as aesthetics. Using the analytic tool of configuration, one can analyse the structures subtending these two scales and grasp how they feed into each other, creating resonances, accumulations, leftovers and divergences. But something else emerges from the interaction between expression and dynamic: an undisciplined questioning of the power structures substantiating the representation of bodies in theatre, and Western societies at large. In closing the essay, I offer a reading of the seeds for radical body politics that each of the work yields.

In *Transfiguration*, blending clay, water and paint with flesh, eyes and muscles is generative not only of an unfamiliar body, but also of a being that is affectively felt and culturally contextualized. Sagazan, in fact, proffers a clear-cut socio-cultural context to his action. As his black, puppet-like eyes disappear dripping through the clay creeks, as a spectator, I recall the first apparition of that body. It entered the stage as a human male, wearing a uniform of the neoliberal era, an anonymous dark-blue suit that reminded me of hedge fund managers, bankers or real-estate executives. But soon after the performance starts, all that is left of that uniform is its constituting cruelty, a painlessly mutilated body. When the suit—as a signifier of remorseless financial speculation, disregard of relational ethics or reckless accumulation of capital—comes back through my witness's memories to haunt the stage, the performance itself demands renewed attention to its multiple layers of significance. The materiality of flesh with clay overflows the limits of the visual, in the process injecting ancestral animism into capitalist secularity.

In *Collection*, D'Urso's body parts progressively re-assemble themselves through dense sequences of muscular contractions and extensions. I read her choreographic work as a disavowal of Western prescriptions about the white female body. She begins by disassembling her body into parts, continues by re-assembling the parts into a hybrid form of feminine embodiment and ultimately offers no closure, but unending, unflinching mutation. The femininity I refer to has nothing to do with reductionist views of women's bodies or with female biological attributes—the latter are purposely hidden from view in D'Urso's performances—and instead refers to the 'set of structures and conditions which delimit the typical situation of being a woman in a particular society' (Young 1980: 140).[8] What is enacted in *Collection* can be seen as a generative form of abject femininity, for it productively disquiets the system (structures and conditions) of bodily norms that in Western society attempt to hold the feminine in restrain. Hers is a feminine that does not abide, for it is alien to corporeal instruction.

Eingeweide offers an embodied manifestation of how the privilege endowed to 'corporeal wholeness and integrity' is nothing more than a fraud by the white techno-medical imaginary (Shildrick 2013: 272). The type of configuration underlying the piece exploits techno-scientific techniques and materials as a means to displace standards of normalcy. In *Eingeweide*, the figure of the prosthesis as aiding extension—as it is commonly represented in the narratives of medicine, technology and spectacle—is effectively and tacitly mined. Pevere's bacterial veil and my own facial arm lend themselves neither to transhumanist visions of expanded bodies, nor to technophobic claims of a coming reign of machines. More simply, they actuate a refractory configuration of human and non-human bodies in a real-life experiment, and in doing so they 'complicate our sense of the boundaries of corporeality' (Shildrick 2013: 276). Instead of performing a didactic or entertaining role, technology and biotechnology are used to affirm corporeality as a matter of incorporating that which is other.

The insight offered by the hybrid performance pieces discussed here relies not much on form or content, but on the interaction between expression (intrinsic materials, rhythms, affects) and dynamic (transdisciplinary concepts, symbols, modes of reflection). This interaction results in a blooming of corporeal and artistic morphologies that are unfixed, ever-changing and relational. As these configurations of embodiment are put into practice, performed, the alleged wholeness of the subject is challenged and impaired. Bodily instruction, in fact, remains 'unnoticed' until it is breached by a body or practice that rejects to follow it (Weiss 1999: 2). If, then, a power of hybridity in performance is to chart body politics yet to be, inhabiting a hybrid body is corporeal research into political action. In this light, theatre is the cradle of a renewed bond between performer and spectator, where they dwell in and upon the multiplicities suppressed by corporeal prescriptions.

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1   The examples are manifold. Proffering a personal experience where her 3-year-old son was insulted for not being the same as his mother, Broeck (2007: 52) reflects on interracial hybridity within white cultures as a trigger of responses ranging from 'denial to fascist aggression... sexual license, and general impure degeneration'. Margrit Shildrick's (2013: 276) research on transplantation discusses how, in Western cultural domains, organ recipients are often faced with the troubling question of how to understand the supposed autonomy and unity of their body when their lives have been saved by a literal incorporation of the other. Lisa Blackman's (2012: 131) work on affect and immateriality elaborates on how the rise of the psychological sciences marked a conception of suggestion, or one's openness to be affected by others, as an 'abnormal capacity' or a 'psychological lack' of people deviating from particular understandings of normality.

2   My definition builds upon Susanne Langer's (1957: 18) broader notion of dynamic as the energy or movement that gives form to an artwork. My understanding differs from Langer's in that relational dynamic, by connecting features of different practices, engages with the performative nature of the borders between artistic disciplines.

3   I strongly recommend the reader to watch the teasers of each case study. *Transfiguration* is available at https://vimeo.com/248467975.

4   The trailer of *Collection* is available at www.numeridanse.tv/en/dance-videotheque/collection-particuliere.

5   The trailer of *Eingeweide* can be watched at https://vimeo.com/298134433.

6   A biofilm is a film produced by a bacterial culture. In this case, Pevere (2018) cultured a colony of Acetobacter bacteria.

7   Known as biomimetic adaptive algorithms, these are a type of neural network used to endow humanoid and non-humanoid robots with animal-like behaviour; see Donnarumma (2019: 220) for details on my implementation.

8   In this sense, as explained by Young, it is possible for men or other gender instances to be feminine at least in some respects.