

Moving Materials: A Question of Form

by lo bil

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Declaration

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Abstract

Moving Materials is a body of work culminating in an exhibition of mutable sculptures created through performance art gestures that involved sensing objects. The exhibition set the conditions for invited guests to engage with these sculptural forms through conversations and physical interactions. Materials were everyday objects including paper, wood, textiles, plastics, plants and found objects chosen to provide a diversity of sensorial qualities. Materials were assembled into sculptures and exhibited in the gallery. Some sculptures were only photographed, titled, and compiled in an image book. Because the sculptures were mutable, the book revealed a history of reconfigured forms and evolving relationalities evoked through these material compositions. Images served as still points for visitors to the exhibition, as a trajectory of moving materials. *Moving Materials* focuses on the dynamic relationality between materials, forces, and bodies as the artwork - with sensation as the provocateur of forces interacting. The cross-disciplinary approach to moving materials, performance, and sculptural composition draws on Elizabeth Grosz's ideas of art as interrelated intensities, affects, and cosmological forces. Timothy Morton's ideas about the inter-relationality of objects further contextualizes the wider implications of examining relations with materials. Discussions of contemporary artworks by artists Sherri Hay, Cassils, and Dana Michel provide further context for how object-relational movement inscribes meaning in the artwork.

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to the students in Palestine who are not able to attend school because of the ongoing genocide, who stand their ground despite inhumanity at the hands of their oppressors. May all people experience the freedom to live and thrive on their homeland.

Witnessing the steadfastness of the Palestinian people and the humanity of all activists fighting for justice worldwide, gave me proof that continuing despite adversity makes change possible.

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INTRODUCTION

Moving Materials is a body of work comprised of mutable sculptures created through performance art gestures that involved sensing materials and led to two public exhibitions in November 2023 and March 2024. This research relates to the de-instrumentalization of materials through methods of performance art that resisted the terms by which I sell my labour in a capitalist market.¹ Elizabeth Grosz’s concept that art and nature “share a common structure: that of excessive and useless production... for its own sake... for the sake of profusion and differentiation” resonated deeply with my desire to make an exhibition wherein this is a driving force.² Sculptural works were organized in the gallery through a sense-driven decision-making process. Visitors were invited to move materials in the exhibition and told anecdotally that in my paid labour I had to adhere to operational directives, but in the labour of my art practice, I had the freedom to move materials for pleasure, and for sensation’s sake.

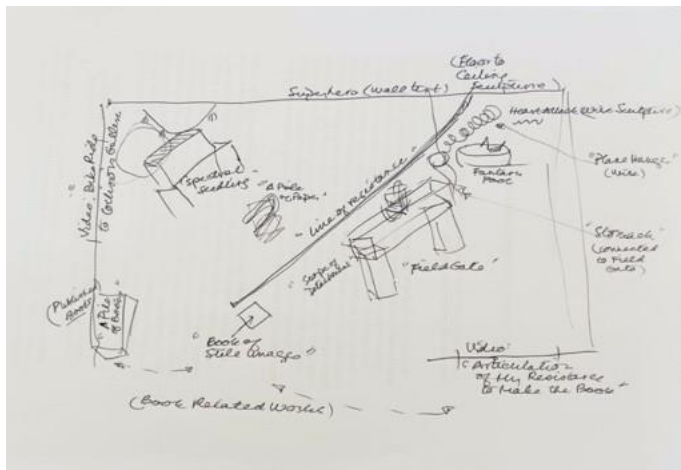


Figure 1: Diagram of *Moving Materials* exhibition in March 2024 at OCADU’s Ignite Gallery West. This drawing was made after the exhibition. The exhibition was arranged intuitively rather than through a preconceived floor plan.

¹ See Appendix 1 for an example of the labour context I am drawing from. I am using this term in relation to Jane Bennett’s use of the phrase, “Instrumentalized matter.” For example, “Why advocate the vitality of matter? Because my hunch is that the image of dead or thoroughly instrumentalized matter feeds human hubris and our earth-destroying fantasies of conquest and consumption.” (Bennett, 2010, p. ix).

² Grosz, 2008, p. 9.

In the final thesis show in March 2024, there was a diagonal sculptural line bisecting the gallery that hung from ceiling to floor extending from the south-east corner to the entrance. There were three artworks that related to books that formed a line across the entrance to the gallery. There was an arch-like sculpture on either side of the diagonal line. There was a video playing in proximity to each arch.³ Throughout the process, invited guests engaged with mutable sculptures through informal conversations in the studio and material interactions in the gallery space. I moved the materials into sculptural assemblages before the arrival of the guests. I photographed and titled iterations of the sculptures, sometimes before visitors arrived, sometimes during or after their visit. The photographs of the sculptures at various times were collected and bound in a coil-bound book for the second exhibition of *Moving Materials*. Since the sculptures were mutable, *The Book of Still Images* hints at forms and relationalities that were evoked through material compositions. The images served as still points for visitors to the exhibition to notice the trajectory of the materials. Rather than identifying the material objects that form my sculptural assemblages as the artwork, I paid attention to how relationalities developed with materials through the process, and I identify that relationality as the artwork. To name the process as the artwork is common in the discipline of performance art, but less common in the discipline of sculpture. Ultimately, *Moving Materials* is a body of work that attempts to create intensities by tuning into the more-than-human forces speculatively experienced in relational spaces between materials and artist, materials and visitors to the exhibition and materials to materials.

³ Videos are titled *Bike Ride to Collision Gallery* (left side of gallery) and *Articulation of My Resistance to Making the Book* (right side of gallery). Sculptures from left to right in the diagram were *A Pile of Books*, *Tape*, *Spectral Seedling*, *Paper*, *Line of Resistance* (sculpture that forms a line bisecting the gallery), *Heart Attack*, *Plane Hanger*, *Fantasy Pool*, *Stomach*, *Field Gate*, *Scope of Detachment* and *Book of Still Images*. There were also drawings on the walls, traces of bodies and a visitor to the gallery who is a graffiti artist wrote “You are a Superhero” on the back wall on day 2 of the exhibition.

I refer to sensations experienced through my body in proximity to the materials, inclusive of physical changes, emotional affects, and mental images. What was created were sensations in relation to materials that extended beyond my own subjectivity. In other words, there were moments in the process of making the exhibition that sensation became inter-subjective. Deleuze and Guattari in *What is Philosophy* state that: “The work of art is a being of sensation and nothing else: it exists in itself.”⁴ This is further echoed in *Chaos, Territory, Art* by Elizabeth Grosz, where she writes that, “Art is not linked to some intrinsic relation to one's own body but exactly the opposite: it is linked to those processes of distancing and the production of a plane of composition that abstracts sensation from the body.”⁵ My exhibition reconciles Grosz’s theory that art is induced through a slowing down of chaos that is caused by the forces of the earth in contact with the forces of living bodies.⁶

As art “monumentalizes” sensation according to Grosz, tuning into sensation as a conduit toward making an artwork seemed the most likely channel.⁷ Grosz’s description resonated with me because my practices of sensing diverse materials had been infinitely productive after fifteen years of professional training as a performance artist.⁸ Yet the question remained as to whether I could maintain this conveyance of sensation beyond the performative – how could I continue the intensities I experience in the process of sensation through the making of mutable sculptures?

In *Moving Materials: A Question of Form*, I trace how the practice of focusing attention on sensing everyday materials in studio practice and prioritizing material relationality over rendering a designed outcome, expanded my sculptural aesthetic and conception of what it

⁴ Deleuze and Guattari, 1991, p. 164.

⁵ Grosz, 2008, p. 11.

⁶ Grosz, 2008, p. 3.

⁷ Grosz, 2008, p. 4.

⁸ For further content related to my performance history please see my artist website at <https://lobil.art/>.

means to make sculptures as a performance artist. I began by asking questions like: What is the minimum amount of material and impetus that I need to make a performance or a sculpture? Do performance art methods lead to sculptures that transmit content about my inter-relationality with materials? How can I create the conditions in an exhibition that allow viewers to respond to forces and forms such as resistance and relationality, that are often visually imperceptible? These questions led me to more questions prompted by Elizabeth Grosz and Timothy Morton's texts, such as: How can I engage in an art practice that responds to art as a product of earthly forces rather than being limited by the subjectivity of the artist? And how can I use the interconnectedness of all things as material in my physical and material compositions?⁹



Figure 2: *Field Gate* in November 2023 exhibition.

⁹ Although I read broadly from these two theorists, I am primarily drawing reference from two specific readings: Elizabeth Grosz, *Chaos, Territory, Art : Deleuze and the Framing of the Earth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), and Timothy Morton, *Hyperobjects : Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).

These questions led me to the intentional practice of integrating other people into my process, who supported experiments of physical resistance, to following playful impulses in daily life, while resisting repetition (as rehearsal) in performance, and the completeness of sculpture. Instances of non-repetition were experienced through a multi-vocal approach to making assemblages that involved conversations with colleagues, as well as following intensities in my own body in response to the presence of other people. The inclusion of other points of view on the materials and the energetic space created by this process, led to unexpected decisions in making sculptural compositions, exemplified in the figures (above) of *Field Gate* in the first and second exhibitions. I was able to alter my habitual patterns of action and visual perception by processing the affective layers of experience that came from these interactions.



Figure 3: *Field Gate* in March 2024 exhibition, with visitor interaction.

Each section in this thesis is titled in relation to a pair of variables that point to a spectrum of points to move between. The section headings suggest ongoing interactions between all the variables at every stage. I parse these simultaneous streams by identifying a few points in each layer of research that relate to a sculpture that evolved in the final thesis exhibition in March 2024. I also retrace my steps through the research to notice how various engagements led to unique sculptural assemblages.

In “Affects and Sensations,” I précis my use of the word sensing via a theoretical perspective with Elizabeth Grosz, Erin Manning, Simon O’Sullivan, and Timothy Morton. I evaluate how this thinking developed through my training with performance artist and mentor Sylvie Tourangeau and by seeing *MIKE*, a four-hour durational performance by Dana Michel at Festival TransAmerique in Montreal in 2023, that gave me an experience of an artwork wherein I could think through the relationship between performance, labour, and sculpture.¹⁰ I refer to the artwork of João Fiadeiro and Violaine Lochu to contrast the experience of making the artist’s labour the focus of the work versus my interest in focusing on material relations.

In “Relationality and Resistance,” I critically assess these two concepts that catalyzed this body of work. Most notably through the practice-based research of *Listening to a Concrete Pillar in an Attempt to Change the Inertia of My Resistance* (April 2023) wherein my body was absent from the final artwork, and my research interest transitioned from being about how the material between two or more people changes relationality - into engaging with resistance as my primary material. I also discuss the sculpture *Line of Resistance* that was shown in the final exhibition, which reveals how a sculptural element included through intuitive decision-making came to

¹⁰ Michel, Dana. *MIKE*. Performance, 2023. Seen live but one moment of documentation at <https://fta.ca/archive/mike/>, accessed June 25, 2024.

figure centrally in the exhibition. My analysis of two more sculptures: *Spectral Seedling* and *A Pile of Books*, reveals my interest to move away from repetition as I have experienced it within the paid labour force, my attempts to de-instrumentalize my relationship with objects and materials, and my interest to create works that extend a potential evocation of lived sensations beyond what I can articulate into language. This became clearer through the focus on resistance as a productive material.

In “Movement and Stillness,” I contextualize my photographs of sculptures by comparing artists whose work hovers between the static nature of sculpture and the movement of performance.¹¹ I define movement within postmodernist aesthetic approaches and discuss post-minimalist sculptor Robert Morris who coined the term “Process Art.”¹² An analysis of Cassils’ performance *Becoming an Image* is used to contextualize a cultural interpretation of stillness in performance, and I consider Sherri Hay’s performance *x for staying here with us now* in relation to performance without human bodies. These artistic references initiate questions around the interdisciplinary impact of movement and help to define my approach and how I perceive one form shifting into another form, and why that matters in the context of *Moving Materials*.¹³ Photography in *Moving Materials* traced relationships and map mutability with *The Book of Still Images* and ways of thinking-through-making by briefly discussing the emergent context of various photographs and videos. I assess whether framing, disorientation, and various states of freedom-to-move were able to create a relationality that became the content of the artwork, in contrast to placing value on the objects in the gallery.

¹¹ See Appendix 2 for links to video and photographs of my works that are discussed.

¹² Morris, Robert. *Continuous Project Altered Daily: The Writings of Robert Morris*. “Anti-Form,” Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1993, p. 46.

¹³ Documentation of Cassils’ performance can be seen here, <https://www.cassils.net/cassils-artwork-becoming-an-image> and of Hay’s performance can be seen here, <https://www.sherrihay.com/x-for-staying>.

In “Forces and Bodies,” I analyze how the space between the sculptures as experienced in the gallery context, revealed how unseen forces constitute the work of art. I connect the cosmic forces described by Elizabeth Grosz in relation to my questions about the role of resistance and relationality as an artwork. And I connect Timothy Morton’s concept of “the Mesh” to illustrate the animated systems of relationality that are always at play in interactions with materials. I discuss the significance of Robert Morris’ use of gravity as a material and describe my own work with *Tape* as a minimal sculptural gesture that identifies unseen lines in space related to sensory interactions with invisible forces. The titles of sculptural works also trace the impacts of forces. I refer to Erin Manning to speak about the relational space of touch.

Although *Moving Materials* was undertaken in the spirit of questioning form, it is also about letting go of conventional ways of seeing, and of moving through sensory awareness. The framing of mutability established in *Moving Materials* invited a diversity of visitors to enter conversations and physical engagements that “mutable sculptures” generated. A fluid state of changing forms and aesthetic lines of questioning in the gallery involved a practice of creative renderings that expanded perceptions of what it means to make art in an exhibition space. This brought visitors into the present moment both through their tactile engagement with materials and through the undoing of the exhibition space, or what Jack Halberstam describes as unbuilding.¹⁴

¹⁴ Jack Halberstam, “An Aesthetics of Collapse,” University of Nebraska, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wf6Xw6bHAfs>, accessed June 10, 2024.

1. AFFECTS AND SENSATIONS

Grosz writes, “Sensation is what art forms from chaos through the extraction of qualities.”¹⁵ Similarly, I am “sensing” to describe an ongoing awareness of changes in perception of qualities that can be connected to my physical state but that also create the context for art making. My work could be a matter of daily mindfulness, but in *Moving Materials*, I asked how this attenuation to layers of attention accumulated and metabolized into the unknown or mysterious qualities of the artwork. For example, I am sitting on a wooden chair, and I experience physical sensations, a minor headache in my left temple and eye area, a stiff pain in my lower back, and a buzzing in my chest. I approach a material, a plant for instance, and the physical sensations I experience change. I am less aware of my back, but my sense of smell is activated. I feel an impulse to reach out and gently pull a tendril from under the table to allow it to rest in the sun. My headache has become more dispersed across the forehead. My lower back pain is less intense when I am moving around the plant. I attribute the emergence of these physical effects to my relationship to the materials that I have introduced in my proximity. But I also perceive a dance, a facing toward the chaos of sensations in search of beauty in feeling through the quality of movements inspired by the plant.

Often an affective or action-based word attends to a collection of sensations and a resulting flow of movements related to thoughts or images. For instance, I was given a white 6 x 4-foot flat sheet of cardboard to work with.¹⁶ I wondered why it was fabricated in this size and shape. I was struck by a sudden question – how can I understand this cardboard panel as it is rather than make it into something else? I noticed a change in emotional affect, the words

¹⁵ Grosz, 2008, p. 8.

¹⁶ See Appendix 4 for images of this experiment with cardboard.

curiosity and playful come to mind. With my feet firmly planted, this curiosity involved a sensation of charge toward the ground and an impulse to push and pull at the cardboard to see how malleable the material was. I spun it around, leaning into my back space to counterbalance the undulations. I slid it onto my back, bending my knees and trying to activate this sliding by creating imbalance and shifting weight to catch it before it fell. I rolled myself into the cardboard and sank to the ground covered by it. The way that it curled allowed for a kind of quick rolling that I could not achieve with my body on its own. I noticed physical sensations such as lightness in my shoulders, fluidity in my spine, and a cool temperature on my skin. I believe I was experiencing what Erin Manning describes as “the senses prosthetically alter[ing] the dimensions of the body, inciting the body to move in excess of its-self toward the world.”¹⁷

I acknowledge that my understanding of sensing is entangled with affective and imagistic phenomena. In “The Aesthetics of Affect: Thinking Art Beyond Representation,” Simon O’Sullivan describes the connection between art and sensation, “this is what art is: a bundle of affects... waiting to be reactivated by a spectator or participant.”¹⁸ I am including affects within my use of the term sensations, because I am primarily interested in the deep entanglement between sensations and affects that occurs when in contact with materials. O’Sullivan writes,

Affects are moments of intensity, a reaction in/on the body at the level of matter... affects are immanent to matter... immanent to experience... we might define affect as the effect another body, for example an art object, has upon my own body and my body’s duration. (O’Sullivan, p. 126)¹⁹

The studio-based practice of sensing into materials that was part of the foundation of *Moving Materials* derived from my training with performance artist and mentor Sylvie Tourangeau. This

¹⁷ Manning, *Politics of Touch* (2007), p. xiii.

¹⁸ O’Sullivan, 2001, p.126. O’Sullivan also cites Deleuze and Guattari’s term “a bloc of sensations.”

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 126.

is a specific technique that I drew from when I write about performance art methods – during the time I was developing *Moving Materials*, I lost track of what performance was. How do I get back to performance? What does it mean to perform? Beyond the belief that the artist’s body needs to be present for the work to be considered a performance, I realized that I was considering the performative state as a way of slowing down time by holding and acting on an awareness of many types of sensations. This activation of many layers at once seemed to be at the root of what I call “a heightened state.”

Tourangeau invites workshop participants into a practice of active listening through slowing down and thereby expanding awareness of sensing. During my attendance at workshops with Tourangeau in June 2012 and October 2023, we were invited to slow down our experience of the moment by tuning into internal density, then external density, and to alternate between these two awarenesses. Because of this training, when I was with my sculptural materials, this method of perceiving the dynamics of subtle sensation was always part of my compositional process. This layered approach also integrates what Tourangeau calls “collective density.”²⁰ This is a way of noticing not just the external stimulus in the environment of the room, but specifically to tune into the social dimension of our practice, for example, how our response to other people in the room affects our impulses toward movement. This also seems relevant in terms of how I integrate conversations with visitors into my compositional process. In *Moving Materials*, I moved through space with these conceptual and practical attenuations, noticing affects related to personal connection, shape, scale, speed, texture, and other contextual points of attention until there was a moment of release when I walked away because something had been activated.

²⁰ Sylvie Tourangeau, 2007, p. TBC.

In a 4-hour durational performance by Dana Michel titled *MIKE*, presented at Festival Transameriques in 2023, I witnessed the artist moving materials into sculptural assemblages. The performance was in the specificity of her attention to her materials. The program indicated the performance focused on the culture of work, public self, and an inner world.²¹ There was a repurposing and defamiliarizing use of ordinary things like (work) tools- a vacuum cleaner, and work shirt that provided signifiers of labour. Other objects like a trumpet, bottle of sparkling wine and multiple window blinds hung from rolling coat racks, complicated the reading of the kind of labour she was gesturing towards. Curiosity and discovery were ever present in her physical manipulation and juxtaposition of objects. At the end of the four hours of focus on performing within the world of the venue that was partly material, partly imagistic, Dana Michel simply stated, “it is finished” and left.

Michel left a question hanging in the air, was this an ending or was it the beginning of something else? As in the way a painter might say “it’s finished.” When Michel left the room, the audience went into the performance area as if it were a gallery, closing the distance between materials and bodies, and we discussed what we saw in relation to the material traces of the performance. Seeing this performance had a direct influence on *Moving Materials* as a way of entering an activated space-time where the artist leaves, the performance ends but the forces in the room continue. When entering the performance field after the artist has left, it is possible that viewers can sense the flows of energy the artist was responding to and creating.

In *Moving Materials*, I called attention to how artistic labour had a relationship to materials, but there is an open ended-ness about what the work was and how it might have happened because human action is not documented. The focus is on the sculptures inclusive of

²¹ Dana Michel, *MIKE*. Performance, 2023. Seen live but a clip available at <https://fta.ca/archive/mike/>.

the energetic forces in the room in the negative shapes between the edges of the sculptures. In Michel's work, she touches, throws, and drags things. We see her lift and release into the material surfaces she has collected. The focus of the artwork is on the artist moving the materials. Similarly, in the artwork *moving things* created by João Fiadeiro and Violaine Lochu, the actions of the artists are documented and shown in the gallery alongside their traces.²² Their actions are performative, they do things in aesthetic ways to be photographed because the human action is the artwork. They also "favor a radical sensitivity toward the present moment" but they do this in support of questioning experiences of non-linear time, how to document the memory of a performance and ask "is a memory a work of art?"²³ The videos show the work as a performance with a beginning, middle and ending. In contrast, sculptural works have a sense of continuity, they continue into an infinite timescale. Because I am not focusing the artwork on the duration of the performance but rather shifting focus to the material traces of the actions in *Moving Materials*, there is a different temporality and sense of relationality that forms a potential opening or invitation to imagine and determine ways of being, ways of seeing, and ways of moving into the next gesture. Visitors can see that materials have been moved into the space by the artist, but do not see the full gesture of the labour that has ended. The exhibition initiates an infinite unknowability- an imaginative leap that invites a relation to materials - rather than having to defer to the representation through video document as to what was important to the artist. Instead of knowing what the artist did, there are sensing questions. But unlike the static sculpture wherein all parts are determined, the viewer of *Moving Materials* is urged to assess

²² *Moving Things*, vidéo-document, Installation activated by 8 performers, 2020, Production Villa Arson, http://www.violainelochu.fr/english/?page_id=604., a collaboration between French visual, sound and performance artist Violaine Lochu and Portuguese dancer, choreographer and theoretician João Fiadeiro.

²³ Ibid, Fiadiero quoted on Lochu's site.

what visitors are seeing in relation to their own field of potential actions, which involves their sensation.

I return to the question of invisible labour and what we don't see when we acquire material goods. In my own experience, it is uncommon to imagine workers pressing into all the surfaces of the products on shelves in playful resistance, while dancing in the aisles before a shift, or balancing boxes on heads while running a relay wherein the winner is whoever arrives last. All of this is of course imperceptible to the management whose constant demand is the efficiency for production and profit. Yet, here is also where art can happen. To know that the arrangement of objects by workers dancing and relationally engaging with materials draws attention to the spaces between the products, to notice not only the products but also the hodologies of the space.²⁴

Brian Massumi writes about this sensing-feeling nexus in the chapter “Concrete is as Concrete Doesn't” in *Parables for the Virtual*, as the basis for change:

...feelings have a way of folding into each other, resonating together, interfering with each other, mutually intensifying, all in unquantifiable ways apt to unfold again in action, often unpredictably. Qualitative difference: immediately the issue is change. Felt and unforeseen. (Massumi, 2021, p. 1)

This was a significant declaration that *Moving Materials* proposes: emphasising affects and sensations in the process of making the artworks is not actually about the human body but rather about the change that is initiated through this relational exchange with materials. Timothy Morton proposes that we are in a time of hyperobjects, of 360-degree awareness of the interobjective reality of spaces our lives are immersed in. With this, sensation becomes a

²⁴ I encountered the use of this term in reading “What Children Say,” where Deleuze writes that sculpture is hodological, “What it lays out are paths—it is itself a voyage. A sculpture follows the paths that give it an outside...the external path is a creation that does not exist before the work, and depends on its internal relations.” Gilles Deleuze, “What Children Say,” *Essays Critical and Clinical*, 1997. Translated by Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco., <https://16beavergroup.org/articles/2008/01/24/rene-deleuze-what-children-say/>

conduit to the experience of “time [as] a flurry of spells and counterspells cast by objects themselves,” as described by Morton, with sensation and affect as signs of the artwork, outside of the visual realm.²⁵

1. RELATIONALITY AND RESISTANCE

Prior to the *Moving Materials* exhibition my questions were focussed on my relationship to resistance that culminated in a 2023 sculptural installation entitled *Listening to a Concrete Pillar in an Attempt to Change the Inertia of My Resistance*. The title describes a physical action which brought me into a felt resistance: the impulse to make art emerging from my sense of inertia, and literally the physical resistance of the pillar itself. I wanted to create the conditions for a felt material resistance. I chose a concrete pillar in the designated exhibition space to spend time with.²⁶ Rather than researching the lifecycle of this architectural feature, I made observations to what emerged in the time I spent with this pillar. I spent about 10 hours over the week with the pillar. I brought my performance materials to the site, painter’s tape, textiles, plastic offcuts both clear and reflective, metal, wood, paper, a peacock feather, a seed necklace from Senegal. I noted how I felt and what I thought during these times of being with the pillar based on changes in my physical sensations, mental images and connections, and affects.²⁷ I waited and listened to my body for signs, shifting patterns of vibration or heat: a swell of blood, an ache, a dizziness or burst of energy. I responded to memories, curiosities, self-doubts, and

²⁵ Morton, 2013, p. 93.

²⁶ The exhibition was the group cohort show, *Too Big to Fail*, in May 2023. The gallery was OCADU’s Open Space gallery at 49 McCaul in Toronto.

²⁷ For further background on the Pillar research see Appendix 3.

desires to introduce another material through tactile interactions and movements around the pillar. Movements included dance-like gestures by making shapes with limbs or sharing weight with the pillar, walking around it very slowly at times, other times remaining relatively still to notice changes in my body that occurred when in proximity of the pillar. I documented states of awareness through photographs, drawings and writing related to questions and physical responses.

I saw the pillar as a metaphor at times for the brutalist style and modernist ideology that the design evokes for me, acknowledging that these cultural resonances were part of a relation with this material and the world around me. The use of tape flowed into my time making *Listening to a Concrete...* and was foundational to *Moving Materials*, specifically my attempt to sense relationality with materials. “Vibration” is an adequate referent to my sensory experience of being with materials.²⁸ I stayed with the pillar despite doubts and curious looks from viewers and colleagues. On encountering the pillar work, one colleague commented: “it looks unfinished,” and I appreciated her resistance because it led me to notice the value of this element of painter’s tape, and how it asserts a presence of not being correct. This is the kind of resistance that I’m interested in, to notice the places where things do not look quite right and in turn require a re-evaluation of perception. In the case of painter’s tape, there is a disorientation in the transition from perceiving this material’s value solely as its usefulness as a tool. In the context of *Moving Materials*, the painter’s tape has another life and expressive element. My colleague’s comment that the tape makes the work look unfinished led me to believe that she saw the painter’s tape as an instrument of labour, to be removed before the show opens. Whereas I saw

²⁸ I am using the word vibration to reference Grosz’s use of the word, but I also choose this word in terms of tracing my sensation given its use in the Occupational Health and Safety context wherein the vibration of tools and materials can be traced in risk assessment.

the painter's tape as having equal agency in expressing the forces of the space and marking something that might potentially be present or not. This led to what later became a key concept in *Moving Materials*: “incomplete design.”

I started using painter's tape in an expressive way, that related to the vibrational aspects of my experience. There is no way to translate felt sensation into the use of tape, so representation was not the goal. I put the tape down as an improvisational action to somehow document sensations, without being concerned with: “why there, or what is that shape?” I noticed a resemblance between the pattern of the tape and the shapes I was looking at. As if the fragmented line of the tape echoed the amplitude of influence around the pillar. I wondered about the connection of the visual leading the body into forms, the connection of eyes to pelvis, and how I metabolize my experience of movement into a material expression.

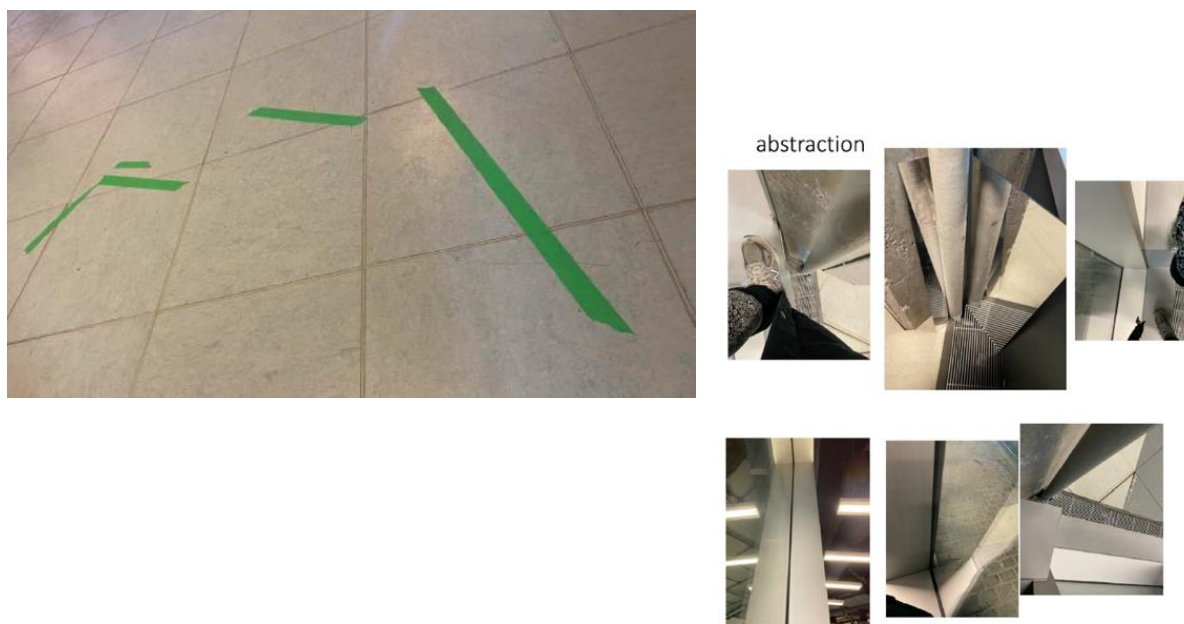


Figure 4: Photo titled *Vibrational Metabolisation*, documents and frames mark making with painter's tape, a response to physical sensation around the pillar. Actions with painter's tape came to be called *Tape* and included as a sculpture in the March 2024 exhibition.

Figure 5: Observations of the pillar during the durational action of sitting with the pillar.

The genesis of *Moving Materials* started at a meeting with my thesis advisors after the *Open Hours* exhibition research.²⁹ I set up some materials in assemblage-like sculptural compositions in a critique room and asked my advisors to attend. They had some resistance to the playfulness that had been cultivated in *Open Hours* wherein colleagues were invited into the gallery, given tours of object assemblages and offered proposals to move with the objects. I asked my advisors what they would change about the sculptures, and they said they wanted to know what I wanted to say with these compositions. This led to conversation about the nature of the work I was making. When they left, I worked improvisationally, intuitively, durationally for all afternoon into the evening, moving materials and photographing compositions that I grouped in a document I titled, *Dry Season*. I wrote titles for the images and at our next meeting a sense of what was possible for my thesis project became clearer. As I look back at that document, I notice how some of the works led to the final sculptures. Although there is no clear reference point or direct connection, I saw a potential idea for *Spectral Seedling* in *Face Down Near a Pond*.



Figure 6: *Face Down Near a Pond*, early experiment with photographing sculptural assemblages. The qualities of this sculpture led to *Spectral Seedling*.

²⁹ See Appendix 4 for details of this research. *Open Hours* occurred right after my installation with the pillar. I advertised it as an exhibition at the OCADU Graduate Gallery, Toronto, in May 2023. When visitors arrived, I offered a tour. Invited guests participated in 1–3-hour facilitations wherein I invited them to move materials with me based on predetermined movement scores. This kind of participatory gallery research led directly into my insight for participation in the 2023 and 2024 *Moving Materials* exhibitions.



Figure 7: *Spectral Seedling*, side view in 2023 *Moving Materials* exhibition.



Figure 8: *Spectral Seedling*, side view in 2024 *Moving Materials* exhibition, final day.

There was something about the gravity of the material in those works, the spreading out of the textile seemed plant-like, the off centre pull of the gaze toward the reflective metal disc – these features indicate an early thinking through some of the bigger gestures that happened in later iterations of *Moving Materials*. This longer trajectory of images through compositions was part of the rationale for choosing some sculptures over others for the final exhibition in March 2024.

Relationality in *Moving Materials* was developed by moving materials in useless and pragmatic ways. I moved with giant sheets of cardboard into elevators, streets, homes, and offices. Boxes of paper rolls, cables and cellophane took bike rides and enjoyed dance-like undulations in the wind. Manufactured tchotchkes and sheets of raw metal fell off carts, while string, diodes and mercury switches slid between pieces of furniture. Textiles draped over my shoulders and crumpled into heaps at my feet alongside rocks, branches and plant matter with different temporalities. I started this project by noticing how holding and moving with a material between two people had a relational impact.³⁰ By the end of the project, it was more about noticing what was activated in the material and in the space in-between when we let go of the material; how performance art strategies toward sculpture making led to a different kind of relationality with the artwork.

The concept of resistance was the most palpable sensation to me in terms of my relationality with the material world. I recognize the boundaries of things through their resistance to my touch. There are also psychological resistances that I project onto materials that become apparent through resistance to doing things or resistance to larger forms of control, as described

³⁰ The action of holding a material between two people as inspiration for movement was the focus of two of my artworks - *In Theory* (video) and *Ancestor* (participatory installation) - in the IAMD Group show entitled *Incomplete*, OCADU Great Hall, December 2022.

by Michel Foucault about the role of subjectivity in relation to power structures.³¹ For example, I see my own relationship to resistance as intimately tied to paid labour jobs wherein I have been trained in a culture of coded and enforced behaviour of productivity. I see the art studio as a site wherein I can practice countering the docile body of paid labour.

I tested my own resistance by working with the concept of incompleteness in terms of sculptural composition; by resisting achieving a visual resolution and instead prioritizing a felt sense of completeness. The decision to not visually resolve these artworks offered a sense of many possible movement trajectories and an invitation to enter the process of thinking where these compositions were going, where each sculpture was headed, and noticing what was in the process of emergence. The sculptures were mutable assemblages, with unfixed components – further emphasizing a sense of incompleteness. I tasked myself to sit with the discomfort of the visually unfinished and decide at what moment the felt sense of completion shifted into a perceptible sculptural composition. Note that these actions are not comprehensive techniques but rather lines of speculative questioning. In trying to discover how to make these distinctions, I was training myself to notice more precisely the sensations I felt when I was with the materials, to the extent that those sensations became the content of the work.

In this way, making this body of work was also a training in when to stay with and when to walk away. When did the work no longer need my body to be a work of art? The moment I decided to walk away from performance-based composition, the process held a greater intensity. I believe this intensity catalyzed a relationality that became the content of the artwork. Through

³¹ “Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power.” Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, (New York: Pantheon Books) 1978, p. 95.

this emphasis on process-based decision making, I tried to draw a line between performance and sculpture in relation to the presence or absence of the artist. For example, proposing the premise that “a sculpture begins when the artist walks away,” was part of the speculative dimension of *Moving Materials*.

By considering artistic disciplines as frameworks of perception, I found that the minimal gesture for a sculpture to occur was that the artist needed to walk away. The complex and site-specific question, “at what point does the artist walk away?” propelled me into further and further iterations of this research with my own sensing capacity of objects/materials and conversations with visitors. Of course, one could also say that despite the distance that I take from my mutable sculptures, I am always somewhat present in their emergence, and I am forever looking on to see where they are going. However, this sense of letting the materials be in motion without my ongoing labour set the conditions for many novel material expressions to develop over the course of the project, that were continually surprising to me and productive in terms of generating curiosity and engagement.

--- Walkthrough of the Exhibition

On the third and final day of the *Moving Materials* exhibition in March 2024 where materials landed was dependent on visitors impractically following impulses, desires, curiosities and pleasures. Upon approaching the exhibition from the hallway, visitors encountered an exhibition space with six sculptures. I greeted anyone who took a few intentional steps into the gallery and told them that these were mutable sculptures, and they were welcome to move materials in the exhibition. I told them anecdotally that I had spent 40 years in jobs wherein I had to adhere to the operational requirements of the management when moving materials. So, in my art practice, my intention was to move materials for pleasure and curiosity. I invited them to

approach the sculptures, to sense into what they experienced next to the materials, and to act on what they wanted to do.

The space was divided into two sections by a hanging sculpture made of textured black safety tape, titled *Line of Resistance*. There was an arch-like sculpture on either side of the line of resistance, *Spectral Seedling* on the left and *Field Gate* on the right. *Book of Still Images* was positioned very close to the *Line of Resistance* on the right side, on a clear plinth. There were video projections on either side of the *Line of Resistance* – *Bike Ride to Collision Gallery* on the left, and *Articulation of My Resistance to Make the Book* on the right.³² The *Line of Resistance* also marked a division between three book-related works. As an artist, I am interested in making lines in space, so I tend to notice how physically and visually lines are drawn and intersect. I put *The Book of Still Images* intuitively along the same axis in between *Articulation of My Resistance to Make the Book* video and *A Pile of Books*. I placed these elements in this way to create a spatial tension where echoes of content created a 3-dimensional sense of kinaesthetic



awareness, that what is behind us is in front of us in another form.

Figure 9: *Line of Resistance* shown from various angles on the third and final day of the March 2024 *Moving Materials* exhibition.

³² Video works can be viewed online, *Bike Ride to Collision Gallery* <https://vimeo.com/799624821/d2f705bcc7>; *Documentation of My Resistance to Making the Book*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eP6ZIZiXNBc>.

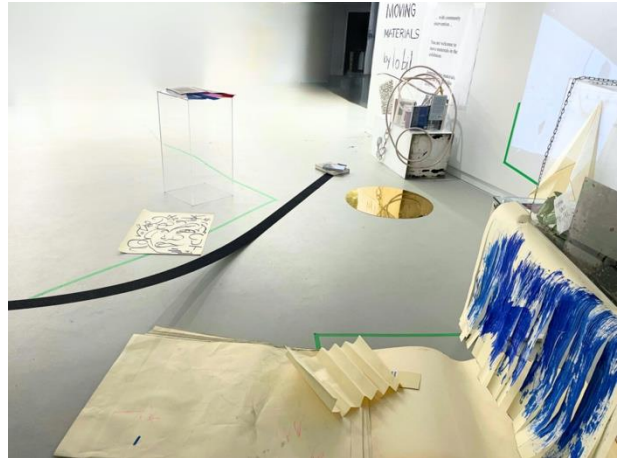


Figure 10: Line of Resistance looking west. / Figure 11: Line of Resistance looking down.



Figure 12: Line of Resistance from the end to end.

On the left side of *Line of Resistance* was *A Pile of Books* which is a sculpture composed of 20 books that were used in my thesis research.³³ *A Pile of Books* was also a sculpture in the 2023 *Moving Materials* exhibition. Published books as material acts as a humorous critique of myself, making visible my academic labour as an artist. I am confronted with an infinite number of textual resources. But after reading the books as they were intended, my impulse was to use these colourful and weighty objects as compositional material. The textual language-based tool also has a life with colour, weight, tactile history and sculptural resonance.

Over the duration of the exhibition, I realized that lining the front entrance to the gallery were three works about books or the production of books – e.g. *A Pile of Books*, *The Book of Still Images* and *Articulation of My Resistance to Making the Book*. In setting up the exhibition, I did not plan this coherence or notice that all entrants to the gallery had to pass through this porous gate of language-related artworks.

The *Line of Resistance* sculpture parses these works, on the left side are published books, on the right side are unpublished in-process attempts at conceptualizing book-like things. There is a reflection there on the artificiality of the gallery where one finds ersatz things that look like things in everyday use but carry a different value. Is there more value in the weight of the published books with their cover prices and economically feasible distribution channels or in the art object that looks sort of like a book or an art video that responds to the affective sensation of weighty resistance to creating a book. As the duration of the exhibition unfolded, I started witnessing my own relationalities between these works, the stories and logics behind the intuitive placements revealed themselves over time.

³³ Titles of these books are now listed in the bibliography of this document.

There was a sense of public-ness to the works on the left, an opening up to the environment with shiny reflective materials, a plant crawling out of its soil, published books and graffiti written by a local street artist. While on the right side of the line there was an insularity, a cosiness, a sculpture in the shape of a stomach, a wire bent into the shape of a heart attack ECG and the accumulation of a soft walled hiding place. But both sides are collections of sculptural forms with a different affective charge, through which the *Line of Resistance* cuts into and simultaneously gives rise to.

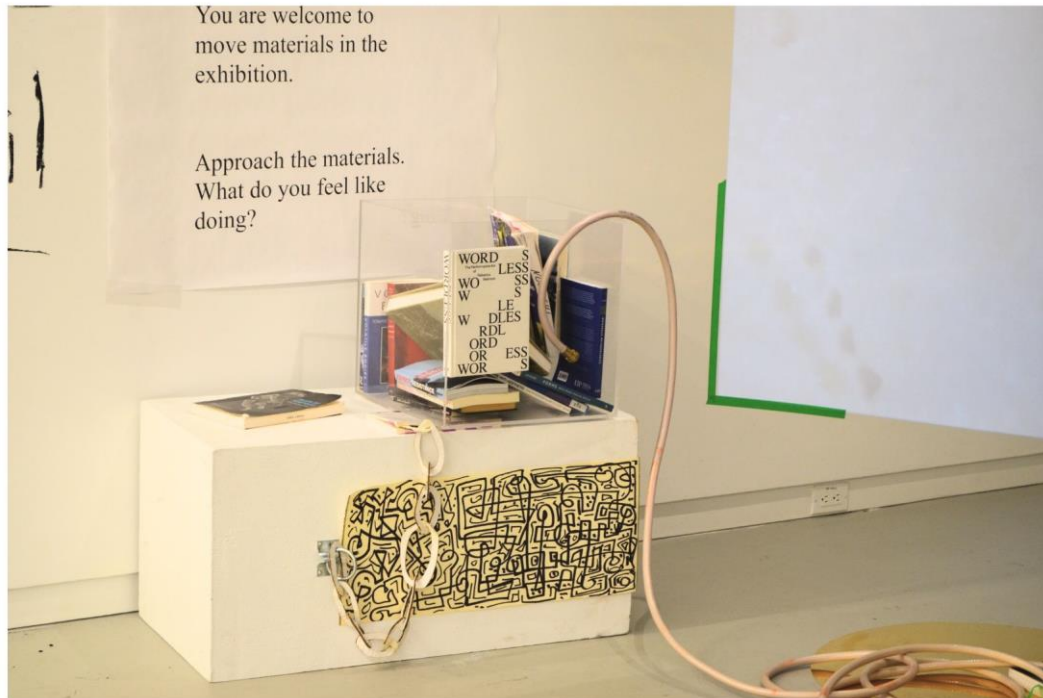


Figure 13: *A Pile of Books*, March 2024 exhibition. To the right of the books is the edge of the *Bike Ride to Collision* video marked by a visitor gesture with *Tape*.

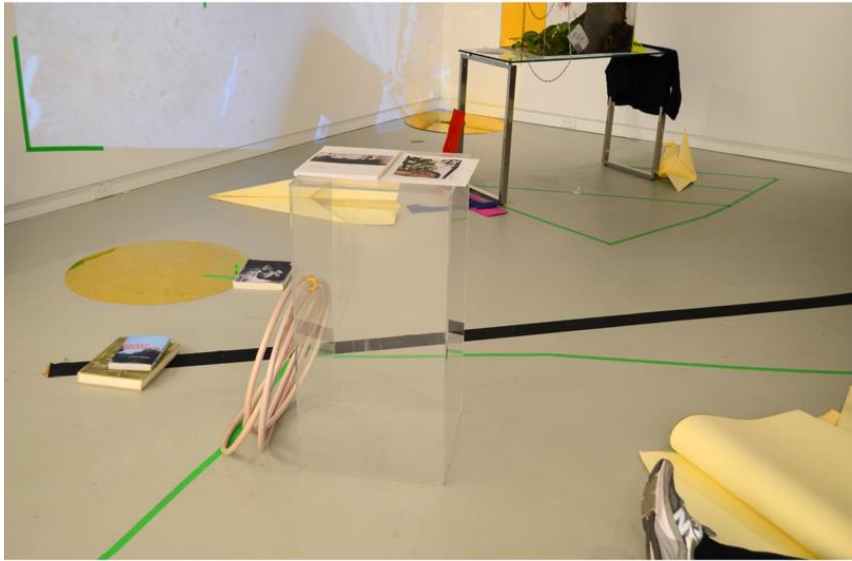


Figure 14: *The Book of Still Images* (on the clear plinth) on either side of the *Line of Resistance* (black line sculpture).

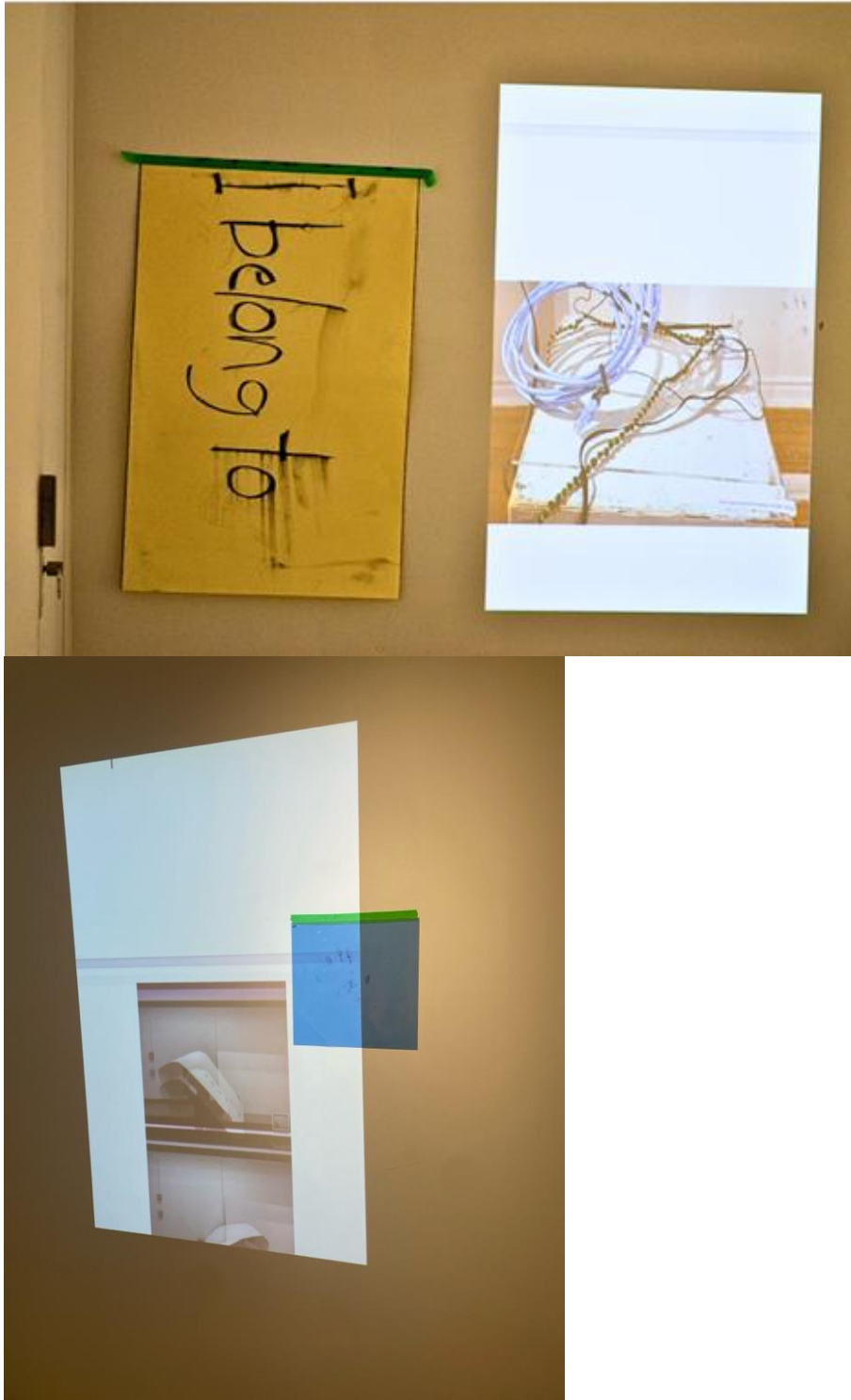


Figure 15 and 16: Two moments from the video *Articulation of My Resistance to Make the Book* (video) was behind the wall with the *moving materials* descriptive text. So, the three references to books form a chain along the first line that one passes through when entering the exhibition. Video still of *ontological performance of the world* (left image) from the 2023 *Moving Materials* exhibition, and from *Cardboard Affordances* (right image), an early process documented in *The Book of Still Images*.

Visitors might not have understood what I was doing based on what I told them and yet through their movements, I believe they were responding to the placements and arrangements of things. For instance, with the *Line of Resistance*, materials rarely crossed the definitive black line of safety tape that divided the gallery from ceiling to floor. The one exception involved *A Pile of Paper*. At least 5 visitors made paper airplanes and tried to fly them in the gallery. Because people were trying to photograph the planes in flight, another visitor decided to make a wire sculpture that would catch the paper airplanes midflight. Her gesture reinforced the phenomena that materials from either side would not cross the *Line of Resistance*.

Another exception was with *Tape*. Gestures using green painter's tape were found throughout the exhibition. In addition to the invitation to engage with the sculptural materials - the green painter's tape became a sculptural form within the final exhibition. Entitled *Tape*, viewers and I formed shapes, shadows, energetic lines and abstract mark making throughout the gallery. *Tape* had a liveliness that offered speculative reference to 3-dimensional forms, as if marking out unseen forces we were witnessing. *Tape* became a way of refracting our visual understanding because there were no indications as to why the person chose that form for the tape, although we knew that what was done with the tape had a site-specificity and a connection to someone's experience in the exhibition.

Another notable aspect was that while visitors were given permission to move the materials of the exhibition in any way they wished, no one ventured to move the location of the sculptures in the room. From start to finish, the sculptures remained in the spatial configuration that I had originally determined.

I realized a radical difference was occurring between the two sides when two friends snuggled up behind the *Field Gate*, sitting on the floor, their backs against the gallery cupboard

doors, leaning into and holding each other, quietly whispering their griefs and aspirations between the overhead projector and the video *Articulation of My Resistance to Make the Book*.



Figure 17: The right side of the Line of Resistance.

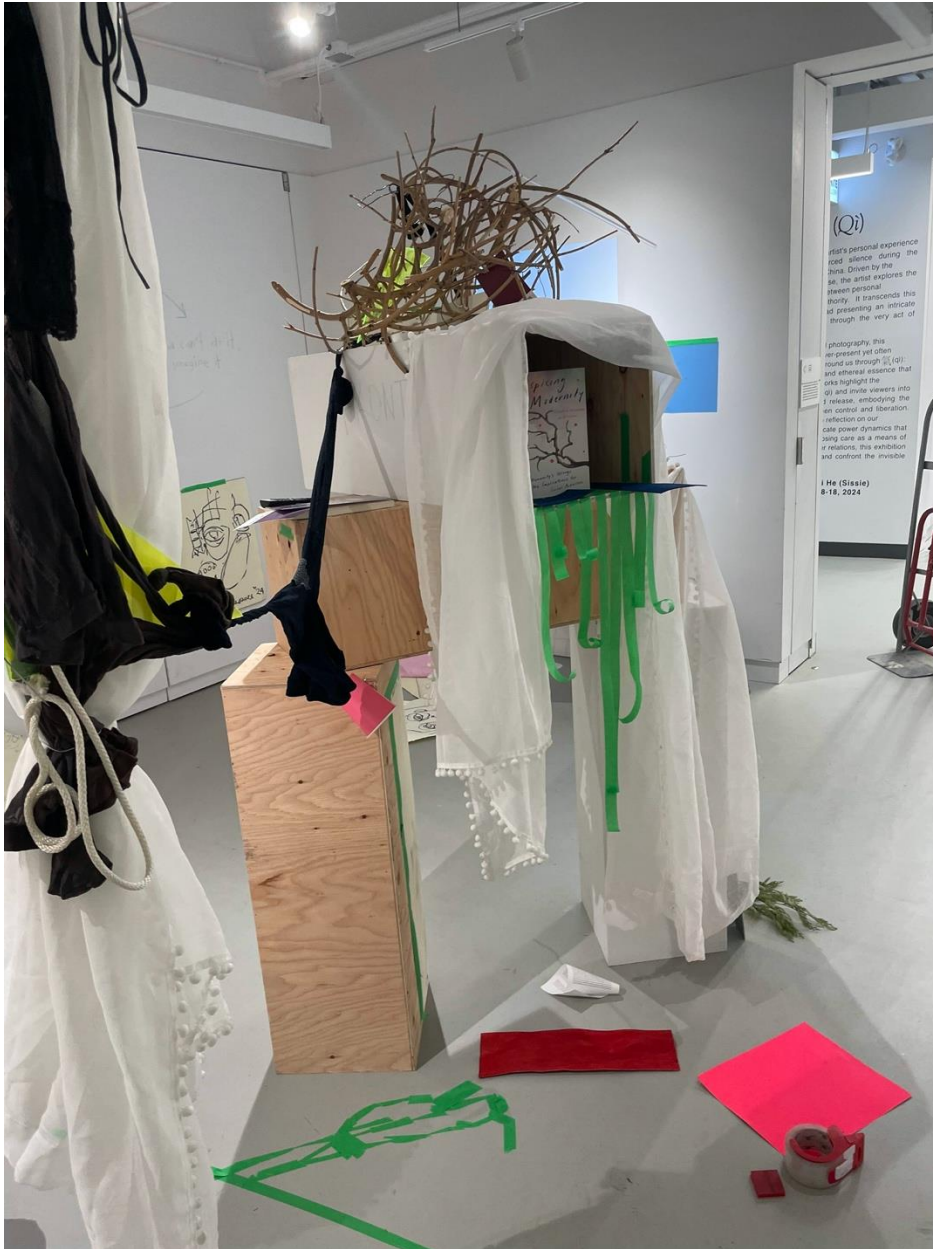


Figure 18: Field Gate on the third and final day of the exhibition, an ever-softening process.

On the south side of the line, there was the dark cozy corner behind a line of ever-softening sculptures, *Field Gate*, *Fantasy Pool*, *Stomach*, and *Heart Attack in Pink Light*. *Field Gate* and *Fantasy Pool* initiated a widening barricade that was further enunciated by *Plane Hanger* and *Stomach*, two sculptures proposed by visitors. I hung the gymnastic ring from the pipe that

would support a white curtain. The visitor created a belt for it and the shape took on the look of a stomach. As people moved materials, I was continually called to reinterpret my own sculptures and materials. This ongoing sense of reframing became art in a dynamic relationality.



Figure 19: Same part of the exhibition at different times, SE corner, artworks: *Fantasy Pool*, *Line of Resistance* (top left corner), *Airplanes*, *Airplane Hanger* / Figure 20: *Fantasy Pool*, *Heart Attack*, *Pile of Paper*, *Wire*

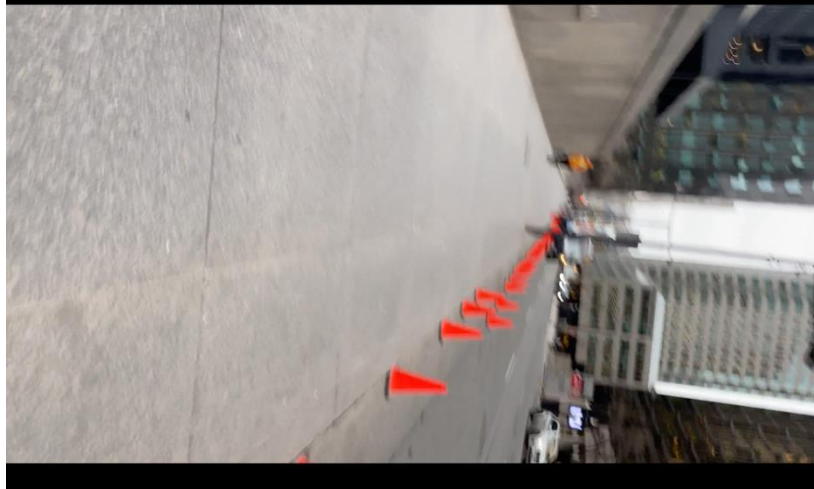
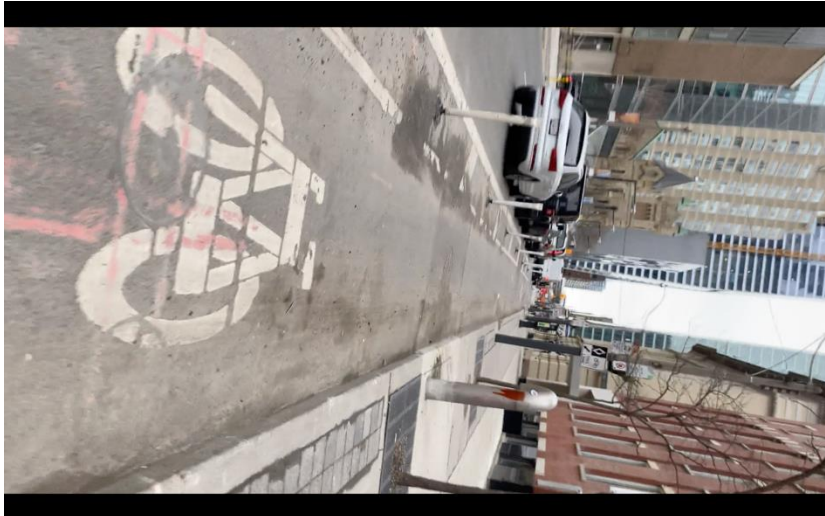
In contrast, on the left side of the *Line of Resistance*, there were more signs of an expanding spatially. The video projecting the outside world of the street, plant life spilling out of its plinth, unanchored chains, reflective discs and cheerful bunting.



Figure 21: Left side of Line of Resistance.

The video projections – *Bike Ride to Collision Gallery* documented a bike ride through the city from OCADU to Collision Gallery about 20 minutes away. The projection the city on its side, where the sky formed a gap between buildings above and the buildings below. This side projection activated for me Timothy Morton’s sense that everything is always in contact, we are always in relation despite a feeling of being surrounded by unreachable heights. The video created a flickering effect in the gallery, taking up the whole, it created a feeling that the room was in motion. The video created a sense of the wall opening up a window to the world outside. This video was initially projected on the pillar in the *Listening to a Concrete Pillar in an Attempt to Change the Inertia of My Resistance* so incorporating this video into the final exhibition was a call back to this initiatory experience with resistance as a material. The video *Articulation of My Resistance to Make the Book* on the right of the *Line of Resistance* was recorded as a screenshot of scrolling through a pdf document with an image on most pages and quite a few blank spaces.

There was a sense of old haptic technology about the jilting hand-cranked flow of images. The overhead projector was originally focused on it to ramp up the sense of being a bit out of time in the contemporary world, although the overhead was redirected by viewers on day 1 to light up the *Heart Attack* sculpture.



Figures 22, 23, 24: Stills from *Bike Ride to Collision Gallery* video on the left side of the *Line of Resistance*.



Figure 25: *Spectral Seedling*, day 1.



Figure 26: *Spectral Seedling* in relation to video & disc.



Figure 27: *Spectral Seedling*, day 2, with *Tape* and gestures by visitors.



Figure 28: *Spectral Seedling*, day 2. Subtle changes by visitors.



Figure 29: *Spectral Seedling*, 2024, repositioned day 3.



Figure 30: *Spectral Seedling*, 2023, day 3.

The seedling felt like an ode to war between life and land, the uprootedness, the great escape in crawling out from the plinth to a bigger container, i.e. the gallery. The plinth as planter also created a little condo for the plant, a pad where people felt compelled to reach in and touch the soil. People hung photocopies of plant relationships on the sides of the plinth. Someone said it was like a condo where the plant had hung photos of its friends around the plant. The ultimate plant pad atop the glass table tower, *come on in and bury yourself*.

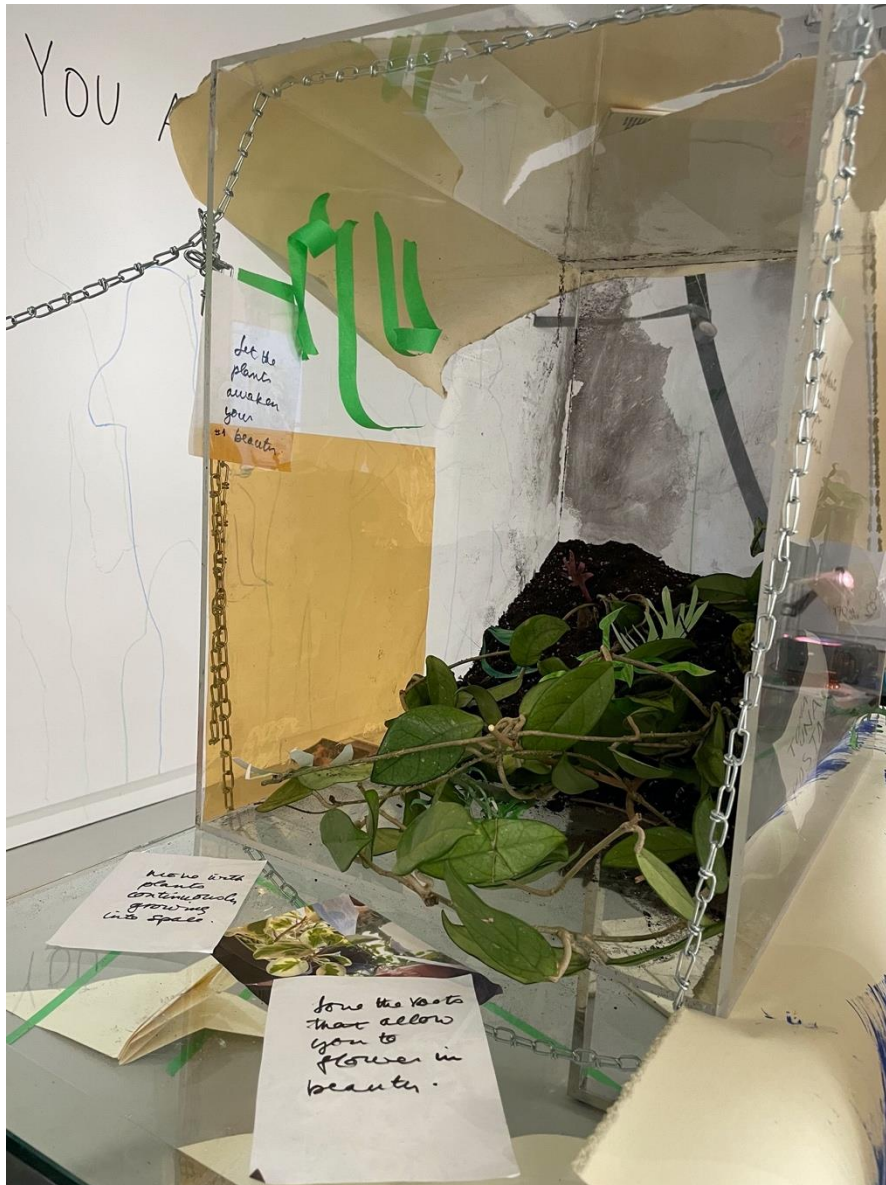


Figure 31: *Spectral Seedling* 2024, day 3.



Figure 32: *Spectral Seedling* on day 3 and hands of viewer who felt compelled to touch the soil.

I stayed in the gallery during open hours for the three days of the exhibition. I did not follow people's movements but rather noticed how materials had moved at various times. I kept asking myself "what am I looking at?" and reframing my perspective. It was in this slow-object-time observance of the materials being moved, that the name of this sculpture *Line of Resistance*, surfaced. This is part of the process wherein I title the sculptures after taking time to consider what words come to mind in relation to them. Because I am not designing the sculptures in advance of being with the materials, this practice of waiting and naming is aligned with this mode of working.

In terms of the works chosen for the March 2024 exhibition, I transplanted the sculptures that still held questions for me that I had developed and exhibited in the Graduate Gallery

research version of *Moving Materials* in November 2023, namely *Field Gate*, *Scope of Detachment*, *Spectral Seedling*, and *A Pile of Books*. The variations of *Spectral Seedling* for instance, are a testament to my pleasure in non-repetition. I recreated the sculptures to be recognizable, but with variations. I also included a few artworks that I had created over my time at OCADU including *Paper Chain*, *Fantasy Pool* and *Bike Ride to Collison Gallery* (video). Additional artworks were created for this iteration of the exhibition, namely *Line of Resistance*, *The Book of Still Images*, and *Document of the My Resistance to Making the Book* (video).³⁴ Finally, there were at least 5 new artworks added by visitors to the gallery – *Stomach* (sculpture), *Heart Attack* (wire sculpture with overhead projection), *doodle* (drawing), *I belong to myself* (text drawing), and *Superhero* (wall text).

The addition of new sculptures to the exhibition at the behest of visitors was a resistance to the concept of setting the exhibition. The long list of sculptures speaks to a resistance to limiting the frame to a particular type of material. I intentionally tried to choose as many kinds of materials as I encounter in everyday life. There was a minimal requirement for a work of art, but a maximal sense of what might be included within the framing of the sculptures. Again, I am playing on questions of resistance – where to draw the line? When does the viewer feel a sense of resistance to the ongoing-ness of production? When does the viewer give into the tidal wave of stimulus surrounding them? Does resistance lessen or become greater when confronted by these forces of excess and lack of constraint? I was creating as an improvisatory performance

³⁴ *Line of Resistance* was actually used in my 20218 performance work *Procedures: Audience as Knife*, wherein a red ribbon cut through the entire theatre from the hand railing next to the audience entrance door, across the performance stage, and tied to the handle of the backstage door. If someone opened the Backstage door, the sculptural line would become a slack curve.

artist, making choices based on curiosity and risk, choosing what seems to not go together to discern a logic that widens my perspective on what I am looking at.

“Is it repeatable?” has been a question and constraint in my own performance training.³⁵ I resist this constraint in my art practice because repetition is enforced on workers in paid labour, and I was trying to establish a space wherein the rules of conformity do not apply. Early performance training also offered me the compositional maxim, “Do only what is necessary.”³⁶ I decided to follow this latter logic but in the interests of engaging new frames of reference in artistic practice, I went against the tenet of repeatability. I adhered to an absurd extent to only do what was necessary while embracing the refusal to make it repeatable.

Of course, it is an impossible goal to not repeat things given human psychology. However, unlike standards of the form, I was not crafting something repeatable. Rather I gave myself instruction while in physical movement, to stop a movement when I noticed it was something I had done before. In that moment, I would make the decision to move in a different way. This possibility was introduced to me through Pochinko clown training with the instruction, “Do something you have never done before.”³⁷ This is meant as a completely impossible instruction akin to the perplexity of a Zen koan that is meant to put the performer in a state of improvisatory vulnerability.

Paid labour required that I put aside self-acceptance, or expressions that relate to the particularities of my own felt perception, thus, embodying resistance to this way of being was an act of reframing behaviour developed in the studio. I think of watching Martha Graham dancers

³⁵ Fiona Griffiths was the teacher-mentor-coach who used this phrase most directly. But it is what is asked of artists either in performance through rehearsal and direction processes, and in visual arts through practice and education.

³⁶ I have encountered this rule in acting, dance, writing and filmmaking workshops.

³⁷ I received training and coaching in Pochinko clown from John Turner, Michael Kennard, Karen Hines, Fiona Griffiths and Sue Morrison from 2005 until about 2016. This is a generative form that develops skill in interacting with the audience and encouraging surprising behaviour toward humorous, character-based comedic responses.

wherein every line ends in a curve, there is no final point, every extension spirals into the next gesture before it completes. I believe there can be a beauty in an aesthetic of non-completion, of being infinitely propelled into the next movement, shape, configuration, or form. *Moving Materials* was the name I gave to this intentional studio practice that resisted completeness and repetition. The name offered an action as concrete as Richard Serra's *Verb List* (1967) "to roll to crease to store... to bend... to flow... to continue" to which I add - to move materials (against the flow of repetition and completion).³⁸

Finding the opposite of the repeatable in performance meant I was making work toward the impossibility of what I called "unrepeatability." To do so, I started taking things away from myself to ensure nothing was repeated or predictable. No script, no choreography, no practicing parts, no big idea, no theme. Inspired by the thinking of artistic movements such as Yvonne Rainer's *No Manifesto*, that references resisting actions related to stylistic choices in dance, and *Dogme 95* that eschewed artifice in content and film production, my decisions were similarly related to reducing the formal structures and unwritten rules that seemed to be foundational to performance.³⁹ My studio preparation was to come up with ideas and practice them, and then intentionally not do what I had practiced, in the performance. I decided to also follow this logic into my sculpture studio. The studio was a place to let ideas bubble up and to let those ideas dissipate as opposed to finding the right ideas to hone and craft. I call this "emptying out." A writer once told me, "Don't be precious, there are many more ideas where that one came from." I

³⁸ Excerpt from Richard Serra's artwork entitled *Verb List*, 1967, <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/152793>, accessed June 9, 2024. Serra brought found rubber into his studio and created this list as a documentation of his movements with this material. An audio interview on CBC Radio by Eleanor Wachtel with the artist describes this <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/writersandcompany/remembering-american-sculptor-richard-serra-for-his-art-that-adds-perception-1.7192425>.

³⁹ Rainer's *No Manifesto*, <https://conversations.e-flux.com/t/yvonne-rainer-no-manifesto/1454>
And *Dogme 95* manifesto, <http://www.dogme95.dk/the-vow-of-chastity/>.

trusted that logic as opposed to the idea of finding and holding onto the perfect idea which is a standard way to approach the rehearsal process, practice session or fabrication trial. I was practicing letting go of what I saw as good or useful in the studio, to prioritize being with my materials (human or non-human materials) in a state of open receptivity. A performance meant I arrived and responded to the sensation of my body in the shape it was that day, of the people who were there, of the conditions of the site. So, I allowed myself to acknowledge or play with any objects, surfaces, or materials found at the site. I approached materials in the performance venue as actants with a history as palpable as my own. They were not props to be used but shared the compositional space with my body. Again, I recreate these performance logics of prioritizing relationality and refusal to repeat in my sculpture studio.

During this era of minimalism in my performance-making, I realized that all that is actually necessary for a performance is to bring my body to a place where the people will arrive and framing of that time, date, location, and physical action as an artwork – this is in complete contrast to the standard belief that the artwork is the content-theme-delivery-script-score-material-design-virtuosity-preparation-the big idea – none of that is required for the performance to occur.

As each item was crossed off the list of possibilities of what is necessary to create performance artwork, I came to ask if the body was necessary. The body in its excess, so full of unconscious habits that lead to repetition. What would this artwork be without the body? And the answer was sculpture. Materials in a composition without a body would form a sculpture. This is how I made this transition from working with performance to working with sculpture and defining sculpture as the moment of intensity when the artist walks away.

I let materials interrupt my behavior by not instrumentalizing them – I am thinking with Jane Bennett’s *Vibrant Matter*; to reorient my perception toward “the vitality of non-human bodies”⁴⁰ The materials are no longer tools to be used toward my objectives, just as my body is no longer a tool in the artwork. Grosz notes that the artwork is between us in the shared relationality that relates to bodies but is not in bodies. ⁴¹ Although Grosz is not referring to the phenomena I am referring to exactly, her thoughts lay a foundation for the possibility of noticing that the work of art might exist in a compositional space of relationality between the artwork and the viewer.

The way I work as a performance artist affects the way I make sculptures, but also the way I define sculpture-making. In *Moving Materials*, I was initially interested in how relationality between artist and materials, materials and materials, materials and viewers, and viewers and artists, emerge. My transition to sculpture was a progression of taking away the formal constraints of performance to find out what was necessary for the artwork. As in performance, I reduce the rules I play with; in contrast to developing a technique that accrues steps or procedures to apply to materials. I began working in the studio without formal training in any traditional sculptural practices such as mold making or carving, no knowledge of hewing stone or shaping clay. I was defamiliarizing the objects by using them in ways they were not intended and through juxtaposition with other objects in ways that did not close the system of meaning by determining how one might read usefulness into the relationship between objects.

The corollary of performative unrepeatability in sculpture was incompleteness. Following from the determination to not repeat in performance, I saw a parallel practice in sculpture could

⁴⁰ Bennett, Jane. *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010, p. viii and 12.

⁴¹ Grosz 2008, p. 11.

be to not achieve a visual resolution based on what I know already or what I have learned. Working towards visual resolution means it looks complete because it is recognizable. Thus, what I perceived as completeness is a repetition of a pattern I have seen before or recognized as an acceptable form. I challenge the valuation of working toward visual resolution by instead working toward the goal to find a *sensorially felt* resolution - the sculpture is complete when I feel something has changed in my relationality with the materials and the sculpture no longer needed human manipulation but had a logic of its own. A sculpture in *Moving Materials* was relational, or a trace of what I experienced in relation with materials in the space.

The idea of stopping work in moment of “felt resolution” is a highly speculative proposal that has no exact science. This is a reorientation and a disorientation to work toward sensation. In the workplace, I had to ignore my sensory experience to complete tasks within the durations proscribed by the management. In the art studio, I reorient myself toward the sensing body that was denied priority in the workplace. From the conversations I had with visitors and witnessing behaviour, the suggestion of this possibility toward the co-creation of the artwork led to a sense of care and consideration of themselves and their actions in the gallery. The simple act of moving unattached materials leaves the viewer so much more room to insert their own sense of perception into the composition as there is no proscribed way of interacting.

Following Grosz’ idea that there are productive forces at play between subjects and objects, it matters that these forces are tied to what resonates from materials,

Vibrations, waves, oscillations, resonances affect living bodies, not for any higher purpose but for pleasure alone. Living beings are vibratory beings: vibration is their mode of differentiation, the way they enhance and enjoy the forces of the earth itself.⁴²

⁴² Grosz, 2008, p. 33.

If I am open to physical sensations leading my process more than visual completeness, and not deferring to technique or a learned sense of how to resolve the artwork, I create the conditions to tune into the earthy forces through material vibrations more than trying to achieve an evaluative goal. Through the sensation of each material, I can potentially tune into “cosmological forces that we can understand as chaos, material and organic indeterminacy...” forces of the earth that provoke the possibility of art.⁴³

I draw further insight into the impact of noticing practice as leading to forms that diversify experience, from the material semiotics of John Law, who writes: “my knowledge is different because my rituals of embodiment are different... we need to... teach ourselves to be sensitive to how knowing is done moment by moment. And if we do this it will sometimes be possible to devise rituals, forms of practice, that work across difference for all those concerned.”⁴⁴ Material semiotics involves noticing patterns in networks of different elements and the consequences of those patterns, “how realities interact and potentially colonize one another or resist colonization... These webs of relations are performative... they do things... webs are fragile.”⁴⁵ I appreciate the behavioural aspect of Law’s theorizing in that changing the pattern we are repeating, creates a new way of perceiving ourselves in relation to our cultural milieu. But also, I wish to emphasize that changing a repeating pattern involves noticing resistance to what has been entrained in the body.

⁴³ Grosz, 2008, p. 3.

⁴⁴ Law, p. 15.

⁴⁵ Law, p. 4.

3. MOVEMENT AND STILLNESS



Figure 33: *The Book of Still Images*, 2024, exhibition day 2. Photograph by Laiken Breau.

The sculptures in *Moving Materials* are mutable, so a discussion of movement and stillness is needed to understand how mutability affects the work. The impetus for creating *The Book of Still Images* was “to reveal a history of reconfigured forms and evolving relationalities evoked through these material compositions. Images served as still points for visitors to the exhibition, as a trajectory of moving materials”

I argue that the two seemingly opposite poles on a spectrum of locomotive quality are in tandem with each other like two sides of a coin. I hoped to critique the way that movement and stillness are regularly applied to disciplinary constraints, with performance generally implying movement and sculpture generally implying stillness. Performance art scholar, RoseLee Goldberg, states that: “It is the element of duration, of time, that is at the heart of

performance.”⁴⁶ In contrast, sculptural materials stay intact in space and time. In other terms, there is no “end” to a sculpture unless it is destroyed. In *Moving Materials*, I contend with this difference between performance and sculpture. Both forms may continue in memory, but materially, a sculpture is recognized not just through its three dimensionality, but also through its infinite life. The mutable sculpture exists in the relationality of the maker and the final form, even if the form keeps changing.

I note that there is a history of cross-disciplinary questioning between performance and sculpture within the dance canon. For instance, my performance work and in turn my sculptural work, was influenced by postmodern choreographic interests as seen in the choreographies of Judson Dance Theater, that Sally Banes has termed “analytic.”⁴⁷ Analytic dance notes Banes “was a style and approach that was consistent with the values of minimalist sculpture,” and it was distinctly modernist in its “separation of formal elements, the abstraction of forms, and the elimination of external references as subjects.”⁴⁸ Methodologically, Mary Overlie’s reduction of forms in her articulation of the Six Viewpoints - space, shape, time, emotion, movement, story – are entry points to performance and simultaneously gesture towards fundamental aspects of sculpture.

Within the discipline of sculpture, post-minimalist Process artist Robert Morris argues for sculpture as inclusive of movement. In his work *Continuous Project Altered Daily* (1969), the sculpture was shown over the course of twenty days in the Leo Castelli gallery in New York. The

⁴⁶ RoseLee Goldberg, *Performance: Live Art since the 1960s* (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 34, as noted in the paper Saini Liina Annikki Manninen, *Duration Materialised: Investigating Contemporary Performance as a Temporal Medium*, PhD thesis (University of London, Queen Mary, 2013), p. 8.

⁴⁷ Sally Banes, 1987, xx–xxii.

⁴⁸ Morse, Meredith. “‘Minimalist’ Dance, Social Critique: Revisiting Yvonne Rainer and Steve Paxton’s 1963 Word Words.” *Dance research journal* 50.3 (2018): 55, cited within Banes, p. xv.

duration of the installation involved a process of perpetual motion wherein the materials were changing position each day.⁴⁹ In his book of the same title, he writes, “Only one aspect of the work is immediate; the apprehension of the gestalt. The experience of the work necessarily exists in time.”⁵⁰ This illustrates that when things are moving, the viewer can only evaluate the work when they arrive. Performance offers a phenomenologically different experience for the viewer. Audiences know that performance is in the same temporality as their arrival and departure versus the experience of going to see a sculptural work that has its own temporality. The arrival and presence of an audience set the conditions for the performance to begin, unfold, and end.

I wanted to activate this sensation through sculptural form - this palpable state of attention in the viewer. In performance, I am witnessing the thought process of an artist who is in a compositional mode, my presence as a viewer matters in this relationship. The performer must contend with the materiality of the viewer’s presence. Materials are not performing for us, but they are always in a vibrational mode in relation to their environment. Through *The Book of Still Images*, I was able to capture some of the changing relationality with my materials that occurred over the long duration of the project, that mimics the changing relationalities experienced in performance. I call these photographs “still points” as they are documenting the continuity of the life of these materials.

Following my interest in discerning complexities related to any dividing lines between sculpture and performance art, Toronto-based artist Sherri Hay’s object performances call into question definitions of performance when there are no human bodies in the performance. Sherri

⁴⁹ See *Continuous Project Altered Daily* (1969): The Machinery of Art, Katia Schneller, <https://books.openedition.org/enseditions/3809?lang=en>.

⁵⁰ Morris, 1993, p. 17.

Hay's object performance *x for staying here with us now*, created for FADO Performance Art Centre in 2018, is comprised of two performances where objects perform rather than human bodies. The curatorial text notes that "the exact time of the performance will be determined by the performer." Hay's performer is a system of gravity-dependent weights and balances. Despite the predictability of gravity, these works defy expectation because of the interconnection of the many moving parts. The artist walks away, and the materials determine the length of the performance.

Hay and I had a conversation about the distinction she makes in framing her artwork as a performance.⁵¹ Our different philosophical approaches bring an awareness of the complexity in analysing these indescribable aspects of art that moves, to create a framing for the viewer's sense of attention. Upon seeing the object-performer, I thought of it as a sculptural work. However, because Hay plays with time, the sculpture becomes performative. Hay adheres to the formal considerations of performance wherein the performance begins when the audience is present. The audience is relatively still in their seats until the materials stop moving. Hay's contextual approach determines how we see the work.

In *Moving Materials*, I was working with sculptural considerations, setting the materials in the gallery in sculptural assemblages and asking viewers to see the materials as sculptural works. The viewers were active rather than seated as in a performance, and even though many performances involve participation, I told viewers approaching the gallery that this was an exhibition of mutable sculptures. I did not mention performance. It's relevant how much the framing of the work within a discipline determines the viewer's perception and interaction with

⁵¹ My conversation with Sherri Hay took place on June 19, 2024 at Trinity Bellwoods Park in Toronto. Hay also attended a pre-exhibition group conversation on March 8, 2024 in the *Moving Materials* exhibition the day before the show opened and we had conversations about our different approaches at that event.

the artwork. There are also many performances wherein the artist leaves an installation of ‘material traces’ at the end of the performance – however, again, I return to the difference in *Moving Materials* wherein I made sculptures through my relational interactions with the materials, rather than focusing on finding an end to a “performance” that left material traces.

Another performative aspect of Hay’s work was that the same title, *x for staying here with us now*, was given to the two object performances using wildly different materials but the same score, both using weight displacement to activate movement and both performances ended when the objects reached a point of stillness. Her choice to use very different sculptures for the same artwork was another choice that points to the world of performance, where it is possible that two different artists perform the same work on different nights. The first performance was described by Danielle St-Amour in a curatorial essay as, “A self-governing marionette of multi-coloured cables, wood, metal hinge, paper and grass mat. This is a spider, or a dog that walks itself. Styrofoam... is joined with wood hinging, metal – these are the legs of the marionette.”⁵² In the documentation, the arms of the sculpture look voluminous and chunky like a primitive robot with a central axis. In the performance I witnessed, the materials were sinewy and delicate with no identifiable centre. Rope dyed purple, red, orange and yellow was hung expansively in the gallery in curvy lines but strategic lines that allowed for continuous movements to vary at points across the structure as coloured sand drained from white sacks made of thin cloth. Hay set the system in place and the materials moved without human intervention for about 40 minutes. Creature-like limbs with tiny undulations appeared to breathe and fidget as if in an osteopathic

⁵² Danielle St-Amour, “x is for,” FADO Performance Art Centre, <https://performanceart.ca/writing/x-is-for-2/> as of June 25, 2024.

adjustment.⁵³ These two works that share the same title but are made of completely different materials, express a resistance to repeatability and speak to the point that the artwork is not in the material bodies but in the conceptualization of materials in space and time. Hay illustrates how the artist in conceptualizing her artwork as a performance, refers to performance as having a beginning, middle and end, and that the artwork has a durational aspect. The still point indicates the end of the artwork. The materials continue to be entangled but the performance is over when the materials stop moving. The movement and the attention to the moment of this undoing and falling into gravity, is the artwork.

In contrast, the photographic still points in *Moving Materials* point to the continuation of the work rather than the end of the artwork as in Hay's performances. The photographic stills point to the life of the materials before the sculptural compositions were set in the exhibition, documenting commercially unproductive modes of relationality and the liveliness inherent in non-human materials. The photographs in *A Book of Still Images* do not complete the artwork but are part of the object-artist relational experience and not about steps that led to the final work. The *Book of Still Images* illustrates a steady excess of gestalt-like awarenesses that the materials generated with intensity in my perception through sculptural composition.

A final note about Hay's work in relation to the activation of the viewers. There was an incredible focus required by viewers to stay with the sequence of these subtle variations for the 40-minute performance and to tune into the atmosphere created by watching objects perform. This kind of durational performance is meditative, offering a chance to experience time by slowing down, or in Hay's words "to have a collective experience in which the nuances are the

⁵³ Sherri Hay, artist's documentation of the object performance for FADO Performance Art Centre, 2018, <https://www.sherrihay.com/x-for-staying> as of June 25, 2024.

loudest thing in the room.”⁵⁴ The time we sat together watching the tiny releases of string was part of the affective ethos of *x for staying here with us now*. After the performance, I went into the performance space to get a closer look, but I did not feel propelled into any further action. The performance was over, the flow of energy had ended with the final movement of gravity. I see this as a fundamental difference between *x for staying here with us now* and *Moving Materials*. By shifting the emphasis of the artwork to the relational aspects, my hope was to bring the viewers into a sense of mobility that might lead to a continuity of action outside of the gallery. My belief is that in experiencing this kind of attenuation to the resistances and relational prompts in the exhibition, a viewer would feel an affective trace toward an active state outside of the gallery and even if only briefly, come to interact with materials in their environment differently.⁵⁵ When blurring of constraints between performance and sculpture, the artist’s framing changes the way in which relational perception is experienced and disrupted.

In the performance *Becoming an Image*, visual artist Cassils, presents another way of activating stillness within an intermedial performance that involves producing a sculpture. Cassils performs in a darkened gallery to critique archives with missing LGBTQ+ histories. Intermittent light flashes reveal moments of Cassils in extreme physical states as they reshape a human sized mound of unformed clay. This technical effect leaves a momentary retinal burn that allows viewer to continue to register the liveness in the darkness, the stillness in the motion. The still image captures the sense of what is missing – histories from the archive. On their website, Cassils notes that “the act of photographing is the only way in which the performance is made

⁵⁴ Hay, 2018, <https://www.sherrihay.com/x-for-staying> as of July 20, 2024.

⁵⁵ In a studio visit from Jennifer Goodwin and her sons during the process of my performance *for the root of the river flows darker than clouds* (2015), I was pointing out lines in the space. Goodwin told me that after they left the studio, her sons were pointing out lines everywhere. It is this kind of contagious action that I hope to inspire in my artwork, that what happens in the gallery bleeds into the perception of viewers when they leave the studio or gallery.

visible.”⁵⁶ When thinking of *Becoming an Image* in relation to *Moving Materials*, I notice that the photographic flashes that create images, document not just the action but in the speed of erasure, also the labour that is not seen but heard. The gaps in the sequence of movement reference what is not visible. Part of my practice in *Moving Materials* was to investigate negative spaces to register the unformed and unseen shapes and forces. How did the viewers of *Becoming an Image* make sense of the gaps in logic between the still images seen in the sudden flashes? What is imagined when we call into focus the labour that is clearly being done but goes largely unseen? Cassils’ artwork brought this line of questioning into my research. *Moving Materials* similarly draws on the relationality of labour. To draw on the labour of art as a relationality, Cassils is a mover of materials, of presences and absences, and activates a porousness by the excessive speed of the flash. *Moving Materials* activated a porousness in the infinite trajectory of possible movements.

--- The Book of Still Images⁵⁷

In *Moving Materials*, stillness became part of witnessing relational movement across forms through extended durations. There was no technique that was followed in taking photographs beyond sensing, noticing, and wanting to make note of intensities, moments when the materials took on a sculptural form. The desire to trace these moments was not for the purpose of recreating the composition or the affect the composition generated, but rather the aim was to mark unique and unrepeatable moments that occurred in the process of sensing materials. When attempting to not instrumentalize materials for my own use, there was always something

⁵⁶ Cassils, artist website, <https://www.cassils.net/cassils-artwork-becoming-an-image>, as of June 25, 2024.

⁵⁷ For more descriptions of images see Appendix 4. For The Book of Still Images in its entirety see https://drive.google.com/file/d/1inm_oqMxhm7Ox6wz6oRShMYaiHPp9-P3/view?usp=sharing.

unexpected happening as each material offered a unique aesthetic proposal. I metabolized the intensity of that moment through sensation and captured something of the experience in two-dimensions through photography. I describe a few unique instances of still points here, to draw attention to this form of photography that attempts to capture the continuity of objects rather than determining an end point or standing in as a completion of the artwork.

Theory Slide is an image of a mutable sculpture created in part by the same materials found in the sculpture *A Pile of Books*. The photograph documents the life of my bibliographic books in Montreal, in another orientation to their environment, on a black Marley dancefloor rather than on a plinth. The image was printed in *The Book of Still Images* in 2024 and was hung as part of the 2023 *Moving Materials* exhibition, positioned above the sculpture *A Pile of Books*. Books appear in both works as a kind of comparison of forms - books in a photograph versus books in tactile three-dimensionality. The aesthetic proposal is that viewers can notice the different relationality they have to the materials depending on the form of the books. One viewer took more pleasure in seeing the books in the photograph, another found that picking up and looking at the physical books had more of an affective intensity as she could flip through the pages. *Theory Slide* in the context of *A Pile of Books* creates an intermedial line of questioning: What sensations are lost when the book is only an image of a book? What is the relational impact of knowing that the books are just an image so there is no imperative to read them.

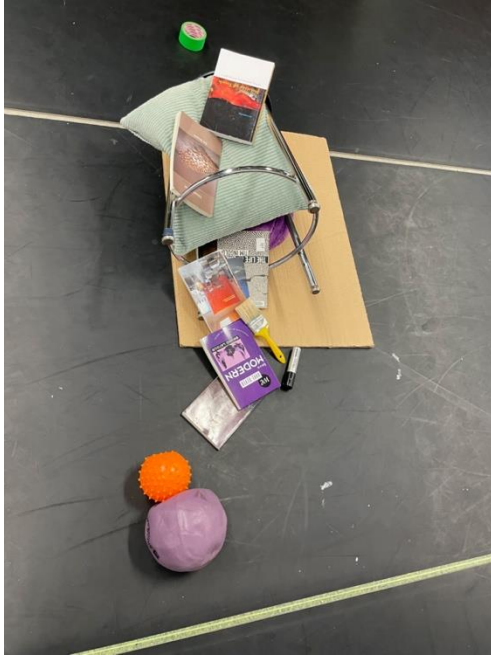


Figure 34: *Theory Slide* as a photographic document of the moment the materials cohered into an intensity and thus became a mutable sculpture.

Figure 35: *Theory Slide* within the *Moving Materials* exhibition 2023, shown in the context of *A Pile of Books*, creating an affective dissonance between 2 and 3-dimensional books.

In *Moving Materials* exhibition in 2023, the safety tape material in *Line of Resistance* was incorporated into a sculpture entitled *For the Glory* and exhibited with the photograph entitled *Trophy*. For the Glory inspired visitors to create different gestures depending upon the materials it was put in relation to. In this form I noticed that the material used in the strong statement of *Line of Resistance* could also be quite mercurial and chameleon-like. In this way, I believe the material of the safety tape most reflected my own journey through *Moving Materials*, in 2023 echoing what the other materials imposed, and in 2024 cutting through the gallery like a border, complicating the differentiation inherent in acts of territorialization. Witnessing the safety tape in these still points, offers a reminder of material malleability and resilience.



Figure 36: For the Glory, 2023, day 1.



Figure 37: For the Glory, 2023, day 3.

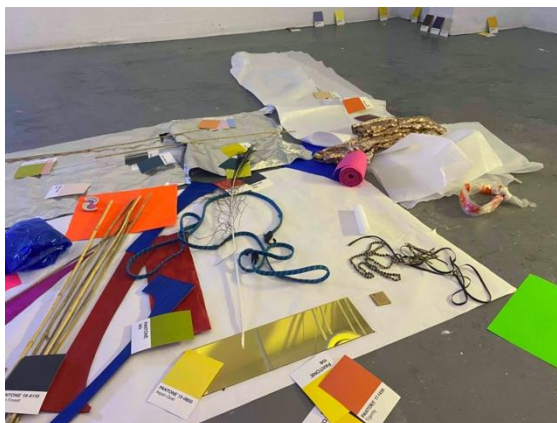
A third application of the still point involved mapping. Many moments of intensity came from noticing the materials were coherent in compiling a series of movements over time. Some examples from *The Book of Still Images* include *Hodology* (Fig 1) which is a birds-eye view map of the studio before a tour, *Map to Repeat Action* (Fig 2) an ironic gesture from the *Dry Season* series, *Energy Mapping* (Fig. 3), a map of invisible forces, *Colour Room Mapping* (Fig. 4) that related to an experience with classmates, and the green speed *Tape* (Fig 5 & 6) series – in the 2023 exhibition, tape was used to “mark the potential speed of objects.” This is clearly an impossible mapping and yet a gesture that responds to the movement of materials through time.



There was something interesting about the time before the official tour of the installation. Derek mentioned he had organized the schedule in case I needed more time for a performance action. It was in that time that I decided to move more materials into the exhibition space.

This kind of liminal movement, what is taken as not performative but functional or part of the labour before the beginning is what I wish to point to. I would consider this a performative movement of materials because I already had enough material to show. I had shown the first group the work without the maps or the pool. But here given extra time, I was able to listen in on the conversations of the audience and to see them drink coffee and shift their weight. Moving the maps is significant because they are bigger than me and the task requires full body engagement.

The map above is of the presentation "hodology" or pathway, as an index to a connection between ideas, concepts, or perhaps we can say, the neuroanatomical structures² of my thinking.



From *The Book of Still Images* - Figure 38: *Hodology* / Figure 39: *Map to Repeat Action* / Figure 40: *Energy Mapping* / Figure 41: *Colour Room Mapping* / Figure 42: *Visceral Networks* with green tape speed line / Figure 43: *Obstacles that Ache* with green tape speed line hypothetically indicating the speed of the sculpture's movements.



Figure 44: Tracing energetic pathways with tape after a conversation in the gallery.

4. FORCES AND BODIES

Robert Morris' framing of the gravity-bound minimalist felt sculpture *Untitled. 1969* is a literal example of a sculptural work in a process of change as it shows the effects of invisible forces acting on it. His work was positioned in such a way on the wall that it was expected to sink toward the floor and thus change its form during the run of the exhibition. Morris' work overall was deeply investigative of the spatial and physical relationship between a viewer's body, the work of art, and the relational forces between them.⁵⁸ The felt sculpture is a canonical work that countered the imperative to fix the work in a gallery.

Both Elizabeth Grosz and Timothy Morton, a theorist who writes about the intersection of object-oriented ontology and ecology studies, consider earthly forces and human intensities, and offer ways to reframe the perception of art. In *Chaos, Territory, Art: Deleuze and the Framing the Earth* (2008), Grosz writes about the concrete and the abstract co-occurring, and at some point, the loss of language illuminates the chaos of where art can exist because art monumentalizes sensation.⁵⁹ In *The Mesh* (2011), Morton notes that every entity in the physical world exists as an evolutionary continuum that begins to take the form of an abstraction when we apply language.⁶⁰ These references to language are part of what I am working against in making compositions – to move beyond what can be put into language, even while I'm doing it here. There are forces that are physical, that abstraction takes us away from. To be in a process of

⁵⁸ E. C. Goossen, "The Artist Speaks: Robert Morris." *Art in America*, vol. 58, no. 3, (May-June 1970), pp. 104-111.

⁵⁹ Grosz is interested "in exploring the peculiar relations that art establishes between the living body, the forces of the universe and the creation of the future, the most abstract of questions, which, if they are abstract enough, may provide us with a new way of understanding the concrete and the lived." (Grosz, 2008, p.3).

⁶⁰ "The real thing is the evolutionary process – the cat is just an abstraction!" from Morton, Timothy. "The Mesh." *Environmental Criticism for the Twenty-First Century*, Routledge, New York, NY, 2011, p. 20.

translating into language for instance, diverts awareness from sensation, and fixes an anchor to the movement of that experience. When I apply a title to a mutable sculpture, my intention is to open a field of further connotation, such as the case with the some of the images found in *The Book of Still Images* such as *Minotaur* and *Pasiphaë falls in love with the snow-white bull*. The language is inaccurate, so the title creates questions and brings other worlds of reference into play rather than determine the meaning of the sculpture.



Figure 45: *Minotaur* (*The Book of Still Images*) / Figure 46: *Pasiphaë falls in love with the snow-white bull* (*Book of Still Images*)

Similarly, in the 2024 exhibition, some of the titles evoked further fields of relationality such as *Line of Resistance*, *Stomach*, and even *Fantasy Pool* wherein the name held something of the shape and something of a dream around its potentiality. I believe that these titles that open the reference of objects to other kinds of sensory memory or require a conceptual leap, help to generate a curiosity around unseen forces acting on viewer perception. I use language to unhinge legibility, if linguistic abstraction in the titling of works is part of the code of the art gallery, my hope is the language used might fluctuate in a partially visible field of reference, rather than fixing the meaning to settle the viewer. I

titled sculptures that were made of only one material with a generic name such as *Tape*, *Wire* and *A Pile of Paper*. In these instances, the direct practicality of the title gave the viewers license to go in any possible direction. After viewer interactions, the materials changed titles related to what the new form inspired, such as *Airplanes* and *Heart Attack*.

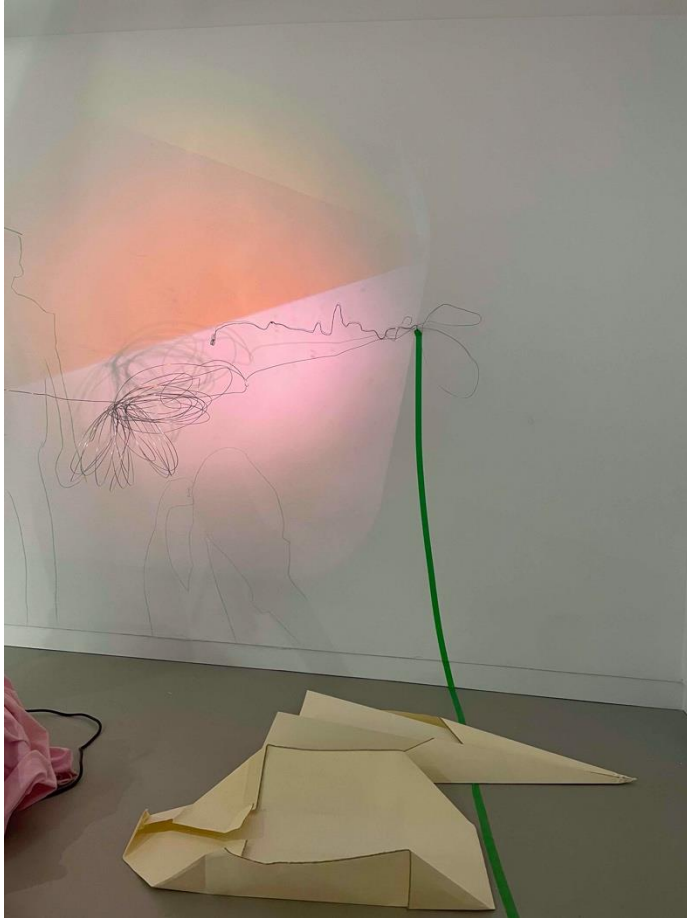


Figure 47: *Wire* became *Heart Attack* and *Plane Hanger*, and part of *A Pile of Paper* became *Airplanes* after visitors re-formed these more basic sculptures that were made of only one material.



Figure 48 and 49: *Stomach*, day 2, at two times.

Coming back to the theoretical framing that forces form the conduit for viewer perception of the artwork, Grosz asserts that art is not about the body of the viewer. “Art... is linked to those processes of distancing and the production of a plane of composition that abstracts sensation from the body,”⁶¹ Grosz writes. She is connecting art to primal human drives such the forces of sexual selection and material sensation, “... sexuality is the rendering artistic, the exploration of excessiveness, of nature.”⁶² That which might seem unproductive through its excess, is greatly influencing how we live our lives as we are pushed and pulled by the networks of forces we are attuned to.

In terms of distancing, Morton has another approach and yet I can see a relationship between the two approaches. Morton writes that “there is nowhere to stand outside of things,” we are always already part of entities that are too big for humans to perceive all at once, but which we can notice through signs that arrive between gaps in comprehension.⁶³ The material between the perceptible maybe imperceptible, but it still has a physical presence with a temporality. In the space between the body and the plane of composition that Grosz refers to, Morton describes a viscosity in which ““distance” is only a psychic and ideological construct to protect me from the nearness of things.”⁶⁴ Both theories in effect propose the presence of forces in the relational space between viewers, materials, and art. Morton describes this separation as ““the “art object” and I appear to be held in a perfect Kantian mind meld... a sticky mesh of viscosity in which I find myself tuned by the object, an aesthetic uterus that subtends even my supposed acts of transcendence.”⁶⁵ Even though the art experience may be transcendent, there is still a very

⁶¹ Grosz, Elizabeth. (2008) *Chaos, Territory, Art* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), p. 11.

⁶² Grosz, 2008, p. 11.

⁶³ Morton, 2013, p. 1 and p. 4.

⁶⁴ Morton, 2013, p. 27.

⁶⁵ Morton, 2013, p. 30.

physical link. Morton also writes that “distance is the main factor in producing the concept Nature” while Grosz writes about nature as an unrecognized and open-ended force.⁶⁶ It felt productive to keep flickering my perception of the work I was doing, between these two theoretical points of view. All my guess work around these different uses of language and framing further defamiliarizing what I was sensing in my movement of materials.

As much as I found it helpful to think of Morton’s interobjective mesh underpinning the connections between all things, I also found it grounding to refer to Grosz’s concept of chaos as a constellation of undifferentiated forces that can be framed through composition. She writes “it is the architectural force of framing that liberates the qualities of objects or events that come to constitute the substance, the matter, of the artwork. The frame is what establishes territory out of the chaos that is the earth.”⁶⁷ Art comes from the intensities and sensations it inspires, beyond its intentions and aesthetic,

“...art does not begin with the exteriorization of one's own body and the creation of materials that are originally corporeal; art begins with the animal, which is itself a conjunction of bodies and bodily forces with territories (1994:183, 184).”⁶⁸
⁶⁹

I kept feeling like both theories were holding up the same map at different angles, creating a hologram of intersecting lines of perception, interrupting my sense of orientation. Every book I was reading formed a contrasting force of perception, but the gallery offered a framing for these intersecting forces and a place for people to navigate through.

⁶⁶ Morton, p. 181 and Grosz, p. 2.

⁶⁷ Grosz, p. 11.

⁶⁸ Grosz, 2007, p. 35.

Grosz's discussion of the complexity of what framing means is illustrative in terms of the possibilities available to us in understanding the process of perception in the reception of art in its multitude. Despite the possibility of a two-dimensional frame that captures a moment in time, any framing of the world is multi-directional, given the forces at play in the foreground and background, the ever-changing fluctuations of time in the perception of an artwork. There is a process of dematerialization captured in the two-dimensional still point, that suggests that the image or artwork is no longer connected to a site or to a body.⁷⁰ The artwork is always already separate from the subjective body, it exists in a system of interconnected earthly forces – photography doesn't activate that separation. The photograph in *Moving Materials* is a witness standing in for the multitudinous process of dematerialization in the object, rather than the dematerializing force itself. The still image is a temporary artistic frame that captures a process, the still is a tool that can be displaced, repositioned, relocated, allowing for the sensations to occur out of time and place.

In *Field Gate*, there were so many changes that the sculpture became a beacon of chaos. For me, this chaos evoked all the directions of forces surrounding the sculpture. The chaos was framed by the name and the context of the exhibition, and people went willingly into it.

⁷⁰ Grosz 2008, p. 17.

Figure 50: *Astronauts*, November 2023.



Figure 51: *Framing Device.*



Figure 52: *Landing*, 2024.





Figure 53:
Miami
Vice is No
Longer a
Thing.
Figure 54:

Figure 54: "Bricolage: Technique of the Refrain" (Grosz, p. 57).





Figure 55: *The Ghost of Interstitial Extremophiles* (Morton, p. 53)



Figure 56: *Raft of Detachment*.



Figure 57: *Heavy Tongues Speak My Language*. (Photo by Laiken Breau.)

The movement of materials was not representational, as there was nothing to represent and no hints of language to direct anyone's way of making decisions. I do not know what forces were at play, but only that there was a reliance on the body, encountering materials at any given moment. The work was about sensation rather than evoking a particular theme, message, or meaning. Grosz writes that,

The visual arts render visible forces that are themselves invisible... They extract something imperceptible from the cosmos and dress it in the sensible materials that the cosmos provides to create sensation, not a sensation of something, but a pure intensity, a direct impact on the body's intensity."⁷¹

Art is not the object but a way of framing cosmic forces. Visual art allows us to sense physical forces of the universe that we are always interacting with. As this sensorial process-based dynamic of forces developed over the run of the exhibition, the space between sculptures became charged with questions and curiosities around what was seen, as opposed to assertions and determinations about what I might be saying.

Most visitors were propelled towards at least one object in the exhibition and were inspired to move it. When I prompted a viewer by saying it was possible to move materials, the visitor had to decide whether to touch or not to touch, and what would they touch and how. Even if an energetic flow occurs after the visitor leaves the gallery, my provocation might plant a seed for noticing affects. Visitors acted in pursuit of their own curiosity, not knowing where they were going or why exactly, perhaps for fun, maybe even excitement at the opportunity. To me, visitors appeared gleeful. Here, there was an amplification, an animation of the space that could be felt, thus enlivening the pathways between sculptures.

⁷¹ Grosz, p.22.

In *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology After the End of the World* (2013), Timothy Morton's conceptualization of the inter-relationality of objects as forming a conceptual mesh is useful to consider when thinking about forces between all physical bodies, like the pathways between sculptures. Hyperobjects are made of the interconnected objects in the mesh, including all the gaps in the weave.⁷² Mesh is porous, which implies points of entry and holes to hang onto. This is connected to the unfinished visual sensation that the mutable sculptures offer the viewer. There is a point of intersection possible in the gap, the sense of visual incompleteness is a place where the viewer can insert themselves into the mesh. The viewer becomes part of the fabric.

Because my materials are found prefabricated objects, they are already part of different systems of production, distribution, social predetermined use and value - adding connotative complexity to what viewers potentially see and sense in my sculptures. I see Morton's Hyperobjects as the material forces that Grosz theorizes - forces indicate an interaction between bodies, and this is relevant for the actions involved in moving materials. The improvisational means movements are always different, and if the movements form a sculpture, then the sculpture that emerges will be different each time. Thus, in shifting my attention to this relationality with materials, combined with an improvisational process with an indeterminate material outcome, it is possible to set the conditions for ongoing novelty, surprise, perhaps even allure in its difference of what is expected - at the same time to experience art as not of the material world, but rather the materials as a conduit for knowledges of relational scale.

I believe that the bigger impact of moving materials as an art practice is that the materials I am moving are connected to larger scale materials that are not within my sight. This connection to what is not in my sight seems to extend beyond the questions of visual art technique, for

⁷² Morton, p. 83.

example drawing is an action that relates hand-eye coordination to observation. But my sense of what I am doing is echoed in how Grosz writes about painting as an action that “aims to visualize invisible forces... to represent the unrepresentable...” (Grosz, p.81). Even as an imaginative or intentional prompt within performance art practice, if an artist registers their connection to a greater system, it changes the way that artist touches the material, and that quality of touch affects the movements that follow from the connection with the material.

What I sense when I am with objects has a relation to many systems in Morton’s view; and to Grosz’s idea that all things are linked to other things in the cosmos. It is through the sensation of art composed of materials that we are connected to greater forces beyond our conscious awareness. If art is received through sensation as Grosz proposes, and what cosmic things those sensations are connected to, even if we don’t see them, there is a transmission of intensities that art makes possible, and so there is always already a primary relationality informing sculpture making. To this end, the artist’s relationship to the material matters and I underscore relationality because it made art possible.

Tape is a minimal sculptural gesture that identifies unseen lines in space related to sensory interactions with invisible forces. Here, visitors play with space-time. It offers a provocation to enact what might be seen. In *Politics of Touch*, Erin Manning writes that, “Sensing toward the world implicates the body in a world that re-organizes conceptions of space and time.”⁷³ Manning refers to “relational matrices” wherein movement implies the possibility for relationality. Through states of resistance and responsive engagement we can perceive and

⁷³ Manning, *Politics of Touch* (2007), p. xiii.

thus interact with the dynamics of the materiality around us. Manning's articulation aligns well with Morton's line of questioning:

How can we notice or change a system we are immersed in? Will noticing the lack of separation between the image and the self, between the artwork and the viewer, between our bodies and the systems that we are moved by, provide possibility to envision new ways of understanding the world around us?⁷⁴

It seems that there is a resistance inherent within materials, and that Morton's lack of separation is the same as Manning's idea of the potentiality to move and reach towards spaces of relationality. There may be an intensity that I cannot predict as I widen the distance between my body and the sculpture: internal and external affects are always interacting. The sculptural works are catalysts in noticing what is in between things.

When visitors moved materials, they created a physical trace through the exhibition, leaving an abstract mark of their presence that was received by the next visitor as the work itself activated by a collective of people they had never met. There was a sense of improvisational immediacy as people moved through the gallery. As visitors tried to make sense of their own participation, their actions were responsive to the movements of others, creating connections throughout the exhibition that charged the exhibition with the interests of many people.

Moving Materials was not designed to direct bodies through interactivity. I did not try to guess or limit how people would mark their presence. I differentiate my work from the interactive sculptures of artists like Franz West, for example, who prioritizes interaction. His sculptural aesthetic critiques smoothness, precision, and the careful handling of the object. Visitors in West's exhibition are invited to interact. In documentation we see visitors place the sculptures on their body and then remove them. In these instances, the invitation of what to do or

⁷⁴ Morton, 2013, p. TBC.

how to interact is clear. *Moving Materials* is not about noticing the material on the body, but noticing how the material, moving with the material, and leaving the material in a different orientation changes their sense of relationality to the environment. The potential perception of disorder of materials provided an opportunity to notice a specific kind of order in chaos, that was related to that person's sensibilities, in contrast to the distinct objects that West created that did not change shape or form based on the viewer's interest.

In *Moving Materials*, the gesture of the visitor is determined by the visitor's perception, memory, history, and sense of humour. There is no determinate way to interact with a refuse cut of coloured wood. One might put it on their head like a Franz West "Adaptive," they might use it as a hat or animate it with a body part like in Rosie Gibbons *Soft Girls*, or use it as a handle to sound a circle of bells like Haegue Yang in *Handles* (MOMA, 2019), they might use it as a musical instrument by tapping it on the floor to channel the ghosts below the floorboards⁷⁵. I did not determine anyone's interaction, including my own, and offered visitors a similar opportunity.

Field Gate, as an example, underwent significant changes with viewers' interventions – each change emblematic of some material force at play in the viewer's imagination. There were small objects that fluctuated around the flat surfaces, the roll of tape, the projector control, the branches, a pencil and bits of plastic were continuously recombined; crumpled paper and books got stuffed into one opening evoking a high school locker at times and a bird's nest at others. Tape became an active marker of outlines and shapes on the floor near it and curling off the edge like a waterfall. White textiles got draped around the entire gate like a shroud. It became creature-like at times. Colours of materials connected the sculpture to other works in the gallery.

⁷⁵ For visuals of West's "Adaptives" at Museum Ludwig in Cologne, I recommend this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84h_j2KaIMQ. Rosie Gibbons, <https://www.rosiegibbons.com/work/soft-girls>. Haegue Yang, <https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/5080>.

Field Gate continually morphed into new forms, like someone trying to mask themselves to go undetected by security cameras. I think back to Erin Manning who writes, “The engendering body is a becoming-multiple... engendering bodies cannot be normalized because they are metastable, always moving toward potential.”⁷⁶ There is no normal, no static point to return to, the changes are endless and create a flurry of energetic traces around the sculpture to respond to.

CONCLUSION:

In *Moving Materials*, my desire was to disobey the efficiencies of a capitalist labour market and pay attention to materials by sensing them. I encountered objects with imagined borders, boundaries, controlled and chaotic at the same time. My method derived from my body in motion, leaving again and again- to allow for a relational space that centered the viewers’ attention on the vibrancy of materials.

While working on *Moving Materials*, I made a video called *Fences*. I left the studio and noticed my perspective had changed as I approached a freestanding wire fence that towered over me. Instead of avoiding the mess of construction, I stayed with it for a while to see what this fence would inspire. It is a non-human character with a barrage of messages. Perhaps an avatar for lost political gusto; a policing device on holiday, at leisure, without the pressure of having to do anything representational or pragmatic. This fence might have been blocking off some construction, trying to make a boundary to mark a site that is ready to be unsettled. Am I in the unsettled part or the settled part? What does it mean to divide the territory in this material way?

⁷⁶ Manning, 2007, p. 95 and 103.

Who am I to disturb this site? Can my body somehow incite the immanent chaos that the fence will one day separate from the orderly flow of pedestrians crossing the street? My art practice has given me the immediate impulse to reframe this fence as an active imaginary rather than an imposition, as an opportunity for the freedom to play, to notice subtleties of experience, and to question my own responsive movements.

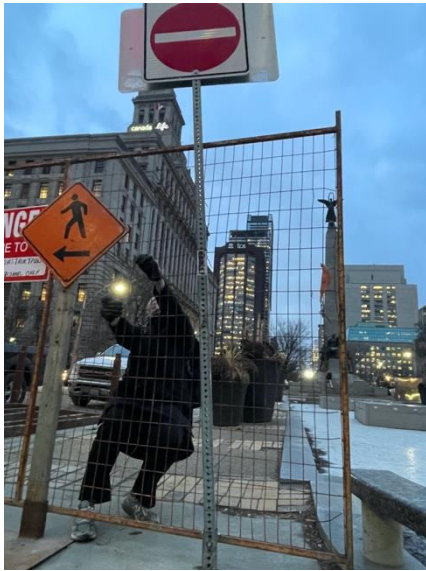


Figure 58: Still from video *Fences*, 2023, reorienting myself to environment outside of the gallery as an outcome from working with material relationality.

Moving Materials was a way of practicing reorientation in environments.⁷⁷ In practicing noticing sensation, there is an enlivening engendering that occurs in the moment of contact. All the artistic endeavors of trying to notice my relationship to materials in the studio expanded outward as materials in public spaces became bearers of knowledge and vibration more than useful tools. This was the space I need to create art, that excessive unproductive luscious state of interobjective dynamic where there isn't a moment when I am not in relation.

⁷⁷ From a recording of Maria-Belen Ordonez's GGRA-6003-302 Critical Theory Seminar in Fall 2022, unpacking concepts in Chapter 4 of Erin Manning, "Engenderings: Gender, Politics, Individuation" *Politics of Touch: Sense, Movement, Sovereignty*, pp. 84-109. (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2007).

Material gestures emerged from my history of movement that felt most necessary and expressive. Mutable sculptures form the context for noticing resistance, sensing, and moving on impulse that was based on the space-time between language, image, and energetic propulsion. Resistance is a sign of the invisible forces at play, allowing me to find the unique movement scores that materials initiated. Responsive relationality is not about having perfected the form at the end of the performance or at the beginning of a sculpture, it is about waiting to encounter the unexpected and unpredictable resistance and staying with whatever comes next.

Moving Materials kept generating new material. There was a continuum when I put objects in a room and moved them around, there was a dynamic, intuitive knowledge that I was leaning into. This art of the animal self is outside of me: objects arrange themselves in their ongoing relations and there were also moments with sculptural forces, that left traces of their trajectories through photographs.

A system emerged from these intuitive placements that generated energetic pathways that kept moving as a testament that visitors did feel an impulse and moved toward change. At times I watched in wonder as to why things happened that way and whether we need to know. Will they ever happen that way again? Probably not. With each movement there is a space for something new to emerge, a decomposition of what we thought we knew - until a whole new way of making connections starts to form again.

Moving Materials seems ill fit to be a Master's thesis because to “master” means to define once and for all what I’ve made and what it means - it is an end. To make something fit into a potentially wrong context is part of the pleasure, as much as valuing the unknown. In prioritizing relationality over any final aesthetic resolve, I generated speculative considerations between legible form and not yet perceptible form. *Moving Materials* set up conditions that might give

rise to conversations about art as it connects bodies to forces, movements to stillness, resistance to relationality. There is no doubt that visitors found joy in engaging with the work in its apparent incompleteness. People understood that the sculptures were intentionally left for them, without drivers of efficiency over determining their perception and movements. It was exciting to witness how visitors stayed in the ever-changing space, moving materials to see what would happen next.

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Appendix 1: An example of *Moving Materials* in a non-art context

I could pick up the box from the skid, carry it through the warehouse and place it on a shelf according to the way products are ordered in the store. I could repeat this journey infinitely for years. This is a productive pattern of labour. Box, carry, order. Alternatively, I could feel my body moving toward the skid. I choose the box based on colour. I feel the texture and weight, I shift my own weight to let it slide into the crook of my elbow. I notice my balance; I step back momentarily to move forward with momentum. I am aware of the scent of the cardboard and its contents. I see the length of the racks to my left. I feel the concrete underfoot, my left foot is not as mobile as my right. A twinge of ache in my right knee that is forever overcompensating for the left foot. I remember the pattern of energy flowing through my body when I went for my morning run. I look up at the shelves, there's something new there, the colour caught my eye. Something has been misfiled that I will have to return to. As heavy as this box is, I momentarily forgot the effort of the weight. I have lost my place in the warehouse, maybe missed a row. I tune into the sounds around me. Someone is calling for my assistance, buzzer sound. I need to locate the shelf for the box quickly so my speed changes. I pivot, I twist a bit, I sigh, what time is it? I find the shelf and run to meet my colleague, noting the misfiled box as I pass it, as if it calls for my attention. And I realize in all of this, it is a dance. I am dancing in the warehouse. There is no repetition possible here, no matter how many trainings I undergo and sign off on that attests that I know exactly how to deliver the product to its rightful place. I will always find a way to change the pattern.

Appendix 2: Links to digital artworks

The Book of Still Images

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1inm_oqMxhm7Ox6wz6oRShMYaiHPP9-P3/view?usp=sharing

Articulation of the My Resistance to Making the Book

<https://youtu.be/eP6ZIZiXNBc> or <https://vimeo.com/970217419>

Bike Ride to Collision Gallery

<https://vimeo.com/799624821/d2f705bcc7?share=copy>

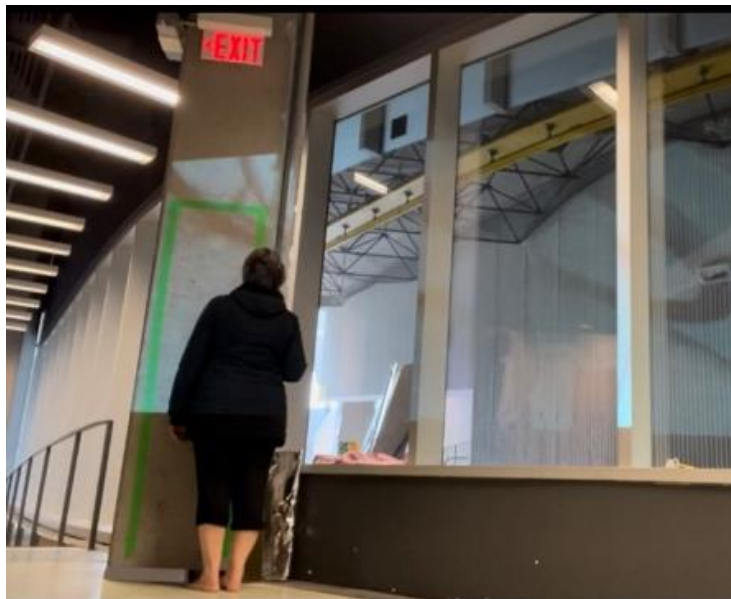
Further biographical content can be found at the artist's website

<https://lobil.art/>

33 Moving Materials, poetic preparation for the exhibition, October-November 2023.

<https://unexpectedarrivals.substack.com/>

Appendix 3: Further documentation of pillar research



Process photos for *Listening to a Concrete Pillar in an Attempt to Change the Inertia of My Resistance*, April 2023. East side of pillar, durational action with *Tape* as a doorway and video projection of *Bike Ride to Collision Gallery*.



Listening to a Concrete Pillar in an Attempt to Change the Inertia of My Resistance

April 2023, OCADU Open Space Gallery.

On the Ledge photo of durational action, lo bil, performance, OCADU, 2023.



West side of pillar, *Protection*, assemblage.

This kind of pillar is quite common in academic settings, going largely unseen and unacknowledged. At the same time, I believe the hierarchical will of this useful entity repeats an ideology in my consciousness despite its coded look of neutrality. It is not neutral, but a reminder of my place as a soft malleable body in a complex socio-economic system. The static building of an institution has greater value than I do as a soft moving body, as a transient character in this context. The concrete of the pillar is made of sand or gravel aggregate, extracted by tools I don't know how to operate, from sites I will never see. The pillar has no eyes to see me, the pillar is not sensate in human ways. However, I prioritized noticing sensing over interpretation to lead to action, even if I could not fully achieve this. I did not act on my first idea of what to do next to

test the reliability of my desires, asking myself, “Is this about the material I am tuning into or am I fearing stillness or boredom?” I sat with the pillar noticing changes to see if my impulse to move was related to the material and the project rather than a fear or a habitual resistance.

I completed *Listening to a Concrete Pillar in an Attempt to Change the Inertia of My Resistance* with a performance entitled *Strike!* which involved an improvisational gesture that had an unfinished quality tied to an intensity of gesture and a mix of feelings. I laughed and screamed. I felt this was part of the world of the material, this expression related to my relationality, my experience there, beyond the visible material elements. I was aware in the performance that this might not be comprehensible, but I stayed true to self, and stayed with the trouble of noticing, wondering, and responding through movement.

Appendix 4: Open Hours, documentation of participatory research

Open Hours was an early exhibition that followed my installation work with *Listening to a Concrete Pillar in an Attempt to Change the Inertia of My Resistance*. During *Open Hours*, I invited colleagues into the gallery to give them a tour of object assemblages and offering facilitations wherein we moved with objects. This work led to sculptures such as *Visceral Networks* (*Moving Materials*, 2023; *Book of Still Images*, 2024).

I advertised it as an exhibition at the OCADU Graduate Gallery, Toronto, in May 2023. When visitors arrived, I offered a tour. Invited guests participated in 1–3-hour facilitations wherein I invited them to move materials with me based on predetermined movement scores. This kind of participatory gallery research led directly into my insight for participation in the 2023 and 2024 *Moving Materials* exhibitions.

At *Open Hours*, a developmental exhibition in the Graduate Gallery in May 2023, visitors arrived and stayed for hours. We engaged in proposals that engaged us in physical movement, naming things, moving through the space on impulse, giving visitors a tour of the mutable sculptures, and engaging visitors in proposals such as the Oracle score wherein we move based on attempting to answer another person's unspoken question.⁷⁸

Interactions with colleagues in the *Open Hours* exhibition felt incredibly liberatory after the relatively fixed nature of my time with the pillar which reinforced to me the importance in the process of being with the pillar-ness as a valuable preparation for observing and welcoming the full experience of mutability or unrestricted movement. The Pillar work initiated this softer interpersonal research in the gallery with colleagues to question: What does it feel like to be with people in the studio after being with a pillar for the month-long development?

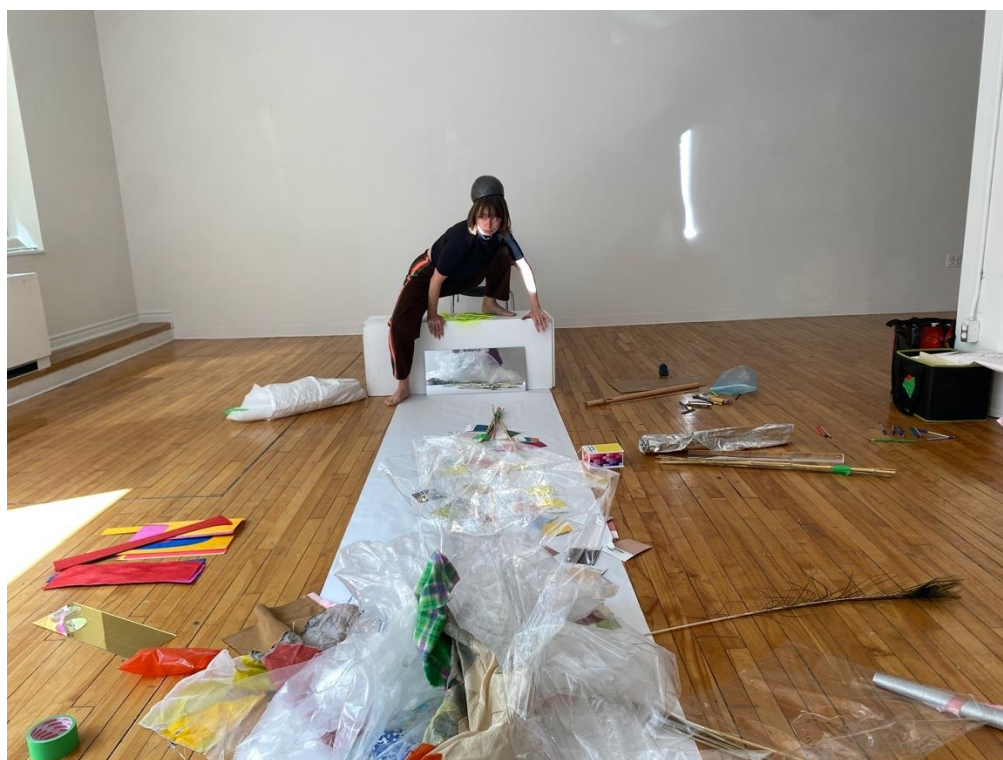


Tour for Open Hours

⁷⁸ The Oracle Dance via Eleanor Bauer, <https://danspaceproject.org/calendar/eleanor-bauer-the-oracle-dance/>, as of July 1st, 2024.



Drawing for Oracle



Tina's Prediction

Dancers / Choreographers Tina Fushell and Shelby Wright in *Open Hours* exhibition.



Visceral Networks

Visceral Networks mutable sculpture was exhibited in the 2023 *Moving Materials* show. It was created by lo bil in collaboration with Tina Fushell and Shelby Wright through sensing materials proposals in the gallery. The sculpture was positioned in the exhibition where the three artists intersected each other's path in their movement-based research. Thus, the sculpture marked a site in the gallery that the three artists experienced a heightened relationality.



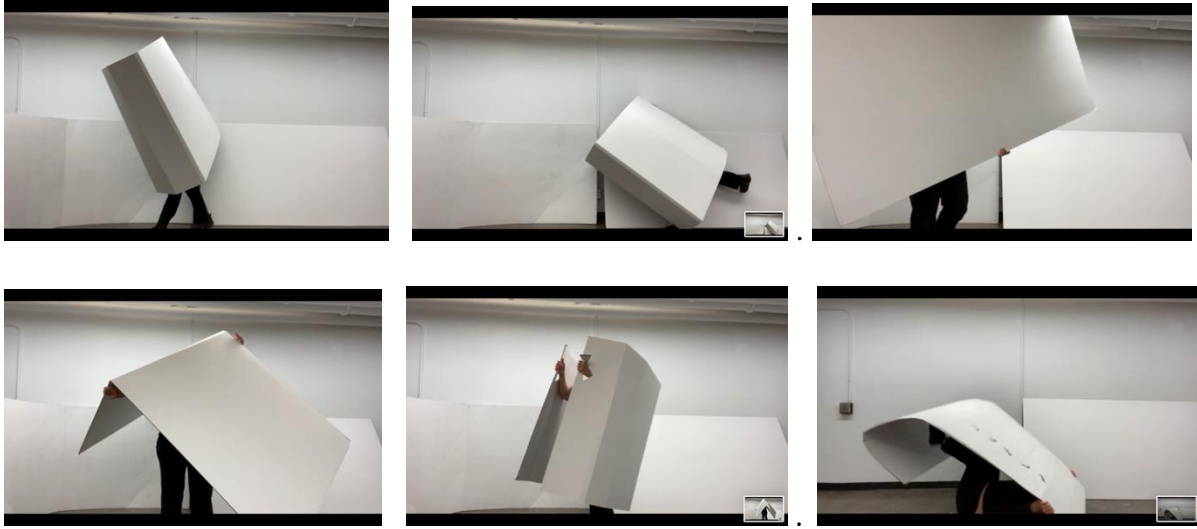
Subtle Body Techniques

A textual detail from *Visceral Networks*, reads "*Subtle Body Techniques*." I cut up my annotated bibliography and we put the phrases around the room trying to evoke a title.

Appendix 4: More ways to relate to still images in *Moving Materials*

Here some additional images that document still points in the process of *Moving Materials*. Some were printed and displayed in the 2023 *Moving Materials* exhibition. All were included in the *Book of Still Images* that was created for the 2024 exhibition. I have chosen these examples to convey through short analyses, the diversity of reasons for taking each photograph that does not relate to progress, completion nor repeatability. Each photograph marks an instance in the life of those materials and my relationality with them.

In *Cardboard Affordances*, I made videos of my interactions with 6-foot sheets of cardboard. This was an early instance of working with a material as I found it, without fabricating something out of it – i.e. not using it for my own design purpose - but rather accepting it as it is. I emphasized my relationship to this piece of cardboard rather than determine a use value for the cardboard as a material. While I was interacting with the material, I was only interested in what we could do together. Choosing still images, however, was a matter of noticing the rhythms and energetics of my interaction including sculptural lines, gesture, volume, framing and the boundaries of the composition. Stillness, or the still image in this case, is a point where performance becomes sculptural, a body is photographed but there is no living body in a photograph, just an image. In *Cardboard Affordances* I attended to performance in the way I attend to sculpture, as an ever-evolving series of states in relation.



Cardboard Affordances. Stills from early Moving Materials process.

In the photographs from the *Moving Materials* residency at Arcadia Gallery in August 2023, photographs were taken to document moments of intensity, when something appeared in the material composition that was unexpected or generated a heightened sensation. In *Caterpillar*, we had moved materials for an hour and when we stepped away from the paper we were moving with, we realized it had an uncanny resemblance to an image we had been discussing earlier. We did not look at the image to create it, it just happened that one of the collaborators saw a caterpillar and was telling us about it. It may or may not strike resemblance to anyone outside of the process but for us in the headspace of moving intuitively with materials for an hour, it felt clearly connected.

In this way, the still image traces something of the impact of performance actions on perception, that arises as a kind of translation of one modality into another through shapes and forms. The photograph thus allowing us to register evidence of the moment we experienced but in a sculptural form. Again, this arose out of sensing each other and the materials rather than any interest in recreating the image we saw.



Image of a caterpillar seen when we were arriving in the gallery to practice. / Image of the paper after moving with it for an hour. I titled this photograph *Caterpillar*. Collaborators that day were Shelby Wright, Fan Wu, and Io bil.