

ppy Birthday from the Antipodes! How wonderful to picture you riding that train, reading our hefty chain of correspondence, composing the collage. I love the extracts you've extracted; they seem to contain, or encircle the terrain we've covered.

ings here are getting exciting. Departure day and that dreadful long flight looms, and still, like the rest of you, I do not have the words!!! I remain quietly hopeful.

o however have some photos and will be attempting to upload these today. What a hoot this panel has been. I don't think I will be able to do a *straight* panel ever again.

th best wishes and gratitude, and a big shout out to Peggy too. (I hope I get to meet you in real life one day.) See everyone else at the residence Inn for breakfast on Thursday next.

ta

llo Mary!

st, HAPPY BIRTHDAY! So glad to have you 'here' in these emails, with us on the planet, as well as (in—this and all your works) *Called* *ck!*

condly, I have just double-checked the invitation list for the folder I created called Object Images. This folder sits inside the one Peter originally created: THE PERIPATETIC PANEL. Google drive lists all of us as having access to this folder, but if you remain unable to find it, please let me know and we can trouble-shoot a different way.

ird, I LOVE the collage of responses you've gathered around "making things up"!

ally, I will be writing about my object (the key fob) and the interstitium and would love to speak at greater length about what you're thinking out this idea with respect to your new book. It seems to me this notion of dormancy (which comes up for me in a book I've just completed about letters) and the interstitium offers an opportunity for a panel at AWP or NFN or some other conference/convergence in the future.

od to spend some of the morning with everyone **Error! Filename not specified.**

h appreciation,
res

ggy—

ou bring your images/text on a USB I can assist with the uploading this Saturday when we connect.

ve the idea of you having to get/find/purchase a bag. I started thinking about having your images be of multiple/different random bags, maybe those you even find on the street!—not that you need to go looking for any, just thinking about the idea of anonymity and the bag-tax intended to limit the over/mis-use of plastic bags. In 2004 I visited South Africa where plastic bags were literally referred to as "winnings daisies." That same year they introduced the plastic bag levy. Here as there, I am not sure how effective such measures really are....

yway, thank you so much for continuing this journey with all of us! See you this weekend--

h appreciation,
res

few more follow ups

llo Friends!

is my birthday and I'm on a train from Philly (where we spent the weekend helping my 83 year old mom and her 94 year old partner with an art exhibit). Too much time with my family has challenged my emotional synapses but there is nothing like the train to re-set myself. Jean and Mom and I had a beautiful breakfast overlooking Rittenhouse Square in the center of the city, and I've spent the first leg of my journey re-reading our 69 page (!) e-mail document where all of our correspondence around the un-panel is stowed. It's been quite an interesting journey. Francesca's sentence, composed, I believe when she was in Saigon, perhaps sums it up best: "You've...made me think. Made me desire."

One of the interesting things that happened while reading was that, after a while, I couldn't tell who the author/speaker is of some of these e-mails and they did start to become a one-and-all meditation.

Before I get ahead of myself, I have a few practical questions still:

I have now read over all of the documents in the FOLDER that Peta had mounted for us, but I do not see the **FOLDER** that perhaps Ames has mounted and **into which we are supposed to drop our photos. Could I trouble someone to point me to that please?**

I also understand that we are now agreed to meet on Thursday morning at 8 am at the cafe in the Residence Inn. See you all there!

Am I correct in assuming that directly following our panel we will have a debrief via skype (?) with Sophie Cunningham as interlocutor in Australia? Sorry if I am still not following the Digital conference piece entirely.

Now that I've read our email correspondence in its entirety, I'm fascinated by echoes, in the e-mails themselves, but also things that resonate for me post-e-mail. For one, Peggy's grandmother's empty bag and an artifact called "bottle of hope," also empty, that I was gifted without asking for such in a cancer ward where I was being treated for breast cancer early 11 years ago. It made me think I should read from the pages in *Called Back* where I feature that bottle, but I'm of course going to compose something new around the paint by numbers I talked about in original e-mail.

There are three passages in our correspondence where inventing or "making things up" resonate in interesting ways, and it felt I had to share:

Maria Irene Fornes, *The Rest I Make Up*, shown as part of *Reeling*, the Chicago LGBTQ Film Festival. The film is beautiful, see it if it comes your way. Fornes wrote a play called *Promenade*, which I haven't seen or read but perhaps one of you have? These words from *Promenade* began the movie: **I KNOW EVERYTHING/HALF OF IT I REALLY KNOW/THE REST I MAKE UP**. Part of our *Promenade*? I don't know.

I've also been thinking about the ideas embodied in invention and intervention. How this journey around (through) the "Stations of the Holy Cross" might be a series of interventions. Also, **how you can't have intervention (making deliberate choices: *inter-* between, *in-*pire come: 'come in as an extraneous factor of thing') without invention (the making up, making over bit).**

Don't use words perhaps like you do, inasmuch as I don't write so much as *wright*. This **involves a kind of inner construction company peopled by many parts of me; I have my own inner architects and decorators, carpenters and designers all moving the furniture about, knocking down walls, pulling up carpets, splashing colour around** and considering what it might take to over-wright/overwrite (overwrought?) as almost violent "assertion of the bland" as you put it Mary and **to re-make the space** and punk the space and leave our queer traces in it and on it as we move through it and onwards.

ay have to borrow for a book I'm writing about dormancy, Ames).

ght the seen yet unseen space in the body perhaps be embodied in the spaces between our utterances in
rformance?

st but not least, I almost feel like this could be a great epigraph to our panel overall:

wo friends of mine went hiking with their young son about fourteen years ago, in Utah. The ranger had assured them
is appropriate for a six year old but when they got out on the trail it was kind of terrifying. At one point the boy turned
his mother and said, "Mama, is this more scary than fun, or more fun than scary?"

ope you all enjoy this post-correspondence collage as much as I do!

rmly

new thread/but responding to "our google doc has begun" thread

ar esteemed all—

aven't responded until now because it seemed appropriate to hold back, and I have zero technical expertise. My head
spinning from this storehouse of knowledge/resources you all have. I am daunted and grateful and want to offer a
llion thanks for all your work and care and consideration. You all are generous and genius collaborators.

m happy to provide a transcript of my text once I figure out what it is. I've been writing an essay embedded in which
/ object—a generic convenience store bag—and am hoping to extract an excerpt. Ames (I am embarrassed to ask
is; feeling dense like Mary), will you be able to provide some guidance re: uploading?

id a question for all: my object is not the actual object. That plastic bag doesn't exist. So my thought is to photograph
placement/ stand-in convenience store bag, and to my mind it doesn't much matter where that's from: 7-Eleven,
arget, Jewel-Osco. This bag is no doubt like the bag that in multiples is twisting the insides of whales and causing
despread environmental havoc. In Chicago, in an effort to discourage people from haphazardly using/over-using these
gs, the city has instituted a 7 cent cost per bag in convenience and grocery stores. (I will actually have to go and buy
e!) Are you all on board with a photo or two of a generic stand-in bag that is symbolic rather than actual? My
eaningful, definitely not-sacred object.

arm wishes and gratitude,
ggY

is is lovely, Francesca. It would also be good for someone to point this out just before we begin—to let everyone know how this will work
ughly speaking)—to introduce the bell sounds and such prior to beginning. Then, I think it'll work just fine!

h appreciation,
nes

is: and I wondered if we might meet for breakfast at [redacted] - 7.30? 8am? I'm happy earlier. [redacted]
e looked on the map and it's literally around the corner from the [redacted] where the conference is being held - [redacted]
[redacted] - three minutes away. It's got a cafe for breakfast. It might be a bit quieter than the main conference hotel.....

19 October 2018 at 09:30, Francesca Rendle-Short <[REDACTED]> wrote:
ar collaborators-all ---

Oh, how thick and wonderful and technical (!) this conversation is. I love it. THANK YOU so much Ames for guiding us through. You are a dream. Agree Mary: what a wonderful introduction, can't wait to meet you Ames! And see you again Mary, as well. I feel as though the cat has been let loose in amongst the pigeons with this DWF caper but you are helping us navigate it beautifully Ames. My sincere gratitude. It is and will be a beautiful result.

The good news is that Izzy has come back to say that she's very happy to give us more time. She's taken off the time-specific delivery of the material on the website so that it now reads it'll be up at some point on Friday 2 November AEST. She doesn't want to load it later than that because she wants it to sit squarely in the middle of the festival to give it lots of airplay. So this gives us till midnight on Thursday Arizona time to get it to her - phew!!

Francesca has created a google drive folder where we can upload the material and if the files are too big then she recommends transferring through WeTransfer. I'll send the links to you Ames.

The transcript idea is excellent --- so will work towards that also.

Thank you everyone. I think we're sorted, hey?

Francesca x

Ames, and friends,

Firstly I want to acknowledge what Mary said in her email. I too have been feeling dense and overloaded and confused, in fact. But I think thanks to Ames's expertise, Francesca's enthusiasm, Izzy's input we are inching closer to somehow carrying all of this off.

Yes, just quickly A HUGE THANKS, and now to your questions below. I have woven answers in where I can in **RED**.

You are (all) most welcome! Apologies if I made things more confusing than necessary—here's to sorting this all through!

18 Oct 2018, at 1:48 am, Hawkins, Ames <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Hi! Thanks for all of this! I know Francesca and Peta are on the ground chatting with Izzy, so it feels odd to keep chiming in from this far away. I do so with some experience making/creating multimodal pieces for publication with an acute awareness of how much time and editing it requires.

My response to the latest email:

1. I love the idea of different audio textures and soundscapes! I also feel strongly about audio quality. *in situ* can totally work and the important thing here will be for all of us to use mics. With will and a plan, we can do this! I will bring both of my H5 and H6 Zoom recorders and mics. Which zoom recorder do you all have? Does it have a USB mic port? If so, I can bring an extra. Does it have an HDcard? I will definitely have my card reader with me. The important thing will be to make sure you have all of the means by which to transfer the audio to my machine as quickly as possible. Recording on a phone is a pain as the file format needs to be converted, blah blah. It is possible, but in the interest of time I would rather focus on editing and not file conversion. Way more fun

I have a ZOOM h4n. It has a USB port on the side. I don't have an extra mike. However, I may also be able to bring a second ZOOM (much the same as my own.) Both have HD cards. The issues I have had before with these has been to do with battery life (I usually plug them into mains power), and also with the capacity of the HD cards. Anyway. I will have a look at them both this weekend and see what I can figure out on a Luddite!

Fantastic. I'll try and bring a couple more mics, as well as lots of batteries. This is all going to work out just fine.

1.

1. Regardless of whatever extemporaneous things that happen on the spot, we ought to include a transcript. Even if the words are not exact, we need to evidence due diligence in making our unpanel as accessible as we can. All this means is that everyone will need to also upload their text to our folder—in whatever shape it is in—no later than Thursday am so that it can be turned into a transcript loosely following our audio. This is a simple job of cutting and pasting and adding areas such as [Chorus: X audience members reading together creating a cacophonous swell] or something to that effect. We put the passages in the order read and we are set!

It will be before the presentation. I don't think of it as a piece of writing in that way. And I feel like as we are offering all these other textures I'd have also provided links to other pieces we have each written) we do not necessarily need the texts.

In my world, a transcript is simply not negotiable from the perspective of diversity, equity and inclusion measures. That said, we can absolutely figure out how to deal with whatever "text" you do or don't have at the time of this recording. I am absolutely confident we can satisfy both my due diligence and your desire. Promise.

1. Before this all gets too far down the road: Powerpoint is really not the software to use for this project if you're planning to include any audio. While one can use audio in PPT, it isn't intended for audio and the sound quality will be....less than desirable. I suggest something like iMovie or Camtasia or wevideo (free, webbased software)....but the more I think about this.....

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The sense from talking to Francesca yesterday is that we don't need to be the ones to mix, compose, overlay. We are "simply" aiming to serve various kinds of files and documents through in a format the DWF can then display, and that as you say, the audience member then gets to design and curate their own experience from those materials.

1. What I hear/feel emerging is this: Our best strategy, given the time constraints, will be (as I believe I am hearing in the email below) to create three different documents—one audio piece, one slideshow/images/video sans audio, one transcript. I rather love the idea that there are these three very different ways of experiencing our unpanel! Could simplify things for us all the way around and provide a range of options for a digital audience. We could combine images and sound later, if we want. But for this immediate turn-around, I think simpler is better. And might actually be more interesting.

Free, Ames.

Fantastic. I think, then, this sorts out any of our comments in point 3.

1. Can you please find out from Izzy how they imagine I'll be sending them the audio file? I imagine they will want an Mp3. My plan is to send them a dropbox and/or Google link. Can you confirm this for me, please? They can then upload on their Soundcloud account.

I'll find out, won't we Francesca?

ANKS!

Thanks everyone, more soon!

The rapid-fire emailing will now cease for a bit. Seems this is all fairly well sorted. See you all soon!

Yes

ta

.. I am bringing an iconic Australian bush food! Vegemite.

(—my responses in GREEN!

18 Oct 2018, at 2:25 am, Hawkins, Ames <[REDACTED]> wrote:

More

My: You aren't dense!

I think the confusion is here: The unpanel and the DWF are essentially happening simultaneously. We aren't streaming the presentation, but we are getting them files as close as we can to our happening. To do so, it requires a plan. Peta and Francesca want to use recordings they make in the moment, during the unpanel. I believe we can figure that out!

You, Peggy and I will pre-record our pieces. As has been suggested, these differences in audio texture will be lovely in the context of our sound tapestry. And, having any audio ahead of time helps me in getting this created asap following our presentation.

I answer your questions as directly as possible:

- The text is not needed until day of the presentation. But if you have it sooner, once you've recorded, please just upload in Google file.
- If you record ahead of time, a .wav file is awesome. That can go into the Google file OR you can just transfer it to my machine when we get to Phoenix. Your choice. Just let me know what you prefer. Please pause for a few beats wherever you'll break in your reading during the presentation so this is visible in the audio—makes it easier to edit.
- Images of your object in "natural habitat" in Google folder prior to arrival in Phoenix: yes.

When we meet for breakfast, the first order of business needs to be deciding upon the order of/for readers. With this info I can start making the transcript and the audio file.

I'm/have been assuming that Peta and Francesca are taking care of bringing the copies/handouts for the chorus part. I'll start confirming that here.

I hope this helps! If you have any more questions, please do ask!

With appreciation,

Ames

Ames Hawkins, Ph.D.

Associate Provost for Faculty Research and Development

Office of the Provost

Columbia College Chicago

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Yes Francesca and I are bringing the copies/handouts for the chorus, as well as a the Participant Release form, duly modified.

Ames

Ames, and friends,

I really want to acknowledge what Mary said in her email. I too have been feeling dense and overloaded and confused, in fact. But I think thanks to Ames's expertise, Francesca's enthusiasm, Izzy's input we are inching closer to somehow carrying all of this off.

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is is going to need further thought from my point of view. I'm not trying to be obstructive here. I just don't know how intact/transcribable my text will be before the presentation. I don't think of it as a piece of writing in that way. And I feel like as we are offering all these other textures and I'd have also provided links to other pieces we have each written) we do not necessarily need the texts.

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gree, Ames.

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I hope this helps! If you have any more questions, please do ask!

With appreciation,
Ames

Ames

I'm in the midst of planning our own conference here (happening next week) and a tad overwhelmed at the moment, I need some help with these beautifully detailed gloriously energized, inspired, and rigorous e-mails.

I've read them all through, but I'm confused about what is needed from me, or what each of us is charged with right now.

It sounds like:

1. My presentation--but you couldn't mean that you need it by tomorrow, right? What is the date by which we need to share them? I will be composing my piece very close to the actual conference date, alas

2. Images of my object and/or related images--to be placed in a folder on google docs?

3. A recording of myself reading my essay as a .wav file? And where do I put that for sharing?

I'm really sorry to be so dense, but I'm not quite following the whirlwind of exchanges at this point, and how one set of tasks is relative to the actual event, and the other to getting the unpanel up on the Digital conference's website. Before or after? or both? I think my sifting mechanism may have temporarily shut down.

Wow, Peta and Francesca, you can see how gifted Ames is and why I suggested Ames join us. Thank you Ames for everything you are willing to do to bring all of this to shareable fruition.

Ames

Oh! Thanks for all of this! I know Francesca and Peta are on the ground chatting with Izzy, so it feels odd to keep chiming in from this far away. I do so with some experience making/creating multimodal pieces for publication with an acute awareness of how much time and energy it requires.

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have no thoughts on what I might bring to eat. Snake sounds amazing!

Otherwise, I have no idea where we will meet for breakfast. I will want it to be somewhere I can bring my laptop and begin working on the transcript. Maybe we just meet at the conference hotel somewhere? If I am in making mode I would just like this part to be as simple and convenient as possible

AWARD! Hope you all have a marvelous day!

With appreciation,
Francesca

From: Francesca Rendle-Short <francesca.rendle-short@rmit.edu.au>

Date: Tuesday, October 16, 2018 at 8:26 PM

Subject: Re: our google doc has begun

Hi Everyone,

In this thread I am having very fruitful conversations with both Peta and Izzy from DWF about our un-panel.

Thanks Peta and Ames for writing and helping to spell things out.

Thanks Ames for setting up the google folder - this is excellent. I've started to add images to this folder. I'm waiting to hear from Izzy/DWF about the powerpoint idea before going ahead and beginning to shape one up out of the images collected there. I've said to her that it could either be a wordless slideshow (which is my preference actually - where audience can watch and listen to the soundscape you're making) or a slideshow with sound (maybe cut-up ambient chorus sound-as-loop) which is slightly more complicated in terms of editing and so on. I'll let you know what she says.

For my money, I think getting audience members to take selfies is getting a bit too complicated in terms of action/activity, transfer of files etc. I think it might be a distraction. The selfie idea is simply Peta and me wanting to record each other actually doing our bit in the panel on a phone - as "selfie".

I like the idea of collecting different kinds of sounds from the audience.

usually record the performance of our words in the unpanel itself, either using Peta's ZOOM or your microphone Ames. We hope that this is a good way. Do you think it will work? There are a number of reasons for this - I don't yet know what it is I am going to read (!) and am all over the place with it, as is Peta; we don't feel we have to capture a complete or accurate archive of the performance but are happy for it to be "in the moment"; we like the interplay of performance of voice *in situ*; we're taken by the idea of having different textures to the sound recording we're making coming in and out of perfection - un-pannelling the panel with voice. But are hoping this is okay and works with your design thinking ideas, especially in terms of being able to edit and upload.

I asked Izzy about having more time in terms of delivering it into the DWF program and she's yet to get back to me on that.

I got snakes and other edible animals for the party bit. :-)

Did you say yes to breakfast Thursday morning. Where will we go?

Ames, Francesca, Mary, Peggy,

Finally weighing in on some of this...

I now understand the images of the object in the natural habitat idea and will get some images into the new Object Images folder within the week.

As far as the "selfie video" goes, I thought the idea was that we were to film ourselves either during the presentation, or at some other time. I have a selfie stick ready to bring with me, though I am yet to learn how to use it! It's on my list.

I am attaching a kind of Participant Release form I used earlier this year on another project in which participants were recorded, and Francesca and I will meet and discuss this today. If we think it's suitable, I can prepare copies of this, or a modified version thereof.

Ames, your offer of technical assistance around audio upload is music to my ears. I have been having concerns about my lack of technical knowhow. If I can't come to you for the separate recording as you propose I think I can probably manage to record my own audio on either my phone, or, on a ZOOM and get that content to you somehow, so long as there's wifi.

Regarding the powerpoint, again I have limited proficiency (and also have other commitments on the afternoon and evening following our peripatetic panel) but Francesca and I will talk about this when we meet in a few hours time. (It's 6.30 am Melbourne time as I write to you.) I'm sure we can work something out.

The Participant Form is attached. As I say, it will need to be modified... I am happy to do this and bring copies.

Best wishes to all,

Ames

16 Oct 2018, at 11:49 pm, Hawkins, Ames <[REDACTED]> wrote:
Thanks, Francesca!

Hi! Here are some answers and a few more questions:

- YES to: "just on the images - that's what we're thinking, right, to put together what images we've got of the objects, the staging of our un-panel, images we've taken in and around like the one of the room we were sent, the two Peta sent of us as shadow puppets etc etc?"
- I created a folder inside our PERIPATETIC PANEL folder on Google drive called Object Images. Please upload 3-4 images of their object in "natural habitat," and any other of the other images as soon as you're able.
- If we are to take images during the event, we ought to let individuals know. We can also invite participants to email us their selfies at the event and use those as well. Maybe this is what you meant by a selfie video?
- I can definitely create an audio file that can stand alone on Soundcloud and be used as the "soundtrack" to a slideshow.

record our pieces in the same manner as Peggy—directly into the mic prior to our event. I'll record mine and hers prior to arrival. I will focus my recording during the unpanel on the chorus and other ambient sounds. May even go around with a mic and ask individuals present to say their name, where they are from, etc. I can also get post-responses if you all would like. I will be sure to be on the move with the mic if we have any kind of Q&A and we can add that, too.

- If I can get the audio from Francesca, Peggy and Mary prior to our event, I can definitely edit within a 3 hour window following our unpanel. If no one is available Wednesday evening (and it sounds may be the case) I'll need to get audio before and after our breakfast meeting. If any of you does have 15 minutes on Wednesday and are willing to record, please let me know and I'll come to you! I am in town and available Wednesday from 3 pm on.
- I have little proficiency with PowerPoint beyond text. I am deferring the image part of things to someone else. If I have all of the parts, I can hand off the audio pretty darn quickly. Then someone else just has to synch/time the images with the text. I think the question of timing has to do with the person who will work on the slideshow/video. How much time will that person need once I've finished the audio? Who will this be? Peta? Francesca? Maybe that person and I ought to connect in email and spare everyone else all of these tech details

Thanks to you all for this fab-collaboration!

With appreciation,
Frances

Subject: Re: our google doc has begun

Just on the images - that's what we're thinking, right, to put together what images we've got of the objects, the staging of our un-panel, images we've taken in and around like the one of the room we were sent, the two Peta sent of us as shadow puppets etc etc?

16 Oct 2018, at 5:43 pm, Francesca Rendle-Short <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Dear Collaborators,

Our google doc outlining our collaboration has begun - hurrah. Here is the link with the google doc link taking readers to the introductory page:

<https://2018.digitalwritersfestival.com/event/peripatetic-panel/>

Yay!!

Also: I've been in touch with Izzy the director. Two things.

One is the time question. Currently we are scheduled to upload everything by 10 am on Friday 2 November AEST which is 4pm our time in NZ, the day before on the Thursday - i.e. 3 hours after our panel. I've asked Izzy whether there is flexibility with this and she says yes, as long as it doesn't clash with our other events. What do you think? Do we need more time? An extra hour? Another 4 hours? Ames? Peta?

She's told me that we can upload multiple formats. The only limitation is that DWF needs to be able to embed the material on a webpage - e.g. video they'll upload to their YouTube and embed, audio through a Soundcloud, and images and text can go straight onto the website. How does this sound? I've been thinking we'll do sound à la Ames's fine work, images collected from everyone and put into a powerpoint presentation, and if we do a selfie video embed it as YouTube. Sound doable?

Winding down.....

Thanks for this summary, Mary.

This is what I understand to be the case with the exception of item 3. I suggested images and offered the idea since I didn't quite understand the preferred format for the DWC, but I completely defer to Francesca and Peta on this item. I am groovy with whatever the two of you have in mind and I am here to support in any way I can. Just let me know.

Love,
Frances

h appreciation,
mes

ate: Sunday, October 14, 2018 at 10:35 AM

llo dear friends!

w that I've had a chance to read everything and am truly in yikes-o-rama mode (my calendar suggests that the conference is just a little
re than two weeks away), I thought I'd just cull a few of the practical details from these e-mail riches--thank you all for all of this!-- so as t
sure I understand where we are:

y flight arrives at 4 pm from Boston on the 31st, and I have to attend a meeting at 7. **Breakfast meeting on Thursday** sounds great to n
ill be staying at an Air B n B--don't have the address in front of me, but it's not that far from the conference.

y phone: 401 497-1233; I will also check gmail for messages

n I correct about what we each need to assemble/bring at this point?

a **5-6 minute piece** that could be read in two parts (drawn from our objects, yes?);

the **object itself** and some way of displaying it if necessary;

images of our objects in their natural habitat--how many pics are we talking about, and, is the idea that we are sending those to Ames or
iking individual slide shows? Sorry for not entirely understanding this part. Do we have a deadline for this? Also, are the pics being
jected during our event, or is the idea that the pics will accompany the recording of the events for the Digital Writer's site?

e polyphonic chorus sounds great to me; I love "essayesque dismemoir" (which just autocorrected to dismember). Thanks for the hilariou
d spirited recap of your meeting, Francesca and Peta, and Ames for your tremendous help in bringing out key points and plans in concer

loubt very much that there will be **tables** in the room. I suspect it will be set up auditorium style unless you request otherwise

arty: I plan to bring Italian Torrone in little boxes to give to the attendees

at's everything I note for now. Please let me know if I missed anything. I just need a clear sense of what we're each to bring to the table s
speak at this point so I can start to get my bits together.

rmly

Wed, Oct 10, 2018 at 12:01 PM Hawkins, Ames <[REDACTED]> wrote:

ary, I hope you had a wonderful evening. We hosted Claudia at Columbia College in 2011 and I found her to be lovely.

will be staying at the Renaissance Phoenix—checking in sometime in the later afternoon on Wednesday. I totally understand about the

xting issue. We can definitely communicate via email which is nearly as efficient



eggy and I will connect on October 27 for her recording session. I will look more carefully at the tech set-up for the room and think throug
ow to best project the audio. I'm thinking a small portable speaker might be really nice so that the voice comes from the table and not son
ont" of the room.

lave also been wondering about the accuracy of the stock photo we got. I know that tables are often how convention centers feature
aces, but I am actually thinking we might get there to find the usual rows of chairs with a projector and screen at the 'front' of the room.
ist something to think about as I rather like the table idea now, and if we don't have them, but just chairs, how might we adjust.

ith appreciation,
mes

unds great—makes no difference to me. Just curious

nes

ook at us!!!

Ames,

m pretty sure the agreement is that we record the panel live but that the upload happens later. Francesca will enlighten us! The time
erence stuff does my head in too. I realized yesterday that I touch down in Los Angeles two hours earlier than I left melbourne!

11 Oct 2018, at 11:48 pm, Hawkins, Ames <[REDACTED]> wrote:

lovely!

, now I am wondering: Does this mean you all will live-stream our unpanel? Perhaps, I didn't understand that we would be
resenting/performing in two different places at the same time, but a day apart. (The international date line thing is mind blowing to me.)

h appreciation,

nes

ar! Hear! And here! Here! Peta

10 Oct 2018, at 8:23 am, Peggy Shinner <[REDACTED]> wrote:

ar all—

is is so...tremendous. I feel a little like the spy at the door, half in, half out. It's kind of a wonder that from all of this
eming chaos a kind of order has emerged, rich, choral (like we are), controlled (sort of), wild (sort of), exciting. Two
ends of mine went hiking with their young son about fourteen years ago, in Utah. The ranger had assured them it wa
ropriate for a six year old but when they got out on the trail it was kind of terrifying. At one point the boy turned to
mother and said, "Mama, is this more scary than fun, or more fun than scary?" Thanks everyone for the fun and sca
d peripatetic unpanel panel. I love how the list from Francesca and Peta's meeting fueled Ames's response and now
're here.

ill start working on my 5-6 minute piece.

anks so much everyone for making a space for me here.

ary, what an honor to introduce Claudia Rankine. And what a joy to have the opportunity to hear her speak. I had the
ance several years ago here in Chicago, and she was tremendous.

armest wishes,

oh this is gorgeous, isn't it? I love it. I will miss it when it is over! I love the time differences between us, this missive mingling to us in Australia overnight Ames - thank you - and through you, Peggy too. Wonderful that you've both met up and you have Peggy's object and recording. oh — the empty bag. Wow. I love that. The handing on of precious things, the material of objects, words, reading, voice. Thanks Peta too for expanding the spaces between my catalogue of hilarity yesterday was a quite day of being beside myself).

love the conversation you've led us into Ames, thinking through the nuance, the audience and how they will feel about it. This is this because they're coming in fresh, without knowing about anything. I'm thinking about comfort too (I hate being put on as an audience member myself), that idea of invitation, us offering a gift of a panel, drawing them into the conversation-all-ready-started, what our audience might expect or might want to expect, how to bring them along with us not to confuse or alienate, but in joy. I really do feel a sense of joy when I think about the bonds of our friendship we've been making through these words and correspondence across seas and lands. It's really pretty extraordinary, I reckon. It makes me want to come to America (and there's a lot that doesn't as we all know!).

oh love voice too Ames. Voice (singing) is what I hear in all we've said to each other. And now, it's really terrific to hear you talk about elevating the voice-as-recording with stills, and to offer that to the DWF. Quite beautiful especially given that Peggy won't be with us in body, but she will be in voice.

think I'm with you too Ames about having a little bit of a sense of what we will do in the hour and a quarter before turning up. It stills my beating heart! It makes me think about the audience too - the four or 40 that might come. So thanks for putting out some ideas and thoughts — I'd love people in the audience to LOVE it too. :-) That's what happened when Peta and I and others presented last time in Iceland. (It's online now at JStor in fact https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.14321/fourthgenre.20.2.0179?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents). All we came into the room with was our piece of writing in five parts. We put our names x 5 into a plastic cup and then we drew a name out of the cup to know who would read first, second, third, etc. The lovely thing about it was that we didn't know what each of us were reading, so it was all new, and it was the juxtaposition of the different 5 x 5 readings that gave the goosebumps.

agree with the less is more. And we definitely don't want whiplash.

the moving around idea is so up in the air I reckon because we don't know how many people will turn up, so how much room there will be in the space. All I see are tables, large round ones at that. I still harbour this idea that we'll get there to find that there is some "outside space" that is delicious and peripatetic. That will give us a sense of movement — movement out, away. Out the door. Even the corridor?

love the idea of us preparing/writing work that is a timed thing not a number of words or pages thing — good thinking. 5 mins is a good length/time (this is what Peta and I were thinking too) (6 x 5 = 30 mins). And divided into 2 works for me - 3 mins each bite. This would really suit me because then there can be an invitation to silence — the sound/time of silence.

love the chorus, I'm leaning towards the babel, a polyphonic chorus, it being uncensored. When I read with Peta, I loved jumping all over the page deciding where and how I'd read, going back over the same words, reading the paratext, reading the punctuation, choosing when not to read but to be silent to hear what Peta was reading. The other thing I'm leaning towards (and Peta and I discussed whether or not to cut the pages up and how on earth we would decide and what that would/might mean etc etc) is to have the words as they are, as they have appeared in the correspondence. Untampered with, unedited, simply feathered together. Just a thought. The stack of pages are so beautiful, each page sings its own song. They are what they are. In their natural habitat (I'll send a pic — the lighting is a bit crap though).

when I copied them I let them bleed off the page.

Peta has lots of chiming clocks and timers too that we could put on for a time and let off. I've got a bell to shake.

oh like the DWF idea of audio and a slideshow.

did the party idea? If we went from table to table, we could have a party of sorts on each. It makes me wonder what a party is, in any case. I want to bring my animals.

MY indeed!

Dear Ames,

It's uncanny how much of what you have written corresponds to things we canvassed yesterday. Right down to the chimney (Francesca had a small bell in her office. I use kitchen timers in my work a lot.)

I also love it that you and Peggy met, and that you have a plan for bringing both her object and her voice into the fold.

The Chorus/Reader pattern sounds great, and everything you have written about the choric babel aligns, I think, with what we were playing with in using the printouts of the email trails.

I thought I would have longer this morning to respond to this, but now I have to head out the door.... so a quick thanks to you for putting all this to the page. It's going to be such fun.

Meta

As I will be arriving into Phoenix on the afternoon of the 31 October. I am [REDACTED], where Francesca and I also be staying, but she doesn't get in till later. The good thing is that our unpanel is not "on" until 11am on 1 November, so we can probably get together that Thursday morning and refine our moves. Are you staying in the same hotel Ames? And what about you, Mary?

The tricky thing is that my phone doesn't work in the USA. I mean I don't normally buy a local SIM.... Francesca, will you have a US phone number?

Dear Francesca and Peta—

This is fabulous. The blow-by-blow is quite hilarious and I believe this unpanel is going to be the most fun!

Peggy and I met on Saturday and had a lovely chat. Mostly not about our panel, but we did discuss our panel a bit. I wanted to bring her object and to audio record her reading her piece so that she could be there with us. I'm not sure this qualifies as a "panel unplugged" but I really liked the idea of having her voice there, even if she is not. It also works well with her object—the empty bag. I suggested that this bag could/might serve as an offertory space—we could invite those who wish to write ideas that are then placed inside the bag to be returned to Peggy.

As much as I do love the idea that we simply meet and "make something extempore, without any prior meeting or clear plan" it also seems we have a range of comfort/interest in different levels/kinds of performance. I hesitate to not have an agreed upon direction prior to walking in the room that morning. We need not know every bit of what will happen, but I do appreciate having a general sense before showing up. On that note, here are some reflections/offerings—

I'm thinking about the negotiation between the unpaneling we are playing with and the expectations of the attendees. Peggy and I chatted about the idea that we want people to leave feeling pleasantly surprised and not as though they didn't get what they desired. At the AWP event Mary referred to that I coordinated I was blown away by how many people LOVED it and all we did was read answers to questions in a round. The audience also loved what we wrote/read and I would want our NFN attendees to feel as though they heard from each of us in a satisfying way.

I'm quite interested in the idea of us moving around/back and forth between bits of reading, but I do wonder about how often/the number of times. I continue to think about the old adage, "less is more," and it feels a bit whiplash-like to have there be too many back-and-forths to me.

ere is what I am thinking: Each of us writes a piece that we could read in two parts. For me, this is less about word count and more about reading time. If we all prepare a 5-6 minute piece, then we leave the choice of how/when to divide it up to the writer/reader and the chorus bits are read in between. I think it'll already feel incredibly polyphonic for an audience even if we read our pieces in two parts with chorus readings between each time. Too much movement and I fear it will all feel confusing rather than "exciting."

ery much like the idea that each of us stands at different tables in the room with our objects on the table—presented however we so choose. As for order of readers, how about:

Chorus/R1/Chorus/R2/Chorus/R3/Chorus/R4/Chorus/R5/Chorus/R5 and back on down again? We need not move for that to be peripatetic, right?? We have all been in our places in the world and our WORDS have been moving. Order of readers could be taken from the piece we've offered ahead of time, or alpha order, or whatever. That seems not so important to me.

my mind, as for the chorus, there are a few ways to go. One is that everyone reads the same thing in unison. Another is that each person reads something different—the creation of a cacophonous babel. I think getting the participants/audience to understand how and when they are invited to read together will be enough of a challenge that they need not have to do their part too many times. As it is, this would be 10x.

can toward the babel as that might un-do what we usually get from a religious service. What if we were to simply print a number of sets of words taken from our exchanges (say 20 different ones?) and cut them up and have each person who enters choose one from a hat/basket and read that same statement aloud 10x. I think confidence and volume would increase over time and allow the people reading to have a different experience with the same words. There's something really magical about that possibility—letting one set of words really enter you as others move so quickly around the room.

we are going to have to have a way to indicate that it is time for the chorus to read—a chime of some sort?

we could, at the "turn" do something quite simple like invite the participants/audience to exchange slips of paper with the neighbor if they so choose, but that's about all the movement I see being able to communicate with respect to the chorus.

for the Digital Writer's site, I am happy to bring my audio equipment and record the audience reading their parts. I would also record each of us reading our pieces either before or after our unpanel—this would improve clarity, etc. All of us would take images before, during and after the event—even take images of our objects as they are in their 'natural habitats' before entering the ugly room--and offer these images in quick succession in a simple slideshow with the audio on the Digital Writer's Festival site. This would make it really easy to create an accessible script as well. Just a



thought/offer. I work with audio, not video, so this is how I think

o, MY! I am SO excited about all of this! I'll be checking in to the hotel on Wednesday evening. It occurs to me that it might be helpful to exchange digits.

h appreciation,
nes

: It's now October!

ar Ames, Mary, Peggy and Francesca,

have just read Francesca's account of our meeting and am laughing still. We managed to move forwards, backwards and sideways all in the space of an hour, and often at the same time. Exciting is one word for it! There may be better words.

Francesca has compiled a good list of our peregrinations. What we said, what we tried, where we were when we ran out of time. The things we were excited by included a "choral" reading from the pages of email correspondence Francesca has photocopied, and the idea of delivering sections of one's own writing in micro-bites within this. We both liked the solo voice followed by chorus effect and the patterns it began to make.

We spent some of the time doing not terribly accurate mathematics about how many words one could hope to utter in a minute, and how many chunks our individual texts might be divisible into, and what will happen if we have an audience of four. Or of forty. Francesca drew all kinds of shapes on a piece of paper and promised to bring this map to Phoenix. But we also couldn't remember some key things - like whether we have yet agreed to a word limit, and if so what that might be.... (I have 1000 words in mind, from somewhere, but we whittled this down to 750) or whether each of us expects to have the time and space to declaim all her icon-inspired words, or just some of them, or even none.

For a while it all got muddy again, so we talked about the dramaturgical imperative to go back to first impulses. For me this still resides in the idea of the panel unplugged. But of course we are now confined to the ugly room. So then of course we found ourselves entertaining the terrifying notion that each might bring herself, her words, her sacred object and any other props, her breakfast (and her iPhone and her selfie stick?) into that space and make something extempore, without any prior meeting or clear plan.

Keeping in mind that whatever it is we do make has to be uploaded to the Digital Writers Festival website. (And in fact we talked about that also being the site that "hosts" our complete/d individual texts, whether or not they have been read or not.)

So. That's me chiming in.

Over to you!

eta

's now October!

dear Ames, Mary, Peggy and Peta,

Well Peta and I have met together after I've been away for a week to talk about our panel and what we are thinking, where we are up to, and what it *might* look like. It was a pretty hilarious hour we had together really, going from a feeling of nerves and biting of tongues to hilarity and laughter. It was brought to an abrupt end because I had another commitment, and we both had that slightly alarmist feeling of being none the wiser, however, we did agree that we should write to you and at the very least tell you our passage of thought and where we are up to at this point. So here I am. It would be really/great to get your response to this wild meandering!

My train of thought - "this is what happened":

- I brought in a set of pages that I'd photocopied from the google doc we've made of all of our conversations
-
- not all of the pages are present because there are some more recent conversations that need to be included - want to print them off too
-
- the text bleeds off the edge of the pages
-
- Peta brought her "object" of a book and the beginnings of some text she has been writing which she said she wasn't very happy with
-
- Peta asked me what my object was and I'm thinking at this point a bible I've picked up at a Brotherhood of St Laurence shop - I want to tear out all the 65 books and just leave Genesis there flapping in the wind, redacted and words and sentences cut out
- I said I'm still really keen on the idea of a mass reading, audience participation
-
- in fact I said that by then I'll probably want a rite of exorcism
- Peta said she might need a rite of mortifying
- we wondered out loud what your rites might be in this stations of the very cross / panel unplugged
- we played around with reading the work together, some of her 1000 words and some of the pages I'd brought, simultaneously - it was fun
-
- we had this idea that each audience member picks up a page of writing as they come in
- Peta then had the good idea of interleaving the mass reading with readings on and about the objects that we are writing
-
- so we tested this out by Peta reading 50 or so words from the opening of her work and then us both chorus reading the printed out pages from google doc
-
- interleave tiny bite - chorus - tiny bite
-
- we then decided these tiny bites should be tiny perhaps no bigger than 50 words
-
- that lead us to thinking about how we might interleave tiny bites from everyone with chorus work - so I drew a diagram - tiny bite, chorus, tiny bite, chorus, tiny bite and so on
-
- we then wondered how long this all would take and timed it out to see - 3, 5, 3, 5, 3, 5 x 9 = 35/40 mins
-
- and then a party
- maybe one thought one could not read all 1000 words as 4 or 5 could be there for some

- then we wondered out loud about the room and how to work with the pretty unwieldy big round tables and how does the party bit fit in
 -
 - perhaps I said if we each had a party table with our object on it we could invite the audience to crowd around and have a party, read a bit, do chorusing then move onto the next table
 -
 - maybe thread could come into it - coloured wool
 - but have we got too much going on now?
 - how would we do our parties?
 -
 - what would a Noah's Ark party look like?
 -
 - then we jumped to wondering when we're all arriving in Phoenix Arizona in any case and could we meet beforehand and figure this out
 -
 - perhaps we have to have no agreement and no plan at this stage
 -
 - I then saw that alarmingly I arrive at 8pm the night before our panel at 11.30am the next day
 -
 - Peta arrives in the afternoon of the day before but she's full up preparing for other panels and the like
 -
 - we then thought perhaps we could have breakfast together on the day of our panel - bring what we have, what we've made and we'll make something out of in some sort of plan on the spot
 -
 - I then said - why don't we bring our breakfast into the room and it can be the party
 -
 - Peta then said - oh yes, let's have our un-panel be our meeting to discuss what to do in the room and to talk about what we are planning
 -
 - our breakfast is the party
 -
 - our breakfast party is a recapitulation of the possibilities of this panel
 -
 - it is an ED room - essayesque dismemoir (a la Peta's work) in the making - where everything we have up until this point comes into the room including ourselves to be made, unmade, remade, made-up
 -
 - like Louise Bourgeois's spiders - do, undo, redo
- that's it. I might have got things a bit out of order or there might be bits missing - I'll let Peta chime in.

getting very exciting, isn't it?

27 September 2018 at 10:47, Peggy Shinner <[REDACTED]> wrote:
 ear all,

ack in Chicago, catching up on/following this astounding conversation. Mary's "Maybe we might even tuck something somewhere for someone else to find!" made me think of the time over 18 years ago when Ann and I were in Spain. Her cousin's partner had recently died and we wanted to do something, leave a trace somewhere, something that we could photograph and scrawl her cousin about. Ann ended up lashing together a Jewish star out of twigs (Judy, her cousin's partner was Jewish), some yarn navy thread as I recall, and I think we wrote down Judy's name and birth and death dates (and maybe we had a small photo of her or not sure) and somehow made a tiny scroll and then searched for a place to leave it. On our hike (we were in Aragon, near the

rain, and we've never gone back, but there it was, a trace of a life and this delicate, made thing under a very old Roman bridge in northern Spain...for someone to find or no one to find, who knows.

Monday night I saw a film about the playwright Maria Irene Fornes, *The Rest I Make Up*, shown as part of Reeling, the Chicago LGBTQ Film Festival. The film is beautiful, see it if it comes your way. Fornes wrote a play called *Promenade*, which I haven't seen or read but perhaps one of you have? These words from *Promenade* began the movie: I KNOW EVERYTHING/HALF OF IT I REALLY NOW/THE REST I MAKE UP. Part of our promenade? I don't know.

Mary, like Ames said, if there's a reading near or in Chicago, let us know. I hope the readings go fabulously.

Good night all.

Peggy

Happy readings this week, Mary! If there's ever one a bit closer to Chicago, please let me know.

About the Panel as After-Party idea, I have only this to add at the moment: !!!!!!!!!!!!!

With appreciation,
Les

From: Mary Cappello <[REDACTED]>

Date: Wednesday, September 26, 2018 at 8:14 AM

Re: "Panel as After-Party! And of course there must be food and drink, music, dress-ups, perhaps? Perhaps even dancing?" !!!

Love it! And love your letter from Saigon, Francesca.

Sorry my note must be more like a text--next five days are the sort where every minute is accounted for.

Jan and I are gearing up for four readings nearly four days in a row (while still maintaining the day job). Here they are if you know anyone in these locales who might want to come out, please send them the link! Tonight we're reading at an ACLU sponsored banned books reading. It could be fascinating.

Don't wait queerly to promenade altogether in Arizona!
Warmly
Mary

For Ames, Francesca, Mary, Peggy

Thank you for your wonderful missives of the past week or so. I have been utterly exhilarated by your responses. It's also waiting to know how to weigh in because I don't have words, or I don't use words perhaps like you do. As much as I don't write so much as *wright*. This involves a kind of inner construction company peopled by many parts of me; I have my own inner architects and decorators, carpenters and designers all moving the furniture about, knocking down walls, pulling up carpets, splashing colour around and considering what it might be to over-wright/overwrite (overwrought?) this almost violent "assertion of the bland" as you put it Mary and to make the space and punk the space and leave our queer traces in it and on it as we move through it and onwards.

here in and through our extended exertions in cyberspace. So for me, our meeting in Arizona almost feels like a panel as After-Party! And of course there must be food and drink, music, dress-ups, perhaps? Perhaps even dancing?

Accordingly I feel our task is to somehow dress/re-dress the room. I don't know how, yet, but will continue to mock things over and mock things up (in my sleep, mostly). I am so very excited about what we are going to make of all this!

Yours queerly,

Stata

Just a quick second to say: Thank you, Francesca!

I hope you are having/had an amazing time in Saigon and I can't wait to hear about your trip to "the heart of the jungle" (Oh, how I love this description!).

With appreciation,
Stata

Subject: Re: Peripatetic Panel - a few questions

Dear Mary, dear Ames, dear queer queering-the-beige-lings,

I have woken in Saigon, the centre of Ho Chi Minh City, early because of jet lag at 4.30 in the morning (Vietnam is three hours behind the eastern states of Australia, which makes a big difference as I've discovered - sort of the same time zone but sort of not too), to read your beautiful words. So PROFOUND. I can't thank you enough. You make me well.

I have been wandering around the hotel room dashing from one side to the other so I can write a response trying quickly to find a plug suitable to fit my adapter and recharger into because my computer is flat, without pip, pushing the plugs into a set of holes into that, wanting preferably to be comfy in my bed with its bed of huge European cushions on it (there is a Pillow Menu here where you can choose between natural rubber pillow, neck support pillow, natural wool pillow, natural popok pillow and body pillow - I'm going to dial for a body pillow tonight to see what arrives - I've also always had this collection of our objects on the soft clouds of pillows for some reason) ----- but none of the plugs work. Until I sat at the desk in front of the mirror me-facing-me and the plug here is good because the balance and weight of paraphernalia is supported by a wooden surface of the desk.

So I can write to you.

It is so much sigh and joy and exhilaration and lung-full of breath in and breath out. It's hard to find words from my tongue, from the tips of my fingers hitting the keys of my silly keyboard that's not playing ball this morning of all mornings (the wifi is dicky-do) to finding a way to language my response, to body my language, because the reply I want to give all these miles and seas and coastlines and sand drifts and wonders-of-this-beautiful-earth-of-ours away because of the extraordinary gift-of people and thinkers you are (I'm so glad I've met you!!) is a full body response, the pulse of my heart, the push of muscle to the surface of skin, all orifices the go - I am crying with joy and relief and that indescribable feeling of knowing/being home.

I come in the 'newly discovered' interstitium - WOW - I had no idea of this discovery of this organ (I knew they were there in the body but am inaware/unaware till now thanks Ames of the scientific debate surrounding) - and want to know/see more of this queer space of the 'seen-yet-unseen space in the body' - *home* in the trace, *home* in the idea of 'a person finding a home', *home* in the work/play we have to do to queer spaces well, *home* in the just-being-in-spaces-is-sometime-never-leaving-some-ways-superenough-to-queer-spaces, *home* in the 'pushing against the sterile space of our classrooms' spaces.

ve (not dead - 'not likely ever to come back to life' - that is so funny Mary!).

s such a uh-ha moment of YES, THIS IS HOME, this is. Maybe this is the PERFECT SPACE 'to make clear how our writing/movements/intentions/attentions are absolutely peripatetic queerings'. I keep thinking about how there is such responsibility here. The presence and presenting of queer in such spaces, and the burning realisation that *we have to do* (I can feel that announcement in my coccyx, the in-between thighs), that there actually is no other place/space to do. How. Queer. Is. That?

makes me think of my journey to your country coming up and how I'm going to be going to Kentucky and the heart of the region and how that Noah's Ark - thinking here of Mary's 'shape-and-make' - they have built as a Disney-shrine to creationist beliefs is the most 'downright RIDICULOUS space' I can think of to go to and how just my presence/presence in that place is a queering of that space/narrative (and how so many of my friends and colleagues are wondering why I am doing this - are you sure you'll be okay? And oh, how I laugh too). Institutionalizing queer wildness indeed (the Ark full of wild and untamed). The *HOME* of 'never undoing us'. *Home* of refashioning. Home, too, of food. Yes. Home of 'making wonders'.

so - WOW - the home of knowing, us knowing that already this space has been IS BEING transformed with this discussion our words and correspondence, and for me how through these words back and forth *all beige* spaces I/we inhabit now and in our futures will never ever be the same, this queering of expectations and desires, and how this traces on.

am sitting at the feet of queer geniuses. Love it/you. :-)

Also think of food. Love to cook. Things with fruit. Because of what it brings inside from outside apart from lots of other things. To nourish and all. It's hard when on the move but I've been thinking of these funny upside-down jelly books I make that look like eyes on a plate with gelatine and cut up words buried and floating. Totally impractical of course - but hey, there's a lot of queer in that!

bringing life to lifelessness as Mary says.

the only Italian I can claim is my name - which I love/heart to do.

is now after 7am. I can go and eat breakfast: cafe su da and hot ginger tea and papaya and pineapple sprinkled with chili oil, (Vietnamese chilli salt).

is so incredibly beautiful, Ames, thank you so much for this:

as I write, I think about how the presence of my students pushes against the sterile space of our classroom. How we queer it. Maybe this is what Mary suggests, the perfect space for our piece to make clear how our writing/movements/intentions/attentions are absolutely peripatetic queerings. We keep moving. We roam. We bring ourselves and our writings in and through so many different spaces. What I love thinking about now is how that space may forever be transformed by whatever it is we do there—the trace of us there somehow, in the space, left for others to feel/find. Maybe we might even tuck something somewhere for someone else to find!"

and WOW--I so look forward to thinking more on this::

have also been thinking a LOT about the newly discovered interstitium. These fluid-filled spaces that we 'could not see' for years mostly because of the ways scientists were preparing tissue samples. The struggle/debate over whether it is or is not an organ. The ways the 'tubule' suggest a superhighway of energy, a seen-yet-unseen space in the body that may help us better understand proprioception and felt sense. How queer is that?"

who knew there might be a substratum a Napoli to our unpanel? Mom's family from Naples (and Campobasso); Dad's from Belmonte Scizzagno, vicino a Palermo.

our collaborators—

I'm sitting on the newly recovered loveseat in what would usually be the eating area of the kitchen (I like to undo the stereotypical/traditional uses of spaces in homes) with a strong breeze-wind coming through the window bringing that late summer/early fall smell of drying-dying-shriveling leaves. They have not yet really begun to change color, but you can see the beginning at the tips when the eastern light hits them just so.

Last night in queer lit we finished our discussing of Audre Lorde's *Zami*. Together, we listened to "The Uses of the Erotic" and then I read passages from Ahmed's *Queer Phenomenology*. I asked them to think about how it is we queer space, how Ahmed's description of moving reflects the erotic Lorde describes. With that in mind, I asked them to 'map' the spaces in the text, thinking about whether spaces were queer, or to be queered; whether a person could become a home. It was a lovely discussion and I have to say that Mary's words here reflect the sensation I got from the students who also discussed the idea of the trace—what is left behind of Ginny/The Branded/Eudora/Muriel/Kitty in/on Audre and how that connected with and to particular spaces/places she lived—whether they were interior/exterior. We started to talk about the downright RIDICULOUS spaces we—as queers—often find ourselves in; the work/play we do to queer the space. As I write, I think about how the presence of my students pushes against the sterile space of our classroom. How we queer it. Maybe this is, as Mary suggests, the perfect space for our piece to make clear how our writing/movements/intentions/attentions are absolutely peripatetic queerings. We keep moving. We roam. We bring ourselves and our writings in and through so many different spaces. What I love thinking about now is how that space may never be transformed by whatever it is we do there—the trace of us there somehow, in the space, left for others to seek/find. Maybe we might even tuck something somewhere for someone else to find!

The idea of using food/drink in our space is incredibly appealing to me. Not only do I love to cook, but I just this summer learned that my mother's father (who was adopted in Brumal, PA in 1945) came to the US from Naples, Italy sometime in the early 20th c. He was born in 1896 and lived to be 102!! Lots of thoughts here with respect to traces as well since it was in 1984 that I first traveled to Italy looked around and said: *Everyone here looks like my mom!* The ways this new information opened into a recent and brief—very brief—foray onto Ancestry.com (about as long as I was once-upon-a-time on OKcupid.com, leaving them both for similar reasons) feels somehow suddenly relevant to this unpanel.

I've also been thinking a LOT about the newly discovered interstitium. These fluid-filled spaces that we 'could not see' for years mostly because of the ways scientists were preparing tissue samples. The struggle/debate over whether it is or isn't an organ. The ways the 'tubes' suggest a superhighway of energy, a seen-yet-unseen space in the body that may help us better understand proprioception and felt sense. How queer is that?

This is another way to say thanks to you all for this brilliant, continuing conversation. Have a lovely weekend everyone!

nes

e: Peripatetic Panel - a few questions

ello All!

on SO loving these dispatches from far and wide, in thought and spirit and place. So much fun. And it's pretty clear at any rate that whatever we do course it will be great given our collective energies and talents. I love the idea of the improvisatory/jazz element, mixing and mashing the texts as has been proposed. Sorry for throwing the animal idea in--not sure what I was thinking, though maybe just projecting since the death of my cat. !! I think I was recalling the keys in the draw of Peggy's piece, Peta perhaps saying she was walking her dog? Anyway, this is neither here nor there. Besides the link to the promenade was in the initial definition Peta had given us--having to do with leading animals forth, etc.

love the idea of leaving a trace. I've brought my object with me from our home in Maine to Providence and of course will be bringing it to Arizona. Needless to say, I can't then leave it behind (It's one of the paint by numbers that my parents made in the 60s, rife with all that was roiling beneath the face of the domicile. Maybe I should "leave it behind," lol!)

have to say that I find the images of the space HILARIOUS rather than distressing. It is just what we have dealt with all of our lives, isn't it? Attempting to institutionalize queer wildness? The assertion of the bland at any announcement of queer colorings? The corporate cheesecake in place of the cake soaked in rum and chased with some Sicilian Averna? The surfaces that might outlive us but never undo us, their anthropocene plasticine perversion of mute in-perpetuity of erasure? There's no there there. And yet there is: it's the color beige. It's the opposite of shape and make. More like a shake and bake sort of room. Those ceiling "accents"! That floor! Someone or something has died and it's not likely ever to come back to life.

am very used to having to work with what I am given--which at a state level is often worse than nothing. I've been literally re-fashioning spaces since I started at the university where I work. Replacing beige or blinding white with eggplant or magenta. Appointing a "conference room" which we were then open for our visiting writers series with all manner of salvation army cast-offs till the place morphed into a place of welcome and hijinx. I think we are very used, in other words, to making something from nothing, or, at saying this is not the world I would have created, this one I was born into, and that what we make is a response to that non-call. So I am sure we will work wonders with this room! I sort of like that it is such a caricature of bad.

loved the photos of Francesca and Peta thinking. And the shadow puppet suggestiveness of Francesca's hands.

think the following suggestion could be a very fun way to proceed:

Agree that we could possibly start with the worst possible version of the most stitched up boring, conventional panel and then somehow smash it apart, you know? Punk the panel!

That's funny - that made me laugh out loud!! The MOST boring panel of all time punked up."

ate to reproduce the cliché of my Italian ancestry, but now I'm thinking this place needs some sort of food or drink. I will think about some Italian specialty that is transportable and not likely to cause spillage. Of course nothing alcoholic much as I'd enjoy that. Torrone in little boxes perhaps. Or something that could punk it up? Or a la walking theme, something to eat on a stroll, like during the Italian *passaggiata*. Just thinking of how to bring life to lifelessness, and I love to eat!

h great excitement from RI,
ry

21 Sep 2018, at 9:52 am, Francesca Rendle-Short <[REDACTED]> wrote:

ermight we got news about our PP space - not good news I am afraid. A bit of a bombshell really.:-(

ta and I are trying to digest what this is, what it means, what we can do, how we might proceed.....

erpts from our very quick correspondence early this morning - Peta in Melbourne, me in HCMC Vietnam:

ow. Horrible. I saw it overnight and wanted to email you immediately but counselled myself to wait....

so baffled.

am also thinking about how we might begin with and the somehow spill out in the corridors and vestibules and foyers, and liminal spaces around this ugly room.....)

could start in the horribleness and move somewhere else.

agree that we could possibly start with the worst possible version of the most stitched up boring, conventional panel and then somehow slash it apart, you know? Punk the panel!

that's funny - that made me laugh out loud!! The MOST boring panel of all time punked up.

Dear Ames, Mary, Peggy and Francesca,

Just a quick note to apologise for my protracted silence. I am a bear of very little brain at the moment so don't have much to add. Francesca's dot points below give a good account of our walks and talks last weekend and possibilities that have occurred to us thus far.

I think the problem is that, for me, everything still hinges on the space. Until I have some firmer sense of whether we are to be indoors or outdoors, and of the ambience, and of what kind of options the space affords. How we move through it, how any 'audience' might be corralled, herded, dispersed etc, I think it will be hard to know how to disport ourselves, and how our icons might be displayed.

I do like the idea that somehow when we have finished there is some kind of trace or residue of our endeavour and I am interested in trying to find/keep a porosity between play/text/promenade. I don't know what this looks like, yet, or even what it really means....

I will continue to ponder and promise to pipe up if I have anything new to contribute.

Best wishes,

John

And as for animals....I'm afraid I'm missing some essential internal formulation.

<https://therumpus.net/2017/01/the-sunday-rumpus-essay-pet-the-dog/>

GGY

From: Francesca Rendle-Short [redacted]
Sent: Sunday, September 16, 2018 6:57:00 PM
To: Hawkins, Ames
Cc: Mary Cappello; Peggy Shinner; Peta Murray
Subject: Re: response to format of performance

Just to add to my notes - I think I'm with you Mary on the call and response idea, also silence as fissure as pause, and Ames' idea of intentional pause/silence, without silencing. Am always for less is more, keeping it simple. I once had an exhibition of writing and books where we all - authors and audience and all - waiting staff - feasted on the words in front of us (there was eating in one iteration) and we "sang" together our sheets/the words. We all started at different points, chimed in, and then ended at different points too. Lots of listening in. Lots of pauses.

arked all over the place. It was pretty marvellous.

and the only pets I have at the moment are my plastic animals that I've collected on my window sill -- I love em!

s, this is great, thank you, thank you. I'm late to the party too, getting ready to leave New Mexico and drive to Chicag

anks, all, for including me. The extracting/splicing together is rich, fun, thoughtful, freeing.

ie Mary, I worry about the performance being cute rather than illustrative or provocative. But I'm a shy person and
verse to taking risks in this way. And I won't be there, so will tread lightly here and listen closely to the conversation,
d then, as Ames said, reside in the pause for a while.

re's something I've been thinking about a lot regarding objects, particularly as it relates to the plastic bag and my
andmother dying without possessions. From Jenny Erpenbeck's novel *Go, Went, Gone*:

*l these objects surrounding him form a system and have meaning only as long as he makes his way among them wit
s habitual gestures, remembering this, remembering that—and once he's gone, they'll drift apart and be lost. That's
other thing he could write about sometime: the gravitational force that unites lifeless objects and living creatures t
m a world.*

preciatively,
ggy

st a few quick thoughts here to add to what Mary says and then I'll slide into that space of pause:

very much like the idea of intentional pause/silence, without silencing. Also, the idea of integrating call and
sponse and getting the audience involved. The more I think about it, the idea of 'less is more' is likely best.
pace to not participate, or perhaps to feel like participant even if one says/does 'nothing,' is key. When I
ought about the AWP panel and how to present our work, the whole intention was to bring the voices and
ords of the 4 panelists to the audience in ways that would invite consideration of the spaces between--
tpositions and order of passages. One way to challenge the notion of center was to undo an established
der to the speakers. Mary's words caused me to wonder: How might we think about this unpanel as another
portunity to think about decentering/acting as we've no use for a center in this academic setting? What's
other simple way to do this and include movement and perhaps audience participation?

no current relationship to any specific animal/s on my end. However, I fully appreciate the way Mary's story
inforces the importance of acknowledging and adhering to a queer ethics of consent in whatever we decide
garding our choreography.

h appreciation,
res

Date: Sunday, September 16, 2018 at 10:49 AM

From: Ames Hawkins <[REDACTED]>

Subject: response to format of performance

Hello All!

I thought I'd separate my responses into two separate e-mails, for clarity's sake and all the stuff we are juggling.

As you note that in previous e-mail "collection" autocorrected to "curtain." Maybe curtain works for the idea of something being staged?, but, why, autocorrect is just so strange.

I have never really choreographed an event such as the one we are collaborating on. I've developed something I call illustrated readings from work that involve highly orchestrated readings of words and images, and I had the pleasure of being on the (non)panel that Ames choreographed at AWP a few years ago that morphed into the wonderful Queering CNF set of audio recordings and documents. This is just to say that I'm not sure how to propose a format at this point, and I look forward to hearing Peta and Francesca's ideas, especially given your work in theater. I wasn't entirely able to "picture," yet, the format you proposed in previous e-mail, Ames, but I am working on it.

For my own part, I find that what such "translations" (of thought into choreographed action) risk is something like a literalizing or abstracting for and against an embodiment or bodying forth. I hope you'll forgive me if I suggest that we have to be careful not to come off as too cut-throat a link that can be an effect of too tight a "translation" of our words into action.

So if panels are already too predictable and tacit in format--and of course rarely, if ever dialogical (when is there really any time for discussion?), might our creation of a ritual simply stand to reproduce the panel once more? Centers and circles are often enough synonymous one another--and I am wondering if our format can run counter to that or offer something different (again, in the spirit of nonfiction). I remember Stein: "act as if there is no use in a center" The pairings mechanism also feels stratifying to me.

Looking back over the materials that Francesca redacted for us, I find myself returning to the ideas both of labyrinths and pause. Might it be interesting to involve the audience in an act of silence that is different from passive listening? Silence as fissure or pause. I also want to be sure the actual objects, and our mediations on them, don't get lost in the performance. I wonder if we might work a call and response element into the event--I mean from and with the ostensible "audience"--not one that is orchestrated but that is spontaneous. I say all of this at the same time I wonder if simpler is better--do we want for our nonpanel panel to be highly orchestrated or lightly orchestrated?

Maybe it's clear that I don't "need" for any of the above to happen to feel comfortable with what we do. I'm just thinking out loud here.

In the hope that this can be helpful, here is what jumps out to me in the material that Francesca so kindly redacted for us:

...circular ritual; "the sacred sent me to hell"--renaming or reclaiming the sacred; "raucous procession," "riotous assembly"--both raucous and didactic; fear and outrage; SINGING

Additionally, it seems to me that in most or all of our writing to one another over this last little while--correct me if I'm wrong--we've referred to a pet or an important relationship to an animal (taking one's dog for a walk, or vice versa)--the "walks" our pets have led us on? This brings me back to Peta's having shared with us the etymology of promenade (leading animals forth via shouts?) I am NOT by the way thinking of animals as totems, but just noting that alongside the object emphasis, an inadvertent animal theme seems to have emerged. The other day at a meeting, one of my colleagues said something to me that I'm still mulling over--he had not been able to come to a dance party that I had and I had hosted, and his reason that night was that his cat had "bit him in the face." In his further explanation at the meeting where I told him, he referred to his having *trained his cats to be taken for walks* (on leashes)." Need I say more?

Looking forward,
Warmly
Ames

Sunday 17 Sept 17:46

Hi Francesca, Ames, Mary, Peggy,

Sorry I'm late to the party. Just wanted to say that all looks fine to me, and I am happy to see this waved off to the DWF. Love the new thing.

efully on Wednesday.

anks for your understanding and best wishes to all.

ta

st a few quick thoughts here to add to what Mary says and then I'll slide into that space of pause:

very much like the idea of intentional pause/silence, without silencing. Also, the idea of integrating call and response and getting the audience involved. The more I think about it, the idea of 'less is more' is likely best. Space to not participate, or perhaps to feel like participate if one says/does 'nothing,' is key. When I thought about the AWP panel and how to present our work, the whole intention was to bring voices and words of the 4 panelists to the audience in ways that would invite consideration of the spaces between--juxtapositions and order of passages. One way to challenge the notion of center was to undo an established order to the speakers. Mary's words caused me to wonder: How might we think about this unpanel as another opportunity to think about decentering/acting as we've no use for a center in this academic setting? What's another simple way to do this and include movement and perhaps audience participation?

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king forward,
rmly
ry

wkins, Ames <[REDACTED]>
ours ago

on board! Thanks, Mary. Super fun and captures the play, power and intimate intention.

ancesca—

is is fantastic. Thank you so much for the work of recombining/revisioning our exchange into these missives. I am very excited to see us
together in each of these pieces. How/where are these short pieces 'released'?

for my piece connected with missive 3, I suggest the following:

I can't provide a link to 'Choir Grrl/Boi' as it has only been performed and never published, but here is one to 'Exhuming Transgenre Ties
Ames Hawkins <http://enculturation.net/exhuming-trasnggenre-ties>. This is its own kind of queer promenade focusing on a specific/particul
red object: the tie.

I do not know what you think. I am definitely not against the other piece, I just know that I almost chose the tie as my sacred object, but I had
already written about it so didn't even mention it when we were writing.

so wanted to say that I am currently thinking about the idea of stations of the (very) cross and very, (very) happy to have you and Peta
and in the promenade, but I figured I ought to share one image that keeps coming to mind for me as a possibility:

place the objects (and us) in the center of the room—together or in a kind of circle
ask all participants to line up in around the perimeter of the room in pairs, facing ahead—a kind of ring of human energy that holds space for
interior where the sacred objects and we will be.

I could use the *Walk in twos, two rows a part text* as a directive to invite the audience in unison to begin moving in a circle. We could either
do it together, or we could hand out slips of paper and invite the audience to say it with us. (When I performed this piece, between the bits
that I read, while I was being disrobed, or disrobing, I sang the first verses to the following hymns in order: Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones,
O Love Divine, Come Down O Love Divine, Where Charity and Love Prevail, Ubi caritas. I have been thinking about the possibility of setting
these words to one of those hymns. Perhaps this is a bit too much, but if folks are game I could give it a go and see what happens—
understanding I'd have to rewrite the passage and have it be in alignment with what we've collectively created. And fully aware that if folks
don't want to sing, that's completely fine, too. Just where my mind goes)

when we are done with the procession/promenade, they turn in to the center of the room and one of us reads our piece. We repeat this
process 5 times. We could read on Peggy's behalf or even play a recording of her work—which might be really cool to have a kind of dis-
bodied-embodied voice appear at some point.

Does this make sense? Again, I am happy to go in any direction (pun fully intended if read that way) and I only wanted to let you hear what
I've 'seen' and 'heard' as a possibility for our un-paneling.

Hope you all are well!!

ances

Sep 16, 2018, at 9:54 AM, Mary Cappello <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Mary Cappello
Ames, me, Peggy, Peta

llo All!

Thank you, Francesca, for bringing together this curtain of cross-currents / correspondences as prelude to the Digital Writers Festival. !

I read it through, and just have one suggestion to run by everyone (along with a caught typo--an extra "it is" in Peta's quotation in segment 4). Segment 5, it seemed to me, felt a little anti-climactic, so I was wondering, if instead, we could see what might happen if we created a black out text from the lines that you gave us there, and use that, instead, for Segment 5. In the name of colloquy, it made me think about what we are saying or not saying, what we can see in what we are saying, and what remains obscured (as in any conversation piece of writing). I think the blacking out that was there simply for editorial purposes made me think of this, too, and, simply, what would happen if we tried to distill some of our collective conversation for segment 5. Here is what I am proposing, in lieu of the original (and of course feel free to reject or propose something else):

perceive of movement

possible --truly,

/ style

with no chronological obligation whatsoever

leadership counter

crit of subventions

ink...

wide-ranging, generous

humour and seriousness both,

ink-accessible

Francesca jumped ahead and had a hilarious cross-purposes laugh.

So, in this spirit, here is some work

For all,

What do you think?

Warmly,

Andy

Sat, Sep 15, 2018 at 3:19 PM, Hawkins, Ames <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Dear Mary, Ames, Peggy and Peta,

I promised I've been beavering away here at a beautiful retreat outside Melbourne in amongst the tall eucalypts - the Yarra gums and ash I think they are - thinking about our Peripatetic Panel and about our writing date. It's pretty wonderful to go back and read our correspondence. So rich and enriching.

What I've come up with is attached.

September.

The plan is that they will release/publish one set every few days in the lead-up to the festival (conference). This draft includes an opening page which sets up the brief with an abstract and note about the performance. Roughly speaking the missives follow a thematic for each on

setting the stage (including a reference to Mary's work)
stations of the very cross (Peta's work)
yes yes yes choir / singers (Ames' work)
essaying objects (Peggy's work)
endings / beginnings (FRS's work)

I included a link to a piece of everyone's work in each section. I'm not sure we have access to Ames' piece so I want you Ames to suggest something else to go in there (perhaps with a note about not being able to include 'Choir Grrl/Boi'). I'm thinking it could be 'Courting the peculiar: the ever-changing queerness of creative nonfiction'.

<http://www.slagglasscity.org/essaymemoirlyric/textual/courting-peculiar-ever-changing-queerness-creative-nonfiction/>

The five missives read like a choral work, I think. I've used rainbow coloured text as a simple (raising-the-rainbow-flag and all that) way of identifying each author. We could have a key of coloured names running alongside each missive entry for ease of reading (Izzy from DWF might have some ideas here). I've redacted any specific writing about specific objects. Each missive is restricted to a single page of text to keep it concise with five entries from each of the five authors, that will act as teasers/tasters. This text withholds what is exactly going to open on the day.

Peta and I have also been mulling over possibilities as to how we might mount this promenade that I'll send to you in due course.

Please do let me know what you think - if it hits/misses the mark, if there are additions or elisions you can suggest etc.

I'm looking forward to hearing what you think.

Warmest
Francesca

Date: Tuesday, September 4, 2018 at 9:00 AM

for Peggy, Peta, Mary and Ames,

Peggy - I'm so sorry to hear that you won't be able to join us at NonfictionNow. I have been so enjoying getting to know you and your writing through our email correspondence and was so looking forward to actually meeting you in November and putting together the culmination of our panel "in the flesh" so to speak. You will be missed so much, but I completely understand where you are coming from. I will mention this pressing question of some conference panellists not having institutional support, and how all the will in the world doesn't quite match the need for hard cash to actually make it happen in terms of travel, accommodation, fees etc, to the conference organisers. One of my closest colleagues here at RMIT in Melbourne, David Carlin, is co-convenor / co-president of NonfictionNow and I know Nicole Walker quite well too. Another co-president, so I will let them both know about this, that this question is something the conference could/should consider - how to raise/provide funds for non-institutional writers wanting to be part of the conference. I know when the conference was in Melbourne in 2012 we were able to source some funding from the Copyright Agency to support quite a number of independent writers in Australia to be part of the conference.

In the meantime, we will miss your presence mightily. But I would very much like you still to be part of the panel in some way or other - in fact you already are!! So I agree with Mary that it would be great to have you and your work included in some way, your voice be part of "the lective set of meditations". You continue to contribute to this thing that we're making up as we go!

As for our plans, just to let you know I met with the organisers of the Digital Writers Festival yesterday. It was an hilarious meeting as it turned out because I was there to talk about another project we are doing with the Emerging Writers Festival and right at the end as I had to speed to another meeting with my Dean, I said, and there's that other thing we were going totally about, the NFN pitch for DWF!! - but I don't have time now. But as we were going out and paying for our coffees and walking away on the street, we managed to have a quickie about ... They're really excited by the idea, the idea of the missives ahead of the festival - a sort of trail of exciting tidbits leading to the performance itself. They suggested they publish these as a sequence online to entice their audience about what is to come, perhaps in the few weeks leading up the festival/NFN - maybe 5 or 6 of them (2 a week). They also talked about the time difference and how our panel is at midday in Arizona but how that puts it at early morning Melbourne time. So they suggested we prerecord the panel in the way that we are suggesting - a live / in situ recording with selfies or some such - and then send them the files to upload onto the DWF site at a more reasonable time of the day, Melbourne time. I have yet to work out the practicalities of this and contact NFN (I haven't done that yet because I haven't heard back from you all) to find out what the space is. presence of wifi etc. Peta and I will also put our heads together and do a bit

amination when she paraded into the theatre space where her examination was to take place, her at the head of the parade selfie-stick in
ce recording it all, with the examination audience, her supervisors and examiners trailing behind her in a great long phalanx. It was
arious, great fun, set the tone for her "essayesque dismemoir" delivery - a tour de force.

, and the other thing Izzy and Will from DWF said is that they are really REALLY excited by this unpanelled panel because of the way it
allenges the "normal" "straight" scholarly panel/conference thingy with its bent creative collaborative queering. They see it as an
vention of sorts, demonstrating in creative, physical, intellectual, visceral, tangible, playful etc ways how this kind of generative and
bodied process can engage us across space, across/through minds if you like, which brings us back to our starting point, that of encoun
onfiction-as-encounter, a queer promenade-as-nonfiction".

at's all for now - but just to say apologies for being a bit slow in responding to these emails. It's been a mad couple of weeks!

o - I'll go ahead and contact the NFN organisers to get some intel on the space, production specs etc.

d so sorry to hear about your cat too Mary - hearts to you xx

ate: Tuesday, September 4, 2018 at 5:30 AM

ry, Peta and Francesca

as thinking similarly: that it would be great to include Peggy and/as her words here if she's game.

ere's something powerful about the possibility of the absence-presence calling attention to the need to help make the conference
ossible for those who do not have more traditional lines of institutional support.

h appreciation,
res

ate: Monday, September 3, 2018 at 7:51 PM

llo Peta!

great to hear from you and I just want to clarify that I feel absolutely no need for a hard and fast deadline of any sort for next step.
rtainly not anytime soon. I'm bringing a new book out and traveling a lot while also teaching and meeting obligatory writing deadlines.
y're all in the same boat, and we have so much to go on already. My vote at this stage of the game would be to stick with we four, and bu
some of Peggy's responses in to the extent she is agreeable to this. It would be hard to bring a 5th person in at this stage it seems to me
d I've definitely seen a lot of panels at NFN with four, or even less. But of course whatever Francesca decides to do is absolutely fine with
--utterly and entirely. It will all be good no matter what route we take. And I wasn't aware of any silence whatsoever, so no worries there!

urs and best
ry

Mon, Sep 3, 2018 at 7:51 PM, Peta Murray <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Mary, hi Ames,

st a quick email to thank you both for responding to Peggy, and Mary, for your suggestion that we might somehow carry her words forwa
ope she will agree to this. (I acknowledged her email myself, yesterday, too.)

ancesca is mostly offline at the moment, I believe, and I am working remotely too, so I wanted to let you know this in case you are worrie
it we Australians appear to have gone to ground. Our peripatetic panel is much on my mind, and I am sure Francesca has been thinking
out it too. But as you know, there are so many competing demands on one's time and attention. We've just had the Melbourne Writers
stival here, and this coincides with Francesca and David's very demanding wrICE program. So things have been pretty busy and I can te
u that the next couple of weeks will also be hectic for us both. So please, can we sit a little longer before we nominate that agreement on
mat deadline?

less one other active question, with Peggy's departure, is whether we try to secure a fifth panellist? I know the NFN conference likes
nels to field a full bench, as it were, and there is usually the instruction that one uses the Facebook page to put out the call for additional
nellists where gaps arise. But our group, and its approach is so - shall we say 'niche'? - that I feel like if we are to replace Peggy, it will
ed to be via a personal invitation from one of us, as before. What do you think? There was always something quite appealing to me about
an odder number than four, but we would also have the problem of inducting a new person into our rich correspondence trail, as you've j
Mary, and perhaps that's not fair, and we should just go ahead with the four of us, and be grateful for the extra time this might afford us to
whatever it is we decide to do!

thinking aloud here. And I believe the call is with Francesca as our chair as to what we do next. But I think I have just written myself
wards a point where four is fine. What do you two think? Especially if we can still hold Peggy's voice in the mix. Indeed perhaps her
sence-yet-presence may become an interesting part of the fabric of our composition? (I'm thinking now of the panel we gave in Iceland la
ar in which Larry Ypil was featured, even though he was unable to attend.)

ope you're both well and I really am looking forward to promenading with you in November.

best wishes,

ta

4 Sep 2018, at 3:59 am, Mary Cappello <[REDACTED]> wrote:

ello Peggy, Peta, Francesca, and Ames,

so sorry to hear that you won't be able to join us at NonfictioNow, Peggy, but I totally understand. One of the panelists on the panel I am
airing is also struggling with expense--she's coming all the way from Berlin and does not have institutional affiliation, so all expenses are
r dime. I have been wondering, especially as the conference organizers have been keen for NFN to foster international dialogue, how or
ne sort of defraying of costs could become part of the project, especially for people who do not have institutional support. Maybe it is
ne thing we can bring up some time with the conference's designers.

o will miss you mightily--and I was very much looking forward to meeting you-- but I hope you would be ok with us perhaps quoting from
ur work or with some part of this rich correspondence we've all been having? It would be a pity for your voice to fall out of the collective s
meditations.

realize I have not yet responded to Francesca's marvelous e-mail of August 10th! I was brining our beloved cat of 18 years to the end of h
at that time, and since then, traveling, myself, in mind heart and body. Perhaps if we identify a sort of "deadline" by which we all want to
me to agreement on the format, plan and what we might still be wanting/hoping to compose for the event, that would work now. I have to
/--my own panel has yet to respond to my request for a coming-together in discussion prior to event, so we are way way ahead of the
me apparently!

h my warm regards to all,
ry

Sun, Sep 2, 2018 at 7:54 PM Peta Murray <[REDACTED]> wrote:

ar Peggy,

so sorry NonFictioNow hasn't worked out for you, and completely understand your decision. Thanks for letting us know.

glad I have had this opportunity to "meet" you and your work, and can only echo your words regarding the process to date. It's been a j
olay with you on this panel-in-waiting, even at this remove. I hope we cross paths again.

th all best wishes,

ta
Peta Murray

ggy! I am SO sorry to hear this!! This is disappointing, but I do fully understand.

m not quite to the point of re-entering this conversation in the larger sense, but I had in my mind that I wanted to say I was looking forwar
making a plan to connect in Chicago. Please do email me at [REDACTED] if you are interested in connecting over a
fee/cocktail at some point in the near future. I'd love to hear more about you and your work.

h appreciation,
res

ate: Sunday, September 2, 2018 at 11:28 AM
ar Francesca, Peta, Mary, and Ames—

I've been thinking this over for a while now, and have decided to leave our panel and forgo the conference. I've loved our wide-ranging conversation, the generous exchange of ideas and experiences, the humor and seriousness both, the refreshing interest in risk-taking, but I cannot take on the expense. When I made the commitment to participate, I thought I could manage, but I don't have institutional support and, weighing the projected expenses, see that's not realistic. My deep apologies for throwing this big wrench into the panel planning. Perhaps at some other time our disparate lives will bring us together.

Respectfully yours,
GGY

from: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

to: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

date: 10 August 2018 at 17:09

subject: Call and response and more

mailed-by: rmit.edu.au

Hi Peggy, Mary, Ames and Peta,

It's now some time since I've written - forgive me. The weeks tear along, don't they, but that doesn't mean that I've not been thinking about our panel and the discussions we're having and all that this thinking and dreaming and wishing and wanting inspires in me and in us and where it might take/lead us. I've been following the correspondence with great interest. It really is a living thing.

I'm also aware that time is speeding by and we're doing lots of other things over August and September. In fact, I've got the Melbourne Writers Festival coming up during which I'll be away and preoccupied with a research writing project that I have going on here. So I'm trying to do some thinking ahead of that.

I can't do justice to the discussion and dialogue we're having here or respond to all the ideas and nuance in the correspondence we've had here - I LOVE LOVE LOVE IT - but I do want to write about a couple of things, and I think these relate to what we've been saying in any case about crafting out of some sort of plan.

Every time you asks about the space - and yes, I agree, we need to know more. To know what is impossible as well as possible. So - I thought I'd write to the NFN organisers (Ashley Wilkins) to ask her about the logistics. Attached is the draft program if you haven't seen it already (it's on the NFN site I believe). You'll see we're Salon 8 on the first day on Thursday 1 November 11am-12.15pm. We have one and a half hours, but we don't know where.

Some of the sorts of questions I want to ask her are:

- what is the architecture of the space they are thinking of - an oval or courtyard?
- what are the aesthetics of the space?
- acoustic quality (need for amplification, mics etc)
- are there display opportunities for our objects?

- how could we display them? plinths? natural "grottos"? or on imaginary display pillows that we process with if we decide to do that?
-
- will it be outdoors - is this our preference - outside the panel room?
-
- but - what happens in inclement weather?
-
- could Ashley send us photographs, options?
-
- how many people might we be able to accommodate?

↳ you all happy with me doing this?

once we know more, we can make plans - or at least know what the constraints are. Peta and I have been talking about how to (in Peta's words) "design an experience".

one other thing I've been thinking (and we've been discussing here) is that if we go back to the original idea, that of "promenading the panel" - the "creative collaboration by promenade", and thinking about the etymology of *promenade* being that of driving animals forth (*pro*) with shouts or menace (*minari*) there is something here about the wild, making it/this panel/our thinking wild. It fits then with (out)rage.

perhaps what we've been writing and creating all along through our dialogue and correspondence is in fact the script for this un-panel. I've been writing - *are writing* - together the script for The Book of the Peripatetic Panel (a book of our correspondence + selected bibliography + shared texts + + +) to be sung or chanted as communal singing - call and response - as salve (hearts and voice beating as a purpose) - as "two rows apart" - as riff.

to have this idea of the audience working for us, with us.

to have this idea of presenting Object Lessons with our objects displayed somewhere depending on space constraints etc or brought along with us is some way on imaginary (or real) pillows.

perhaps we simply keep writing to each other with more dialogue and more "stories of our objects" and responses to each other's thoughts and our work and keep collecting it on the google doc in pages to share with the audience and all for the panel.

the two x two pairing idea really excites me. Call and response.

also collecting small plastic animals that can be paired up in twos (different/odd pairings being my preference).

in other words, what we said we would do is "create a new form of colloquy", "inscribe a generative and embodied process of collaboration across a space that is nonfiction", "fray the edges between panellist and "public".

in the spirit of all of this, and more, here is some work from me for the "sharing of works". The first is a collaborative piece I did with a visual artist about stuff we made together that is both breach and connection.

<https://www.axonjournal.com.au/issue-14/across-speak-and-or-waywardness>

and this little piece "Angel Bread: writing my mother" - is more the guts of something ---

<https://www.axonjournal.com.au/issue-1/angel-bread-writing-my-mother>

dearest of wishes
 francesca

on 30 July 2018 at 15:13, Peta Murray <[redacted]> wrote:

francesca - A post-script: no sooner thought than done! - Monday 30 July

for Mary, Peggy, Ames,

ppily, the Good Fairy Francesca was reading my mind as I composed that email, and no sooner had I created said files than she popped the entire correspondence crumb trail in!

there is no need for any immediate action on anyone's part. We have our Compilation Album and all the emails are there.

re Mary's email for other matters needing ongoing thought and discussion as time permits.

be continued. Best to all.

ta

ta.murray2@rmit.edu.au has invited you to contribute to the following shared folder:

PERIPATETIC PANEL

Click to the folder for our Peripatetic Panel.

On 30 July 2018 at 14:52, Peta Murray <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Hi Mary - 'please park your assemblages in here' - Monday 30 July

Hi Mary, Peggy, Ames and Francesca,

Thanks, Mary for your latest email and for consolidating so many possibilities into the one email.

I must also apologise for lags in the conversation from we of the Antipodes. Francesca and I are just a few weeks into a new semester here, and things are maddeningly busy, with the usual juggling of plates. It's difficult to keep track of tasks and to find time for the things one wants to do when the things one has to do keep getting in the way. I'm sure you understand.

I agree that this email colloquy is threatening to become a most unwieldy beast, and in the interests of reining it in, I'm going to thread my current thoughts through yours below, Mary, and propose some "actions" along the way.

I'm going to do this in RED so you can't miss me.

Let me know your thoughts in due course.

On 30 Jul 2018, at 11:47 am, Mary Cappello <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Hi Francesca, Peta, Peggy, and Ames,

There's such a wealth of inspiration in everyone's posts. I am learning so much already from reading, and thinking, together.

reed.

wonder if we could gather together all of the e-mails since we started to discuss the shape the panel might take a make a “google doc” out of it. What do you think? With all of the e-mail I attend to in the course of a day, I’m finding it hard not to lose the thread or overlook something and I’m also getting what was posted earlier. Unless Francesca, or Francesca and Peta as our leaders, wish at this point to cull what seems most salient and propose a performance for the performance and directives? That could definitely work too.

Myself don’t feel ready to lead, and I also suspect leadership is counter to the spirit of our perambulations and subventions.

I therefore agree with Mary that a compilation album is the way to go, at least for now.

ACTION: Once I have sent this email I am going to create a folder and within that a shared Google Doc to which I shall invite you all.

Rather than charge one of us with the assemblage - an onerous task, given the volume of correspondence to date - I propose that we each work our own chunks, DIY style, in whatever order we see fit, and with no chronological obligation whatsoever.

That okay?

Except that I (Francesca speaking here) jumped ahead and did it in any case, because I wanted to make sense of the email trail myself. So there it is!! And then Peta and I had a hilarious cross-purposes laugh. :-)

I’m struck by Ames’ references to going “where I ought not go,” the question of whether “there is anything to the meaning in their location and how does it shift if the object shifts”; the matter we find ourselves returning to—of whether there is a pattern of searching, of seeking and finding; and the link between the sacred and mundane (which of course is reminiscent of the Benjaminian aura)

actly. Hence, too, my resistance to chronology as a means of arranging and displaying our search.

I’m totally with Peta in pursuing ritual that moves into the profane, and, as an aging queer woman with attitude, I’m also noting in a lot of what we are writing a recurring emphasis on (out)rage, or anger, and its importance in nonfiction as social practice/performance/intervention. Fear of course, as queer people, also figures hugely for us all, but then there’s heart-racing excitement too!

Yes, yes and yes.

3 Kentucky-based Noah’s Ark seems like a super-scary place to me, btw, and I can’t imagine going there alone, if at all. Very interested to hear more about your work on this place and its connection to Queensland, Francesca! I find myself very intrigued by what you offer us here in “subvention: the experience of assistance from below.” I wonder if this could be linked to the way in which in our writerly practice we speak from elsewhere or start from a place other than the center. And if this could inflect our performance?

Love this too. But how?

As Peta notes, we don’t know what the space will be like in which our performance will take place, and I’ll note here that we’ve still to consider how we will engage the audience. Do you think we can ask in advance about the space?

Francesca may know more about this than I do, or have access to those in the know. I guess that as we are planning to take ourselves away from the conventional panel set-up, someone may be able to advise us as to what other kinds of spaces and options we have.

I continue to be interested in the way we conceive of movement and route (since these seem also of equal importance in the essay and certain forms of performative nonfiction as well). I don’t want to lose the idea of labyrinths if possible—but, truly, I’m very open to whatever people want to pursue.

Following the labyrinthine and keen to keep many channels open.

I’m also wondering if we might identify a queer ritual that can serve without reference to Judeo-Christianity (over and against stations)? I think of the way, for one... And I think of “pictures at an exhibition” where our objects are concerned. The way we move in other spaces where our attention is called to art or...? Fill in the blank? I’m afraid we might be losing track of the promenade. Is there a way for a “procession” to be raucous, while also allowing for the meditative? Here I also find myself thinking about the right to public assembly and how that is being eroded in the US. Here: “the movement of our bodies in life and the movement of our thoughts in writing”—what is possible and what do we want to incite?

Will need to think on this, in quest of the raucous procession, the riotous assembly.

Now, Ames: I loved “G-sis!” I really enjoyed reading that riff! And the beautiful part that Francesca alighted on: “*Walk in twos, two rows a part. On parallel rhythm. Hold your book at your sternum. Enunciate. Spin that note, up and out through your forehead, between your eyes. Spin that sound higher and lower toward God, in unison. Raise your hand when you make a mistake; know when you are out of synch. BE through sound, by what you do, not by how you look.*”

love Peta's idea of our finding a way to engage with each other's object in advance—toward cross-pollination and colloquy—but not sure how to enact as of yet.

only idea thus far is that we exchange images, but just with one other... so it's as if each of us passes an object to the person on her left some such.

is really lovely to be reading each other before meeting (a different way of encountering each other's object, so to speak) and I wonder if the panel could present the audience with a bibliography of one short piece from each of us that bore upon the conversation leading up to this panel?

love idea, Not sure how.

am saying that it might be interesting to have read something short by each of us and to bring bits and pieces of these into our dialogue? Or if we might reference these or have some sort of call and response be part of the performance?

I love this. I love call and response. I also love unison and choral speaking.

I'm following everything, I think we have pieces now from me, Peggy and Ames; I would love to read whatever you want to send Francesca and Peta!

Wow! This is where my sense of fraudulence kicks in. As a newbie to the academy I have little to share. I wrote plays for years but have only done an essaying for a minute. Here, then, is a link to a piece of faux-scholarship called Please Supply Own Title:

<http://www.textjournal.com.au/speciss/issue39/Murray.pdf>

Peggy: Thanks for sharing your absolutely brilliant essay on the "slave key." I found myself telling my partner about it on a walk we made today. It's a gem, and I look forward to re-reading and teaching it.

is, brilliant. Thank you, Peggy, for sharing this remarkable and rich piece.

was really struck by Peggy's reference to the woman who was punished for disappearing, vanishing from view—for accidentally locking herself in—a requisite power and precarity involved in "losing the key"—this seems to me to be in interesting dialogue with my escape essay (Houdini et al) [the slave key also made me think of the gendering of machine parts and tools]. Possession and being possessed by (an object) is another great theme. And, the object as real and not real or literal and metaphoric seems in some ways at the heart of our object work. By the way, wow to the letter from Nathan Leopold! It seems like you have an entire book here, Peggy, that could be drawn from these objects? Including the slave key—are you working on a book on these objects taken together? Also, does anyone know the lovely, slender volume by Dawn Raffel, *The Secret Life of Objects*? Dawn is a friend of mine, and I love this book. I love your cataloging thus, Peggy:

the bureau in the downstairs hallway, along with outdated owner's manuals for electronics we no longer own and disemboweled pens and two rabies traps, cats long dead and stuffed mice toys for the ones we have now and five eyeglass cases and four combs and salvaged scrap paper so Ann, if she goes out and I'm not home, can leave a note about her whereabouts, and an envelope of Forever stamps, there's a disordered stash of keys. I would have guessed around 30, not inconsiderable; it turns out there are 69.

is interesting to me as a playwright. I have always worked from objects and remain compelled by their concrete spatial poetry.

am very sorry, Peta and Francesca, for the terror you must feel in coming to the States this year. Of course we are dealing with what it feels like to BE here (one local example of our lives this summer: as our place in Maine is not all that far from the Canadian border, we were hearing and reading of "Border patrol" stopping cars for miles on Interstate 95, stopping and asking drivers "where they were born." It's totally scary shit and I have already decided I will use to answer this question if stopped, following the cue of this amazing woman:

<https://youtu.be/LAASgPU1BQc>

love. Yes, and I guess we are fortunate as Australians in being eligible to apply for VISA waiver, and generally being regarded as "friends of America. so at least it is easy for us to get in.

would love to be in the presence of Francesca's singing! Alas, I'm one of those people who is tone deaf—I cannot sing, but for whatever it is worth, I really think of myself in reading my work publicly as a frustrated opera singer, my writing, the aria I am trying to channel.

would love to sing, especially in a choir. I'm a tenor.

wonder that Ames is busy through the 15th and I think Peggy said she is going to be somewhere away in the next while too, and I'm certain that Francesca and Ames are super-busy as always. Personally, I'm concerned that once my semester hits the fan (first week of September), I will not be able to keep up my end

ready presented and go forward from there now?

re this idea, but again, would not presume to lead said crafting in the presence of such an experienced group of writers. But I will keep mrd and set up that Google doc now, and dump some of my own emails in there in due course. I hope you shall join me there!

pe to hear from you soon.

anks and warmest wishes to you all.

ta

ary - 'more follow ups to all we've shared' - Monday 30 July

ri 30 July 2018 at 11:47, Mary Cappello <[REDACTED]> wrote:

ar Francesca, Peta, Peggy, and Ames,

ere's such a wealth of inspiration in everyone's posts. I am learning so much already from reading, and thinking, together. Here are just some cursory thoughts on the posts I've now had a chance to read with more care.

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'm struck by Ames' references to going "where I ought not go," the question of whether "there is anything to the aning in their location and how does that shift if the object shifts"; the matter we find ourselves returning to—of wheth ere is a pattern of searching, of seeking and finding; and the link between the sacred and mundane (which of course is niniscent of the Benjaminian aura)

'm totally with Peta in pursuing ritual that moves into the profane, and, as an aging queer woman with attitude, I'm also ting in a lot of what we are sharing a recurring emphasis on (out)rage, or anger, and its importance in nonfiction as soci actice/performance/intervention. Fear of course, as queer people, also figures hugely for us all, but then there's heart- ing excitement too! The Kentucky-based Noah's Ark seems like a super-scary place to me, btw, and I can't imagine ing there alone, if at all. Very interested to hear more about your work on this place and its connection to Queensland, ancesca! I find myself very intrigued by what you offer us here in "subvention: the experience of assistance from below vonder if this could be linked to the way in which in our writerly practice we speak from elsewhere or start from meplace other than the center. And if this could inflect our performance?

as Peta notes, we don't know what the space will be like in which our performance will take place, and I'll note here th: 've still to consider how will we engage the audience. Do you think we can ask in advance about the space?

continue to be interested in the way we conceive of movement and route (since these seem also of equal importance in e essay and certain forms of creative nonfiction as well). I don't want to lose the idea of labyrinths if possible—but, trul n very open to whatever people want to pursue. I'm also wondering if we might identify a queer ritual that can serve thout reference to Judeo-Christianity (over and against stations)? I think of the runway, for one... And I think of "pictur an exhibition" where our objects are concerned. The way we move in other spaces where our attention is called by art? Fill in the blank? I'm afraid we might be losing track of the promenade. Is there a way for a "procession" to be icous, while also allowing for the meditative? Here I also find myself thinking about the right to public assembly and w that is being eroded in the US. Here: "the movement of our bodies in life and the movement of our thoughts in iting"—what is possible and what do we want to incite?

os, two rows a part. On pace, in rhythm. Hold your book at your sternum. Enunciate. Spin that note, up and out through your forehead, between your eyes. Spin that sound higher and higher toward God, in unison. Raise your hand when you make a mistake; know when you are out of synch. BE through sound, by what you do, not by how you look.”

I love Peta’s idea of our finding a way to engage with each other’s object in advance—toward cross-pollination and colloquy—but not sure how to enact that as of yet. It’s really lovely to be reading each other before meeting (a different way of countering each other’s object, so to speak) and I wonder if the panel could present the audience with a bibliography of one short piece from each of us that bore upon the conversation leading up to this panel? I’m saying that it might be interesting to have read something short by each of us and to bring bits and pieces of these into our dialogue? Or if we might reference these or have some social call and response be part of the performance? If I’m following everything, I think we have pieces now from me, Peggy and Frances; I would love to read whatever you want to send Francesca and Peta!

Peggy: Thanks for sharing your absolutely brilliant essay on the “slave key.” I found myself telling my partner about it at the talk we made today. It’s a stunner, and I look forward to re-reading and teaching it.

I was really struck by Peggy’s reference to the woman who was punished for disappearing, vanishing from view—for accidentally locking herself in—and the requisite power and precarity involved in “losing the key”—this seems to me to be an interesting dialogue with my escape essay (Houdini et al) [the slave key also made me think of the gendering of machines and tools]. Possession and being possessed by (an object) is another great theme. And, the object as real and not real, literal and metaphoric seems in some ways at the heart of our object work. By the way, wow to the letter from Nathan Hopold, and it seems like you have an entire book here, Peggy, that could be drawn from these objects? Including the slave key—are you working on a book on these objects taken together? Also, does anyone know the lovely, slender volume by Dawn Raffel, *The Secret Life of Objects*? Dawn is a friend of mine, and I love this book. I love your cataloging thus, Peggy:

the bureau in the downstairs hallway, along with outdated owner’s manuals for electronics we no longer own and feathered pens and two rabies tags for cats long dead and stuffed mice toys for the ones we have now and five glass cases and four combs and salvaged scrap paper so Ann, if she goes out and I’m not home, can leave a note about her whereabouts, and an envelope of Forever stamps, there’s a disordered stash of keys. I would have guessed around 30, but inconsiderable; it turns out there are 69.

I am very sorry, Peta and Francesca, for the terror you must feel in coming to the States this year. Of course we are dealing with what it feels like to BE here (one local example of our lives this summer: as our place in Maine is not all that far from the Canadian border, we were hearing and reading of “Border Patrol” stopping cars for miles on Interstate 95, stopping and asking drivers “where they were born.” It’s totally scary shit and I have already decided I will refuse to answer this question if stopped, following the cue of this amazing woman:

<https://youtu.be/LAASgPU1BQc>

I would love to be in the presence of Francesca’s singing! Alas, I’m one of those people who is tone deaf—I cannot sing, but for whatever it is worth, I usually think of myself in reading my work publicly as a frustrated opera singer, my writing as an aria I am trying to channel.

Note that Ames is busy through the 15th and I think Peggy said she is going to be somewhere away in the next while too, and I’m certain that Francesca and Peta are super-busy as always. Personally, I’m concerned that once my semester hits full tilt (first week of September), I will not be able to keep up my end of the dialogue in response to these riches with this so concerted time and attention. Do people think we can craft a plan out of all of what we’ve already presented and go forward from there now?

I love very best

1 28 July 2018 at 13:17, Mary Cappello <[REDACTED]> wrote:

ary - Saturday 28 July

llo All!

ggy--I definitely didn't see this e-mail till now, so very glad you re-sent. Francesca and Peta--haven't had a chance to respond to your recent notes either. Everything here so rich. I have had guests non-stop for the last little while and hope to regroup in the coming week, catch up with our panel plans, and devote more careful attention to all that everyone has written. Thanks for your patience. Certainly it does seem like we've been doing more preliminary thinking and collaborating than a lot of panels do, and so early in the process, and that is so inspiring. I think we should have no problem putting together a consummate plan.

Best wishes to all and more soon,
Mary

1 28 July 2018 at 03:14, Peggy Shinner <[REDACTED]> wrote:

ggy - Saturday 28 July

all—

I'm sending this again (originally sent on 7/23) in case it got lost in the thicket of emails. Otherwise, please forgive the duplication.

So, Ames I'm in Chicago! Going to New Mexico soon but when I come back perhaps we can meet over coffee.

Warm best,
ggy

For Francesca, Peta, Ames, Mary—

Now there have been more responses since this last one from Francesca but I fear if I don't respond now I'll lose everything in my head. So this is only a partial response as I haven't yet addressed Peta's email or the most recent one from Ames. Apologies for being a little slow.

The conversation about objects is fascinating. Although I live with my partner, Ann, in a house full of objects, most of them are hers as her family collected antiques. Many of those are imbued with family history, stories of when things were bought, passed down, used, mis-used, broken, reassembled...My study has stuff, too, much of it selected by me, some of it given to me, but not talismanic stuff, or not as I look around and hope something will call out to me. What does call out to me are a couple of objects which have been or are the sources of investigation. Like Ames, I have something key related—in my case a key itself, the key to our current car. When we purchased the car, the business person gave us three keys and called one of them a master and the other two slave keys. I was stunned. How did our language evolve in this way? Culture/language, language/culture, yes. What did this mean for me, to me, as a white

possibly learn about and say about this? So I write an essay, which took a long time to figure out, which I'll include here <https://lithub.com/what-does-it-mean-when-we-call-a-key-a-slave/>

Currently, I'm also centering an essay around an object. When my grandmother died in 1995, in a nursing home, I was given a plastic bag (like a convenience store bag or one a person might get at a drug store) that contained nothing but house papers. The bag was otherwise empty. How could this happen? How could a person die with no possessions? What happened to her material life? Part of what happened is that I was inattentive; the plastic bag was a symbol, but not a symbol, a real thing, indicative of my indifference. This is the piece I'm working on now. The meaning of property, what's the nature of our social contract/do we have or are we bound by a social contract, and other questions as well. The bag is hardly a talisman, but it is meaningful and it is a source of inquiry.

Another object is the letter written to my mother by Nathan Leopold (Nathan Leopold/Richard Loeb who murdered Bobbie Baker in 1924, the year my mother was born/it was luridly known as the "crime of the century"/they were defended by Clarence Darrow). In the late 1950s Leopold was up for parole and my mother wrote a letter in support of this. She got the letter back from him, which I found in a drawer and later took after she died. The letter was an entrée into thinking about my mother. Who was she? Why did she write to him? How did this fit into or not my conception of her? She'd always been slightly mysterious and the letter (from Puerto Rico, where Leopold went after he was paroled; stamped with an airplane, postage 7 cents) highlighted that mystery and made me want to shatter it (that didn't happen) or at least know her a little better. It also led to a lot of research and then thinking about Leopold and Loeb, their relationship (lovers in a tangled, manipulative way, shaped by anti-Semitism, their wealth, class, damaged psyches, the strictures of the time, and devotion as well).

At this point, I'm leaning towards the letter, tattered, in pieces, fascinating and pedestrian, with her very familiar handwriting on the back.

A familiar and historical artifact. I'm so lucky to have it.

Oh, whew....

Francesca, I want to acknowledge the nervousness you express about coming here now, how unwelcoming this country feels/is and the general sense of pervasive danger. I want you to know I heard that; often I'm afraid too. When I'm not outraged, or outraged and afraid together.

As for the Melbourne Digital Conference and know that I am somewhat of a technophobe, which may be apropos of the thing, but I feel the need to put out there. Thanks for doing the legwork and pursuing this opportunity.

I didn't get any of the residencies I applied for (Ames, I'd been waiting to hear from various residencies when I first heard from Francesca, Peta, and Mary, and the timing of those might have impacted my participation), so Ann and I are making a work retreat mid-August—mid-September in northern New Mexico, where we've put down some roots over the years. I won't be off email but I'll be a little turtle-ish in responding—just like now apparently!

I feel like there's more I'd intended to say, but my brain has frozen.

For now, and with growing excitement...

nes - Saturday 28 July

Francesca—

ing into Cincinnati is a great choice and definitely the way to go.

ry glad you enjoy the "instructions." Most of that is this is a near literal list of the rules/guidelines our choirmaster had for us. He was quite aracter and so almost all of the directives were accompanied by hand gestures, demonstrations, and a ton of energy.

on't happen to have access to the Chronicle article at the moment—sorry about that. I'm moving (half a household this weekend, the other f in two weeks) and doing all sorts of things at work to prepare for the RETURN OF FACULTY. (Such is my job). When things settle down a couple weeks I'll try and locate a readable copy and send you.

d that's my FYI as to what is bound to be my disappearance from this conversation for a few weeks. See you all again around mid-Augus

h appreciation,
nes

om Francesca - Friday 27 July

ar Ames, before too much time goes on, I just wanted to say thank you for offering a place to stay in Chicago. So generous of you - really ank you! A road trip south from Chicago to Kentucky sounds like a fine thing to do. But in fact I'm flying into Cincinnati, which is much ser!!, staying there and will be hiring a car to get to the ark and the Creation Museum.

io - Ames, I'm really interested in the articles you sent me by your professor colleague. I haven't seen them - so thank you for these. I can't am to access the Chronicle one, so wondered if you had it on file or could access it for me. It looks pretty interesting. The other one is op cess, and it's good too. He sounds like a really interesting researcher/writer, doing some great work.

e other thing I loved was your attachment setting out instructions and responses to the Choir Grrl-Boi. They were hilarious. We might be e to utilise these or something like it for our whatever-it-is we are doing, if we are doing some processing of sorts. By way of instructions r audience.

alk in twos, two rows a part. On pace, in rhythm. Hold your book at your sternum. Enunciate. Spin that note, up and out through your ehead, between your eyes. Spin that sound higher and higher toward God, in unison. Raise your hand when you make a mistake; know en you are out of synch. BE through sound, by what you do, not by how you look.

Francesca x

1 24 July 2018 at 08:28, Peggy Shinner <[REDACTED]> wrote:

ggy - Tuesday 24 July

ar Francesca, Peta, Ames, Mary—

now there have been more responses since this last one from Francesca but I fear if I don't respond now I'll lose everything in my head. So this is only a partial response as I haven't yet addressed Peta's email or the most recent one om Ames. Apologies for being a little slow.

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22 July 2018 at 03:53, Hawkins, Ames <[REDACTED]> wrote:

nes - Saturday 21 July

, this is becoming so rich and FUN! It is lovely to have the thought of Francesca dancing in her kitchen and all of us smiling as we write--

Let me begin with Noah's Ark, etc. Francesca you are more than welcome to stay with me in Chicago should you make this a US entry point and drive from here. It'll take you about 5 hours to get there, I would guess. Given the size of this country I would say that it is "close-ish" but definitely not a day trip length. It so happens that a professor at my school—Steven Asma—has written about the Creation Museum. You might want to check out <https://www.chronicle.com/article/Dinosaurs-on-the-Ark-the/29886> and <https://www.scientificamerican.com/podcast/episode/fdaca16a-e7f2-99df-323d104dd12efcae/>. You might already know this, but I thought I should share.

Let me begin with some of my recent thoughts. I also think a great deal about w/rite/right as I have been imagining—'seeing'—the movement between things and places. I saw a pentagram in the five points, as well as something more like objects at the four cardinal directions with one in the center. Movement could be in a circle, could move in and out. We could also think about what happens if we don't only move but we move the objects as well. In other words, is there anything to the meaning in their location and how does that shift if the object shifts?

Let me begin with that, I have also been thinking about our selections processes and how rich the conversation here. What I didn't say was that in my very first and I kept choosing different cups/drinking vessels and books. Given there was such a pattern here I felt these objects simply represent for me a spiritual/intellectual/emotional foundation. They are sacred, but the sacred is so closely associated with the mundane that I worked to move toward something that was less obvious so as to open me to different places and spaces.

Let me begin with that, I don't go through all of the other objects BUT I did want to mention that the pattern became clear when I landed on a shelf containing two journals and a prayer book (no Bible). Our collective commentary and reflection on organized religion is fascinating. To further this conversation I wanted to share that years ago I wrote and performed a piece called "Choir Grrl/Boi" which I have attached here. It's a bit hard to describe but this is my way of exploring the queer safety of the Anglican Church choir in which I was a chorister for 8 years. Our choir traveled the world. (It still does BTW). The highlight of my tenure was singing in St. Paul's and the Sistine Chapel and at an audience with Pope John Paul II.

Let me begin with that, anyway, the larger point here is that in the choir I was able to be/feel myself as a boi when I had that cassock and coda on. I was in close communal space with girls ALL THE TIME. And singing those high notes was absolutely an erotic experience. In the piece, I got a bunch of queer friends to create a mini church procession. I sang verses from particular hymns and followed with the spoken word you see here. My costume was a cassock and coda with the front cut-away below the middle. This is where the drag came in. I had different actors—altar boy, drag queen, priest—help me transition from a grey flannel skirt and pumps to khaki pants and loafers which were removed to reveal black leather boots and boots. Then the group used a rope to "bind" me with queer love in the end. Sorry, there's no video and I gave the costume away a few years ago to the La Pocha Nostra intervention collection when I was in a radical dance workshop with Sarah Mann and Guillermo Gomez-Pompa. (Ok, this makes it sound like I am a dance. I am not. I am invested and interested in form and radical performance and this is what I do: to and through all this work).

Let me begin with that, I guess I wanted to put this on the table since I recognize this piece may become a touchstone for me in our panel. My writing/thinking/work process doesn't look nothing like this in the end. Or it might draw from it significantly. Not sure. But I did want to share this thought process.

Let me begin with that, which brings me (somehow?) to Mary's offer to find the store. Thanks so much for the offer! I have absolutely no idea of a name, but I'll take a look on googlemaps and see whether I can identify any possibilities. What stores have been there for 35 years selling primarily locally made objects and products? That's your best bet, I'd imagine.

Let me begin with that, which brings me to the idea Peta has here of us interacting with another *objet*. Absolutely. I was also thinking about an experience I had many years ago participating in a social justice Stations of the Cross event. The event occurred all over the city of Detroit and was organized by a collective of social justice community members. The 12 original stations were used as inspiration to take us to places where injustices had occurred. Someone prepared statements and we were invited to pray/honor and I would say re-member the events (put them into/back into our own bodies) so they would not be forgotten. This is where the idea of Very Cross comes in as well. My job is really all about joy, but joy doesn't mean pain is absent. In fact, once I get past the feelings of freedom about where I can go/have been I am also confronted with questions about where I ought not go, and how my movements are restricted in my own country. Totally thinking here about what Francesca says about her nervousness in coming to the states this time. My own sense of freedom has been drastically impacted by this administration. It's for sure. There's freedom FROM persecution and freedom TO do and move. You don't get *freedom to* without first having *freedom from* and *freedom from* is being challenged and denied and threatened at every turn—if that makes sense.

h appreciation,
res

1 21 July 2018 at 13:47, Peta Murray <[REDACTED]> wrote:

ta - Saturday 21 July

ar Ames, Peggy, Mary across the seas, and Francesca-in-her-Kitchen,

stly, Ames, how wonderful that you have joined our merrie bande. I am so excited by the composition of our ripatetic panel, and by this rich thread of conversation and I look forward to meeting you all in real life. (I am also ready wondering if extracts from these emails might somehow have a place in whatever it is we weave on the day?) I am also delighted that everyone seems to be up for the Digital Writers Festival debrief. How moderne we all are!

ael a bit late to the party on this email thread, but I have been reading and thinking along as each new offer has come. So many synergies and touchpoints. I am very interested in rituals and w/rites and have long been aware of the legacy of my Catholic childhood (I too fled, Mary, in early adolescence) on my thinking and making practices, especially in and for the theatre. I still feel the pull of the "smells and bells" as Ames put it, and these days try to work with rather than against these impulses - but like others I am interested in re-defining and overturning the notion of the rite, de-coupling it from organised religion of any kind, and pushing it towards the more secular, and beyond, into the profane.

I have re-purposed the Stations of the (Very) Cross accordingly elsewhere, but yes, with emphasis on our Australian/English usage as cranky (another word I love), as this has been a big part of my recent work, which is mostly focused on ageing and strategies to counter ageism, including playing with tropes of the ageing queer woman with wit and attitude. (For instance, cross-dressing for me has now expanded to include getting dressed while cross!). But also, yes, I am deeply drawn to stations as niches and sites of display and contemplation. I'd be happy to think further into this as you proceed, but I am mindful that Another Great Mystery is that we are unlikely to know much about the space in which our womenade is to occur before the time we get to Phoenix.

orry. Couldn't resist.

As far as my devotional object goes, I am still trying to settle on something. The meaningful object I presented to Francesca last week, causing her nerves to prickle, remains a contender. It is a book I had remembered so fondly from childhood that my partner tracked it down and present a vintage copy to me as a birthday gift. It was only then revealed to be something politically and culturally charged, and far from innocent. I now feel fascinated and repelled, affectionate and duped by the icon in equal measure, and would like to delve deeper. But I am also allowing myself to step back and rework on all of this, in case something better presents itself. In the meantime, I love the selections and the selection processes each of you has shared. I also love the threads of connection emerging between them/us and wonder if this is something to attend to, somehow, as we go forward? For instance, considering Mary's offer that she might somehow be able to visit the site where Ames found her fob, I wondered whether there might be some point at which we are invited to engage with another's objet in some such lively and present manner?

. Those are my thoughts of the moment, and here I'll leave you, for now. It is a Saturday, and the sun is shining. I have a long walk in my future and two demanding dogs at my feet.

Warmest wishes to you all

ta

om Francesca PS - Friday 20 July

3 ---- but actually in this scenario, when I think about it, it can't be a bible. The sacred object is more likely to be a pile of men's cotton handkerchiefs that belonged to my father with his name written on them from when he was in the nursing home so they wouldn't get lost - he always carried a handkerchief up his sleeve or in a trouser pocket and often would tie a knot in a corner as a way to remember something - that I love and that I now use daily, re-mem-bering, knotted/not-ed.

om Francesca - Friday 20 July

ear Mary, Ames, Peggy and Peta,

hat wonderful emails to wake up to in this part of the world! Thank you for sharing your thoughts, for embracing this idea of the sacred object and running with it in various *peripatetic* ways - there is so much to take from your stories and musings, it is so rich and nourishing.

1 dancing a little dance here in my kitchen in Melbourne. :-)

ere is such resonance in your responses, about choosing and how to choose, where and how the sacred fits (or not), where ritual might fit (or not), that idea of 'inscaping' Peggy/Mary, which I love, how objects embody memory, felt experiences, internal, treasured landscapes, longing, desire. I also really love the idea of cultural change that is developing here as we correspond back and forth across and around the States where you are, Ames, Peggy and Mary and across the Pacific Ocean to Peta and me - how the simplest of words and phrases can mean different things, such as the word 'cross' meaning angry or being annoyed as well as traverse, to move across, or cross borders - our right to move, to travel, to walk - and how this possible w/rites/rights notion that Peta could form some sort of foundation: love btw Mary's *the movement of our bodies (in life)* v. *the movement of our thoughts (in nonfiction)*. Yes, Mary: this polylogue really does read like an essay-unfolding.

ecause I've been thinking about my contribution and what I might offer about bodies I am thinking in relation to what I to choose as *sacred object*. When Peta first suggested the idea and showed me something that might be hers (and I'll leave her to expand those early-pass thoughts), my heart leapt a bit, truly, nerves prickled as I began to think about what might be my response to the offer: what is precious to me, what I hold dear, what I keep coming back to, to observe, to touch, what I know in the deepest of knowing ways - also that which is dangerous too, where the wound is (which is my association with the sacred - I was brought up loathing the sacred, [apart from singing - always loved to sing Gospel]; the sacred sent me to hell..... Because there's a kind of nervousness thinking about coming to the States this time, and I'm sure Peta agrees; it's so different to when I last visited; everything has changed. There is definitely that feeling of KEEP OUT Mary, an un-welcome kind of mental (physical/psycho) energy one has to muster in order to push against the politics of awful things to go. My heart is racing..... Also, and more particularly, ahead of NonfictionNOW I am planning to visit Noah's Ark in Kentucky because of a book I am writing on/because of my father - I think it's nearish to your neighbourhood, Ames, is that right? I'm terrible on American geography. Because of the challenges of doing this, and because of that feeling of being ostracised, unwelcome, excommunicated - hell bound in fact (I've never had the courage to visit Noah's Ark and the Creation Museum until now) - I am thinking that my sacred object

'assistance from below'). A sort of Queer Reading of Noah's Ark. I'm not sure where this is leading me (which is the exciting bit) but I'm thinking the sacred object has to be my father's bible (my father and Queensland, where I come from, has genesis-type-links to Noah's Ark and the Creation Museum). Perhaps too, Glad-Wrap is the sacred object. Also - thinking ahead to the walking/promenading bit, I've got pages of the Book of Genesis in my head redacted and floating as re-formed/reconstructed poetry, so, part queer parade (animals parading 2 x 2 to the Ark in all sorts of different cross-species queer pairings), part elegy. A de-sacred object, if you like, or 're-creation' (a la Anne Carson).

... something.

Having said all of that, and despite that dreadful feeling you get in your gut after making any sort of confession, the strong sense I get writing this and slowly following my thoughts and writing fingers is a kind of animus, in the way you talk about Ames - breath of life, spirit.

... that's me for the moment.

... and thanks for the thumbs up re the Digital Writers Festival. I'll get onto that and we'll see what happens. Brilliant.

... still dancing!!!
... francesca

... 20 July 2018 at 11:26, Mary Cappello <[REDACTED]> wrote:

... Mary - Friday 20 July

... wow--I loved following your thoughts and reading your responses, Peggy and Ames! It seems we already sort of have essays in the making, to say the least. I'm struck by the question of how we make our decisions about choice of object--where the mind goes (how it moves?) in the search for the object, and what renders the objects we've started to identify "sacred." How are we defining sacred, I mean. A secular sacred is always preferable, and, in the queer contexts we create and live in, this doesn't mean an annexing or negation of ritual. But maybe a ritualistic reappropriation of it.

... There are incredible serendipities here, Ames: do you know that Jean and my cabin (where we are right now) in Maine is not too far from Acadia National Park? We're due for a hike over there next week. If you knew more about the store, I could try to identify it and take a picture. Around the key fob story very moving. And, second cross-over: I am currently writing an essay about the word "keep," and have been collecting (NOT via google) various phrases in which the word figures. The impetus for the essay was the horrible little phrase --that also struck me as one of those phrases not easily understood by non-native speakers--"keep out" on a sign on a nearby abandoned house. You, as "keeper" of the keys jumped out for me.

... best to all,
... Mary

... 20 July 2018 at 00:28, Hawkins, Ames <[REDACTED]> wrote:

... Ames reply - Friday 20 July

... Hello all! Thanks again for the invitation. It is wonderful to meet you Francesca, Peta, and Peggy; Mary it is fantastic to hear from you again.

... Thanks so much to Mary and Peggy for your thoughts/reflections regarding your object. Like Mary, I also walked around

out what I absolutely could not give up/toss out or grieve were it somehow lost or destroyed. With which objects have I made an energetic connection?

There were two immediate contenders: two quilts made by my father and the Swingline stapler that is now mine that was my mother's. Then, when I left the apartment I kept thinking about it and realized that I'll likely choose the key fob I bought in Bar Harbor, ME when I was 15.

I can't quite recall the name of the store but I believe it was filled with objects and art made by local artisans and artists. The key fob is in the shape of an oval about 3 inches tall and an inch wide. It's brass on one side and copper on the other. The brass side has a face forged into it and reminded me of Druid tree faces. This one has an open mouthed smile and totally looks/represents: Joy. My fob sat among 4 or 5 others all made by the same artist and this one called--or perhaps more accurately--laughed to me. I knew that when I returned from the trip I would begin my driver's ed class and I saw this as the key fob for car keys, connected to the rite of passage of getting a driver's license.

Since then this fob has been the 'keeper' of my keys to all of my cars and homes--it seems to be the steward of my movement/s, both temporary and more permanent, and a literal and figurative sense of freedom and independence. The combination of the two metals has also always made me feel a sense of alchemy regarding this object and I note a kind of magic here as well. This fob has been with me for almost 35 years and traveled with me across the country and back again. I don't have a name--I've never seemed to want or feel a need to name inanimate objects--though it does feel as though it now exists with a kind of animus (Latin), connected to soul, spirit, breath of life. The expression has a lot to do with the

I was raised in the Episcopal church and totally did all the smells and bells kind of religion. This fob somehow straddles that past and the place where I now exist--a kind of spirituality connected with and to green witchcraft (no Wicca connection) and holidays connected with paganism and such though I would never say I am a practitioner of any specific religion. The labyrinth fits in perfectly with all of these ideas as does the notion of constellation--which leads me into the idea of bringing this work to the Melbourne Digital Conference. Simply put: Yes. Fantastic. Whatever you need from me in terms of help I am all in.

So, I think that's about all for now as I have many more emails to write today. I'll have a chance to get to Mary's article this weekend (thanks for sending!).

Once again, thanks for the invitation and opportunity to be a part of this panel. I'll be able to register this weekend and I'll make travel plans then as well.

Talk soon!

With appreciation,
Peggy Shinner

On 19 July 2018 at 09:01, Peggy Shinner <[REDACTED]> wrote:

[Peggy's PS - Thursday 19 July](#)

Mary, meant to say how much I enjoyed the maze of the escape essay. It was a pleasure to follow your thinking.

19 July 2018 at 08:41, Peggy Shinner <[REDACTED]> wrote:

ggy - Thursday 19 July

ello Francesca, Peta, Mar, and Ames (big welcome!)—

much to think about and respond to. Thanks so much Francesca and Peta for floating these ideas to get us going, and Mary for your rich response. I too have been thinking of my object, which I'll call meaningful. I worked with a local social justice foundation here in Chicago last year, and part of that work was fundraising, asking potential donors for meaningful contributions. Everyone got to determine for themselves the amount of their meaningful donation. And all donations are equally meaningful. That process spoke to me a lot. I have an idea about one such object, but want to close my eyes and "inscape," to borrow from Mary, and see what else might emerge. More coming soon.

ations of the (Very) cross is funny (I love cross as an indication of mood) and evocative, and I appreciate where Mary took that in terms of crossing, borders, the right to cross, travel, move, walk. I also have some uncertainty/uneasiness about its Christian roots, so different from own secular Jewish ones. Let's continue to talk about this and see where the discussion leads us.

haven't had an opportunity to go through all the various links/materials yet but look forward to doing so in the coming days.

Warm regards,
Peggy

Francesca - Wednesday 18 July

Dear Peripatetics,

Here we go. We've got our full panel now - wonderful - so we can really begin to thrash out how we might go about doing this.

Low is the very first gambit - the sacred object idea - an offer of a possible way we might proceed. It's something concrete as a beginning which is always good. We can all bring our sacred objects to the conference/panel as talisman, and then build something around it together along the lines of the Stations of the Very Cross.

It please, chime or move with other ideas or mash them up or whatever.....I for one am really looking forward to corresponding with you about this. I find it invigorating and stimulating.

Warmest
Francesca

19 July 2018 at 00:56, Mary Cappello <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Mary's PS - Thursday 19 July

got to attach piece on niches:

https://marycappello.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/cappello_mood_rooms.pdf

hope we each will feel interested in sharing short work as part of collaboration? Sorry to inundate!

19 July 2018 at 00:52, Mary Cappello <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Mary's response - Thursday 19 July

Hello Francesca, Peta, Peggy, and Welcome Ames! So glad you are free and available to join us, Ames.

OW--I love the ideas you have sent to get us started, Francesca and Peta. I love the idea of identifying a sacred object that we bring with and work something up around. Without "thinking" too much (which I'm really good at, and also over-thinking, really good at that too), I allowed my mind just now to roam the environs of our summer cabin which is much less accoutered than our cluttered space in Providence and, think "sacred object." In an instant, I alighted on two such items here, both of which are wall hangings of a sort: one is a set of four (but only bring one if I choose this one) paint by number genre paintings--one of swans, and one of a boy leisurely fishing--that each of my parents, shall we say, conceived?, in the 1960s. Theirs was a profoundly unhappy marriage, my mother dealt with enormous anxiety at the time (including agoraphobia), and I've always felt that in *her* paint by number in particular, that anxiety is there inscribed. My mother actually *is* an artist and so for her to have agreed to perform the paint-by-number ritual (which was popular at a certain period in the States, along with hooked rugs that families were meant to craft (so to speak) altogether--in lieu of prayer? or like prayer, a way of keeping the narrative in place and pretending the horror roiling beneath the heteronorms really aren't there at all--for her to have agreed to this strikes me as interesting unto itself. The "scenes" hung on the walls of our working class living room for at least 50 years, and when my father died, I asked for them. They are sacred to me, I suppose, for what I imagine them "containing" as both silent witness to a household that was marked periodically by domestic violence, and into which I poured my own gaze, not knowing what they could possibly reflect back, but they were there as silent accompanist of something otherwise unrecorded. I have to laugh as well because I don't ever recall seeing a swan or a German in Darby, PA, but these were the themes my parents chose from the no doubt paltry supply of whatever craft store they found the time. The other object that occurred to me is a puzzle--I won't go into all of the details on this one--but just to say that it sparked a ritual form of camp space play between my partner and me and her brother and his wife on one of their visits to our cabin. We'd bought the puzzle for one of their 8 year old children and when he wasn't interested, we started to get into it. I got it at a thrift store--it dates to the 30s, had no picture on the box, and we didn't know if all of the pieces were there. Anyway, the four of us stayed up half the night assembling it--to discover only once missing! I can say a lot more about what makes this puzzle "sacred" to me--[this short essay on "escape"](#) that I wrote last August arrives at the sacred moment. And it also makes me wonder if the "Stations" element that Francesca and Peta have given us might be interestingly intervened in via the idea of the labyrinth (looking back on this essay--it's short if you have a chance to read, according to the site it takes 5 minutes" to read, lol): the multi-cursal vs. the unicursal labyrinth, nonfiction as the former, the stations of the cross, a type of latter. (Rewriting this essay, I see it arrives at promenade! We really seem to be on a similar wavelength. And I also see that, oddly, they have now added an audio file of what sounds like a robot, but the person has a name, reading it aloud. This is what happens when we sign our literary works over to the internet).

I was raised in the Catholic church, leaving it to turn atheist in my later teens, I appreciate the concept of the Stations, and have a sense here you are going with this--which I find quite rich: the peripatetic as a rite of pause and highly orchestrated movement over and against the more commonplace affiliation, say, of the essay with wandering, walking/thinking, wending. I found these two links on Peta's brilliant and various performance writes/rites--wish I could be there to have experienced this! But feel lucky that we'll all be working together in Arizona could we borrow some aspect from this work that Peta has carried out? The niches strike me as something we could borrow if Peta agrees perhaps we might stage our objects in named niches? (On other notes, I've done some thinking about niches here:)

<https://nonfictionlab.net.au/2018/06/the-thesis-is-presented/>

<https://www.australianstage.com.au/201609197978/reviews/melbourne/missa-pro-venerabilibus.html>

I love the idea of bringing our work to the Melbourne digital conference simultaneously! Of course of course. I'm all for your applying for this and I thank you so much for this wonderful collaboration.

The last thought that occurred to me while reading your initiating e-mail to us today--we might need some help in contextualizing the particulars of the phrase, "The Stations of the (Very) Cross." I take it to mean cross as in angry? This might be one of many touchpoints where the international nature of our panel becomes apparent, i.e. in the States, for the most part, it seems to me, at least, the word "cross" is only used in this sense. Cross as in to move across, as in crossing borders and preventing such occurs to me over in this horror show called the USA, and even though I've taught and read and thought and written about matters of immigration and immigrant subjectivity for many years, what with concentration camps being erected here as I write, the RIGHT to move, the right to cross, the right to travel, even to walk, becomes painfully palpable. Perhaps this could serve in some way as a basis for the intervention we wish to make? i.e., rites vs. rights, movement of our bodies (in life) and the movement of our thoughts (in nonfiction). Our relative freedom of movement as racist privilege.

Hope this isn't too abstract. That's all I have for today. Must now go for a walk!

MRS
Mary

In the meantime Peta and I have put our thinking caps on to work out how we might proceed, as a start. We wonder if, to make it simple, at least as this starting point, and also thinking about the "Stations of the Very Cross" idea, we all might each choose a "sacred object". We're thinking this will be an actual object - something that is portable and easily transportable to the conference (for all of us in our suitcases). From this starting point, as a sort of offer, we can begin to develop ideas about what each of us might do by way of performance, improvisation, presentation, play etc. These 4/5 objects and the play/performance we/our audience do around them, would then form a loose structure / organising principle. We could then "move" from one object/setting to the next, say.

We've also been thinking about the ideas embodied in invention and intervention. How this journey around (through) the "Stations of the Very Cross" might be a series of interventions. Also, how you can't have intervention (making deliberate choices: *inter-* between, *venire* come: come in as an extraneous factor of thing!) without invention (the making up, making over bit).