




half down

catherine dionne ashley

The background features a repeating pattern of glowing, ethereal circular motifs. These motifs are composed of intricate, branching, and interconnected lines, resembling a combination of organic structures like coral or seaweed and abstract, crystalline forms. The colors are a mix of light blue and lavender, with a soft, hazy glow that makes them stand out against the plain white background.

half dawn

catherine dionne ashley

Half Dawn

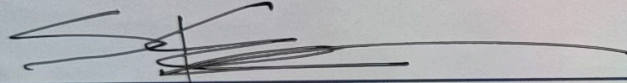
A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
Master of Fine Arts in Digital + Media in the Department of Digital + Media of the
Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, Rhode Island

by

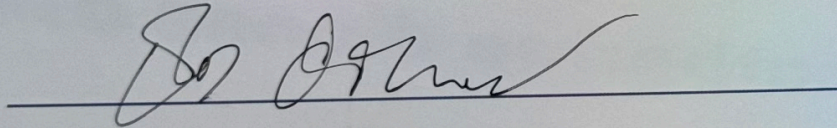
Catherine Dionne Ashley

2024

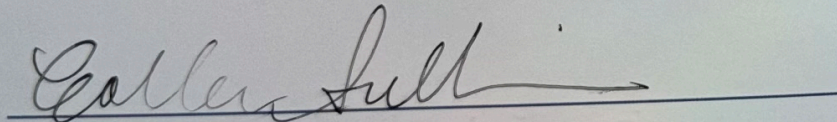
Approved by Master's Examination Committee:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shona Kitchen', written over a horizontal line.

Shona Kitchen, Professor and Department Head of Digital + Media, Thesis Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Osborn', written over a horizontal line.

Ed Osborn, Professor and Chair of Visual Art at Brown University, Thesis Advisor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colleen Sullivan', written over a horizontal line.

Colleen Sullivan, Assistant Professor of Theatre at Chapman University, Guest Critic

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how slight the movement, to escape being caught by eye
day in, day up and over, we continue to count to
"good, how are you?"
i bring attention to the beguiling nature of half dawn
a time i made up myself - it's real now.

steps away from being on the edge of the precipice not quite reaching the tipping point of something

b i g

i'm acquainted with the only constant in life.

how slight the movement
to escape being caught by
eye

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By presenting these words on paper, I have given entry into a microcosm of recent research, questions, and creative explorations. There is potential for disconnection when trying to turn your head inside out and present it in a way that feels beautiful for other people. I'm trusting the moments of authenticity I've found in my wandering. Segue. Relationship. Gesture. Illusion. My musings all stem from notions of temporality. Time dances on the farthest ends of both immensity and desolation. I've spent stretches of time asking the people, texts, and experiments around me to define time in a way that I can understand, and stand with. *Half Dawn* explores what it means to be a maker informed by the world in/outside of you.





TGP For me, for you.

Am I *real*? At times.

I live in a flourishing state of dissociation that is permeated by the need to investigate what parameters are put in place to deem something of existence. Actuality. Real. TGP can be used as a beacon for explaining what dictates states of consciousness, emotion and our disposition.

Time, gesture, and performance are labyrinthine elements that intricately inform states of being. Time, with its inexorable passage, shapes our outward presentation and subconscious, influencing our emotional states and overall perception. It delineates the past, present, and future, which shape our experiences, memories, and societal expectations. Joy, nostalgia, impatience. The passage of time influences our emotional states and dictates our

schedules, routines, and milestones. The awareness of time's varying nature can prompt us to savor moments, seize opportunities, or confront the impermanence of existence, all of which contribute to the sometimes veiled nature of our psychological states. Gestures – those deliberate, involuntary, and subconscious, serve as a language of the body, conveying nuanced emotions while completing tasks that prolong our existence. Astute changes in posture, facial expressions, and body language convey a wealth of information about our feelings, intentions, and reactions. Understanding these nonverbal cues helps us interpret others' states of being and communicate our own more effectively, deepening our connections with those around us. Over time, individuals have developed routines and habits that involve specific gestures to efficiently accomplish various tasks. These gestures become habitual, and are thus ingrained in one's daily life significantly impacting overall efficiency and productivity. Repetition in habitual

gestures leads to the development of muscle memory, which allows individuals to perform tasks with minimal conscious effort, minimizing decision fatigue. Through the incessant nature of daily performance, we express our identities, connecting with our innermost feelings and externalizing them for others to determine. The degree of performance needed for effective communication and interpersonal interaction exemplifies that the way we present our ideas, emotions, and ourselves often relies on how well we perform in these aspects of communication. Collectively, these elements interweave to create the fabric of human existence, offering profound insights into our inner worlds, the dynamics of our interactions, and the multifaceted nature of our being. The careful observation and discernment of how time, gesture, and performance influence states of being enriches our capacity for empathy, communication, and self-awareness.



Killing
TIME

KILLING TIME

What a broad topic to touch on, and try to make sense of...perhaps let's start with what we know.

Time is:

Unceasing.

Measured using seconds as its primary unit.

Deeper.

Not absolute.

Irreversible.

Varied.

Deeper...

Cunning.

Biological and man-made.

Cyclical.

Everything.

Okay—so we know that time dictates, everything. The concept itself umbrellas over powerhouse ideas like tempo, regeneration, and memory. We want to kill, keep, and lose time, that sentiment glistening with the luminesce of simultaneity. Time prescribes what resources

are available to us, and with that, measuring time has been imperative for the practical, cultural, and scientific advancements of human society. After initially supporting agriculture, celestial observation, and navigation, time moved on to aid the development of trade and commerce, technological innovation, and globalization. Kept time is the tether that holds us to the structures we've put in place. Though, a crucial element of what makes time worth keeping is its amorphous disposition.

During early Covid in January 2021, I moved into a big house with six other roommates. It was really exciting to live with new people, and be able to hang out while still being conscious of the virus. To celebrate this, we would have dinner parties on Fridays after work, and one day we decided to play hide and seek all around the four floors of the house. It's a timeless game—running, climbing, or tiptoeing into a hiding spot and quietly sitting with the excitement of being found. Right before dinner, I received some upsetting news from my father. I shook off what I could, but it was still sitting with me. When it was my turn to be the seeker, I planned to count to ten with my face in my hands then set out on this young-adult echoing of a game I adored years ago. I moved from n

number to number in my head, visualizing each. I counted to ten, but I didn't count to ten in ten seconds. As I finished counting, I quickly pulled my head out of my hands, leaving me feeling a bit dizzy, which usually happens when I stay in one position for about a minute or so. In that moment, my growing confusion fueled a bout of anxiety so I sat down on the couch, put my face in my hands, and counted to ten again. Those ten seconds were about twice as fast as the last. I slowly lifted my head, grabbed my phone and turned on the stopwatch. I counted to ten. Thirty six seconds had passed. Mind racing, I raced up the stairs.

This moment gave me such clarity. At the beginning of my research, I had to find some idea that supported my understanding that time was uninterrupted but also permeable. I didn't find anything that resonated with me and I started to investigate what qualities dictate time to me. These musings further underlined my stance of the variability of biological timekeeping. I've created a formula:



**perception of time + temporal illusion =
perceived duration**

An individual's perception of time stems from their prior understanding of how they've measured time.

From a subjective standpoint, our perception of time is directly linked to temporal illusions which present time as anything but linear—moments of surprise can make time appear to slow down, while intense focus or excitement can make it feel accelerated.

This formula omits unitary measurements, and centers one's positionality as the guiding force for processing time.

Centering our experiences, bias, and stimuli in our relationship with time gives space to conceptualize time as something that varies from person to person.

Biological timekeeping, an offshoot of chronobiology, refers to the internal biological clocks and rhythms that regulate various physiological processes in living organisms. We embody tempo and regulation, which optimizes health and well-being. The prioritizing of

biotic time opens doors for conversations about aspects of natural care, societal structures, and our relationship with time in an organic context. These explorations have the potential to culturally reshape task completion, individual practice, and the fostering of a more holistic approach to timekeeping to better our autonomy in existing societies.

While this text is not necessarily scientific in nature, it would be incautious to not touch on the previous efforts of great minds, and how they melt into my own theoretical undertakings.

One of the most central experiments surrounding biological timekeeping was conducted by Dr. Franz Halberg and colleagues in the 1950s. Using golden hamsters as the experimental subject, Halberg sought to explore physiological changes in the absence of external time cues by subjecting the animals to constant darkness. At the time, it was understood that biological rhythms were solely responsive to light and dark cycles. However, Halberg and his team discovered the hamsters exhibited a consistent and internally driven rhythm of activity and rest.

This rhythm, persisting with an approximately twenty four hour cycle even in constant darkness, challenged paradigmatic ways of thinking and led to the coining of the term “circadian”.

These newfound revelations highlighted that internal timekeeping mechanisms can regulate various physiological processes independently of external environmental influences.

Groundbreaking findings from this revolutionized the field of chronobiology, and revealed more about the inner workings of humans and their biotic timekeeping mechanisms.

This exploration not only confirmed the presence of circadian rhythms in humans but also contributed significantly to the understanding of various physiological processes, including sleep-wake cycles, hormone secretion, and temperature regulation. These insights garnered new medical practices, giving rise to the concept of chronotherapy, where medications are administered at specific times to optimize efficacy and minimize side effects.

With that, the study of circadian rhythms introduced the idea of circadian disruption, which played a crucial role in reshaping societal behaviors to mitigate adverse health and disease effects.

The term circadian disruption touches on the disturbance of the circadian system, born from acute challenges to the system, such as those experienced when traveling across time zones, night-shift work and artificial light exposure. While there is an eventual re-synchronization, circadian disruption is oftentimes accompanied by detrimental short-term consequences like sleep disorders, metabolic changes, and poor work performance. Along with that, people have different chronotypes, representing their individual timing of activities and periods of peak alertness, and understanding individualized chronotyping is crucial for minimizing the impact of circadian disruption.

In the realm of physics, Einstein's theory of relativity questions the idea of time as an absolute, introducing the concept of spacetime, where time is intricately interconnected with space and can be influenced by factors like motion and gravity. The concept of time dilation emphasizes the difference in elapsed time

as measured by two clocks, either due to a difference in gravitational potential (*how much energy an object has based on its position in a gravitational field*) between their locations or relative velocity between them. (*The idea behind general relativity is gravity as a bending or warping of space and time caused by mass and energy. With that, special relativity considers changes to space and time based on how you're moving relative to other things. $E=mc^2$, you know*). This underscores the dynamic nature of time. While these relativistic effects are typically trivial for biological processes on Earth, the overarching idea of spacetime as a four-dimensional continuum contributes to a more holistic understanding of temporal phenomena. The dynamic and context-dependent nature of keeping time, as illuminated by relativity, supports our discernment of biological rhythms that align with the principles governing the spacetime continuum.

The eternalist perspective surrounding the possibilities of the Growing Block Universe theory, where past and present coexist and the future does not, has contributed to discussions about time as fluid and intricate, challenging simplistic notions of linearity. The block universe

hypothesis proposes that past and present exist as unchanging entities within a four dimensional spacetime block, thus growing and offering innovative perspectives on biological timekeeping. With this understanding, the cyclical nature of biological processes that are regulated by internal clocks, is predetermined and fixed within the temporal order of the block universe. Biological rhythms are considered simultaneous and unchanging events within the block, challenging our traditional understanding of time's dynamic flow. While still a matter of debate, it's important to note that the hypothesis raises questions about the nature of agency and free will in the context of biological timekeeping, as it implies that events are preexisting and unalterable.

Quantum mechanics further complicate the linear view, suggesting that time may not be as straightforward as classical physics implies, and quantum states can exist in superpositions. As a result, simultaneously existing in multiple states allows access to different temporal possibilities. Quantum biology reveals connections as it sits at the intersection of quantum physics and biological timekeeping.

From this research, I've recently been introduced to the speculative framework of Black Quantum Futurism, developed by Rasheedah Phillips and Camae Ayewa. This way of thinking integrates quantum physics, futurism, and Afrofuturism with a focus on exploring the intersections of time, space, and race, aiming to disrupt oppressive systems and create alternative futures. Black Quantum Futurism in action could look like a community-led project that reimagines regional and global historical events through a quantum lens. Community members could collaborate on creating a speculative narrative where pivotal moments in history, such as the Civil Rights Movement or the Transatlantic Slave Trade, unfolded differently due to quantum fluctuations. Exploring the impact of altered timelines on present reality, offers insights into the resilience and agency of marginalized communities. Through storytelling of an interactive nature, this project would engage participants in critical reflections on the past, present, and future.

My first studio piece at RISD, *I KILLED TIME*, was an projection and soundscape installation that played with repetition and difference, liminality and associative relationship under the umbrella of time. The layered

projections and overlays on the television feature non-invasive monitoring techniques emphasizing how time moves through one while exposed to different stimuli, paired with the looming gaze of time as it informs and dictates our bodies.

The sound design is a reactionary instrumental improvisation devised from a collection of voices speaking the phrase, "only time will tell" which was supplemented by recordings of instruments housed at the Anarchestra, a providence based collection of instruments created by music theorist Andy Thurlow.

This exploration completely revolutionized my process in terms of shifting towards temporal studies being my primary source for embedded research.

Oh, what was to come.

**By reimagining
temporalities, there lies
power to reshape destinies.**



I KILLED TIME, 2022.



glamourized
commonplace

GLAMOURIZED COMMONPLACE

All parts of us are constantly in flux. Sound's vibrations, cells multiplying, blood pumping. Without movement, nothing reaches its full potential or even becomes. In its purest form, movement is creation. The genuine practicality inherent in movement influences how it's woven into the fabric of art and our daily routines.

Movement, with its inherent functionality, serves as a conduit through which emotions, narratives, and intentions are conveyed. The authenticity of movement breathes life into creations, infusing them with a dynamic energy that resonates. Similarly, in daily life, movement forms the backbone of our interactions with the world, from the simplest to the most complex gestures. It's through movement that we express

ourselves, connect with others, and navigate the environments around us. Within the realm of movement, gestures are vessels for expression. Whether grandiose or minute, gestures infuse movement with depth and meaning, elevating the intricate storytelling of human expression.

This allows for an established sense of order and connection. Enacting a gesture with repetition allows for familiarity that may invoke senses of comfort and vexation. Coupled with that ideology, it is imperative to nurture the tether to our ancestors, traditions and past histories. Beliefs are reinforced through repetition of voice and body.

A beacon for nonverbal communication, gesture is instrumental in modes of movement



studies. The exploration of hand/facial signaling in my work allows for analysis of the movement patterns these expressive features elucidate. Complimentarily, the gestures we employ while speaking have the power to alter how our words are perceived, lending them added significance, lucidity, or emphasis. I'm continuing to be occupied by questions about the idea of transition and its relationship between gesture and segue, illuminating the roles they play in executing everyday function.

Segue, which refers to the transition between moments or actions, gives a look into cognitive processing and task performance. Gestures serve as integral components of cognitive processes that are intrinsically grounded in bodily experiences. This is in part because they provide a means to externalize, reinforce and manipulate mental representations, facilitating communication and problem-solving. From this, gesticulation bridges the gap between thought and action, reinforcing the interconnectedness of cognition and physical embodiment. Smooth transitions between gestures guides the flow of information, further promoting efficient problem-solving and task execution. A seamless segue ensures minimal disruption or pause. This continuous flow of activity is particularly valuable in time-sensitive tasks, where efficiency

and precision are paramount. Additionally, ideas from ecological psychology suggest that our environments provide cues for action, and segue in gesture-based tasks can capitalize on these affordances, initiating a symbiotic relationship with the task environment. Overall, segue optimizes cognitive and perceptual processes, ultimately enhancing aspects of performance and efficiency.

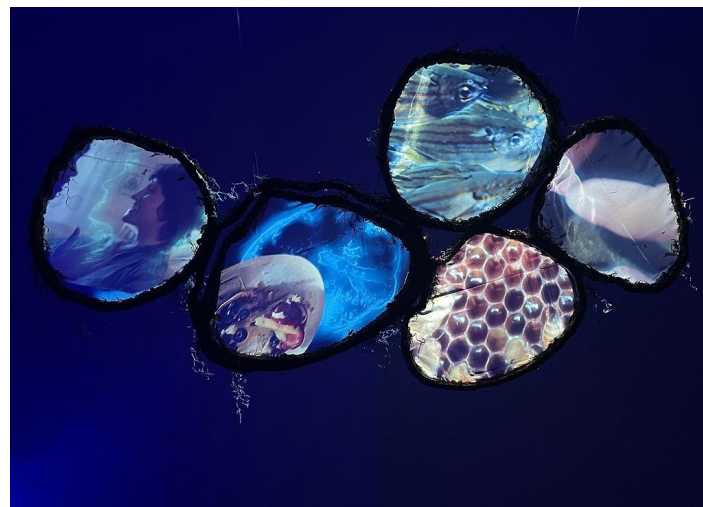
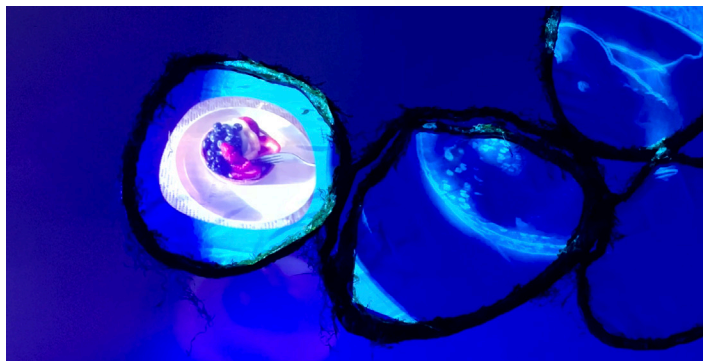
In Black communities, gestures serve as conduits for the transmission of cultural heritage and resilience across generations. These gestures encapsulate the collective experiences preserved and reinterpreted – forming a vital link between past, present, and future. Nuances in body language paired with African American vernacular English (AAVE), dance, rejoicement and grief serve as repositories of collective memory and identity. They embody resilience, resistance, and resilience in the face of adversity, carrying within them the stories and struggles of ancestors. Within Black spaces, reclamation is not merely a replication but a dynamic process of reinvention, adapting to contemporary contexts while acknowledging cultural mistreatment and liberation. As such, gesture becomes a form of cultural currency empowering Black individuals and communities, while also serving as a powerful tool for

resistance, expression, and affirmation in the face of historic and ongoing marginalization.

The grandeur surrounding habitual movement is alluring. The sociological structures we've put in place, like time, adulthood, race, virginity, etc. all influence the idea of gesture as they dictate the hierarchy of gestational patterns. Conversely, I began to answer questions surrounding what defines realities, distortion and order. Rooted in phenomenology and existentialism, gesture aligns with the notion of intentionality, where even seemingly insignificant motions possess inherent meaning when permeated by conscious awareness.

My piece, *Gesture Reprised*, is an exploration into repetitive ritual, gesture and romanticizing the mundane. This piece was born from

a number of different experiments that investigated a collection of everyday functions. Honing in on this idea of romanticizing the mundane, or glamorized commonplace is notable as it elevates the seemingly ordinary to a level of extraordinary, thus platforming these habitual movements and **challenging perceptions of what is to be celebrated and given attention.**



This way of working gives space for individuals to engage in a process of existential revaluation, empowering their agency in crafting a meaningful temporal experience amidst routinized task completion, further using individual autonomy to shape one's existence. Additionally, within the realm of aesthetic theory, such an approach resonates with the concept of "everyday aesthetics," which emphasizes the aesthetic potential inherent in ordinary experiences. By infusing mundane gestures with significance, individuals transcend the mundane, transforming these temporal practices into moments of existential reflection and aesthetic appreciation, thereby enriching their lived experience of time. As I continue to hone in on this idea of romanticizing the mundane, I'm exploring the elevation of the seemingly ordinary to extraordinary to necessary, and ways in which societal perceptions of function can be challenged.

In essence, gestures serve as the fine details that enhance the tapestry of movement, unveiling layers of subtlety and complexity. Whether in performance or everyday interactions, gestures underscore the fervent influence of the nonverbal cue.



GESTURE REPRISED, 2023.





the big show

THE BIG SHOW

Performance is the medium that most informs my practice. Through a number of performance based ventures, I've found motivation in the shared experience forged by time-based media and its gathering nature. At first, I was drawn to stage acting, but I soon discovered my love for storytelling in theatre intertwined with a developing fascination for the counterpublics made within the shared spaces of live performance. What captivated me was the idea of a collective memory forming among performers and audience alike. In those instances, only those present could fully grasp the fleeting moments of live interaction that distinguished one performance from another, even if they shared identical content. Live performance underscores the significance of collective memory and illuminates how our individual biases influence the way we remember, subtly altering our perceptions of shared experiences over time.

As a young creator immersed in the world of theatre, jazz and classical performance, the metamorphosis into solo performance art was a gradual evolution marked by discovery, iteration and tenacity. I learned commitment at a young age to my body, to the countless

rehearsals, productions and concerts. As I played tennis, I found myself learning my opponent's rhythms, and we fell into a dance. Moving together: performance. Feigning indifference when watching a cross-court winner soar past me: performance. My opponent ran up to the net to shake hands after they lost the match on a double fault: performance. I was using the same skills on stage as I was on the court. Then, I saw the same behaviors in class. In white spaces.

Everything is a performance.

Everything was going to be a performance.



Within You, 2021.

The theatrical work that I crafted alone danced with abstract movements, whispered with sensory cues, and pondered existentialism and the passage of time. My shift from theatre to performance art was born from my developing ideology of “self as medium”, while also starting to explore the possibilities of embodied performance I could make if I looked beyond standard conventions and narrative structure.

My ideology of “self as medium” acts as a method for unconventional toolmaking. Overarchingly, the elemental use of my likeness/voice/gestures allows boundaries to not go unstretched. Conceptualizing active participation as a tool gives license to over extension and resilience, commonly utilized in performance art spaces, as the effect of using your body and presence as a means of expression is lasting. There is an overarching sense of trust, intimacy and vulnerability with the audience. This, in part, is due to our innate capacity for shared connection. When we see representations of humanoid figures in art, there is an opportunity for recognition, which triggers our empathy. It can act as a conduit for traveling through time, perspectives and cultures. Even a glimpse of the assortment of human experiences contributes to fostering

understanding and appreciation for the richness of the human condition.

I will never forget the first time I learned the details of Rhythm 0. Marina Abramovic is principled in a complex blend of existentialism, spirituality, and a commitment to pushing the boundaries of art and human experience. Her unceasing exploration of self led to questioning my own practice as I thought to the peripheries of my body of work. Within You, a projection and soundscape installation, cycles through thoughts of youth and mortality. The piece serves as a prologue to a larger conversation about the fleeting nature of childhood and stands on the precipice of defining when that transformation starts to take place. Stemming from a near death childhood experience in a lake at summer camp, I submerged my head in a filled 5ft water tank in a warehouse alone for moments at a time. This was my first experience in a performance where I’d been denied breath outside of exertion from physical gestures. As I watch back the piece today, glimmers of excitement and unease filter through the visuals. I sit with the fact that the uncertainty I felt in this near death experience is not present in the work.

I am concurrently:

10. (The age I was when I almost drowned.)

25. (The age I was when I created the piece.)

26. (The age I am now.)

In Southwestern Maine. (Where I almost drowned.)

In Pittsburgh, PA. (Where I made the piece.)

In Providence, RI. (Where I am watching now.)

Soaking wet. Completely dry.

Viewer/performer relationship is an essential dynamic as shared experiences morph due to the distinctive temporal dynamics that are shaped by the engagement, perception, and interpretation of those simultaneously in the space. This relationship functions in two ways: the performer is responsible for presenting a compelling and engaging performance, while the viewer is responsible for actively indulging in the experience. While many may view these entities separately, this mutual dependency allows the performer to rely on the viewer's attention and engagement to create a sense of energy, or a buzz, during the performance while the viewer relies on the performer to provide something worth engaging in. Duration of performance, paired with viewer perception and interaction can inform the behaviors of the performers and

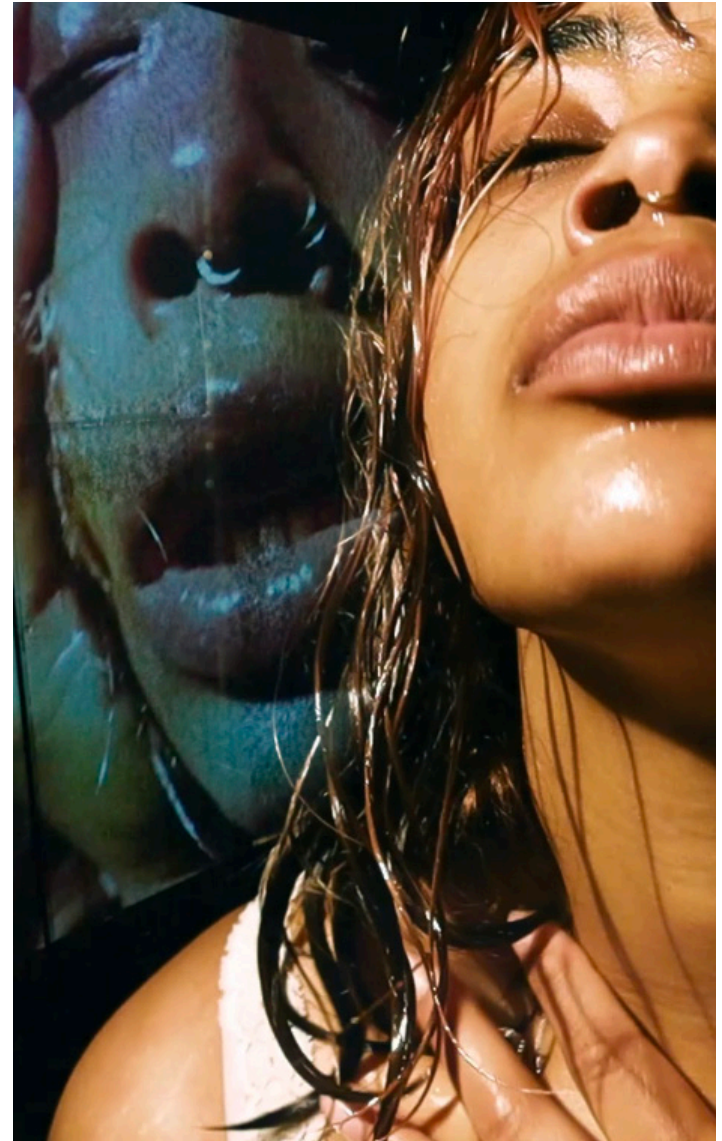
space themselves. For instance, the length of a performance can affect viewers' attention spans, emotional responses, and overall engagement, with longer performances potentially leading to fluctuations in interest or immersion. Variations in tempo, timing, and pause can evoke different moods, convey narrative nuances, and shape the viewer's perceptual experience. With that, the timing of specific moments within a performance, such as climactic moments or periods of silence, can heighten suspense, evoke anticipation, or prompt reflection, thus influencing the viewer response, which is then washed over the performers, the engagement informing the way they continue to perform. Beyond mere communication, we rely on signaling to convey intention and meaning. While based in performance art, gestures take on a heightened nature, becoming a primary mode of expression for artists to convey to viewers. This reliance on gesture to engage is satisfied once a response is evoked that transcends linguistic barriers. Additionally, audience participation or moments of interaction within the performance can foster a sense of immediacy, intimacy, or shared experience between performers and viewers, blurring the boundaries between observer and participant.

What starts the cycle? Can it be undone?

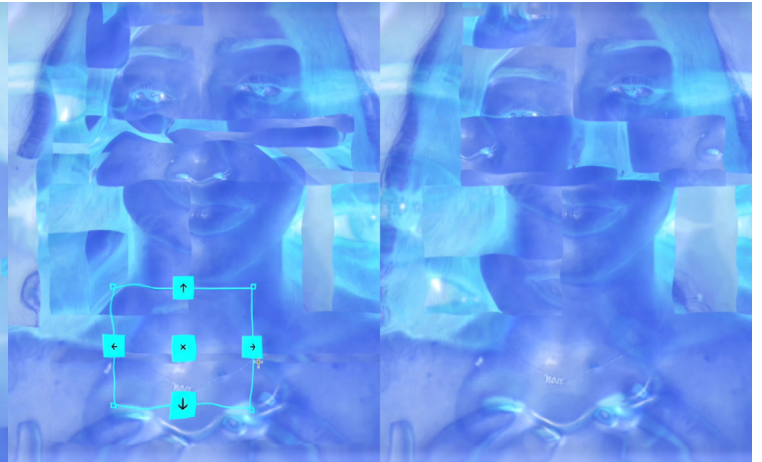
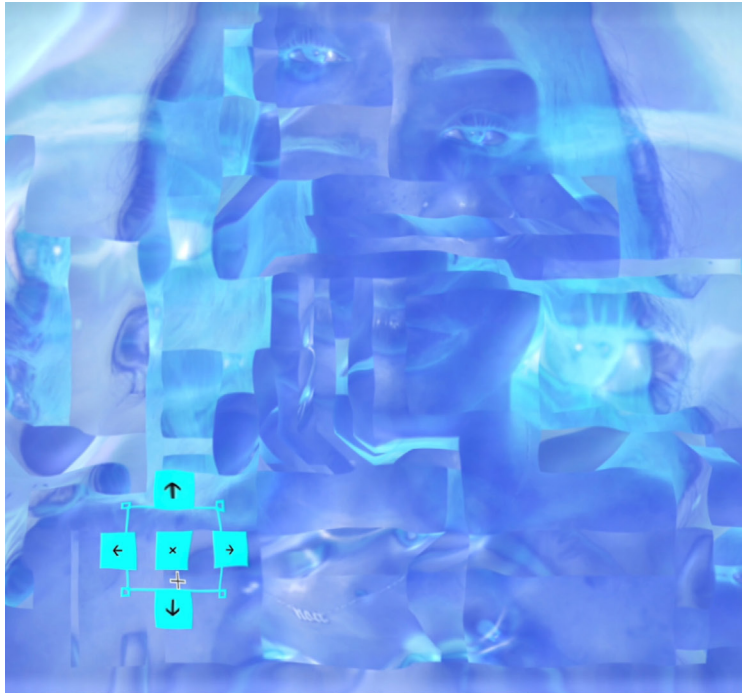
Stemming from our societal understanding of time, performance influences goal-setting, prioritization, and cultural norms. By recognizing the interconnectedness between time and performance, there is opportunity for swifter navigation of societal expectations, optimizing productivity and relationships. When we manage our time effectively, trust and reliability are enhanced. Conversely, the inverse may place strain on daily performance leading to increased stress, leaving one unable to prioritize and allocate time to nurture relationships. Giving time and performing unconditional care to those around us fosters a solidification of connection, intimacy, support, and exploratory interaction. The aim is to move far away from resentment. Ultimately, performance vitality leans on its ability to contribute to the functioning of communities, achieve objectives, and advance societal development.

More boundaries will be pushed. More audiences will be invited. More unraveling.

More odyssey.









a love letter
to sound

sound,

You are a vessel for change over time. You come with intricacy, analogously stemming from the simplicity of interaction. Above all, sound you've decorated the landscape of our existence with resonance, dissonance and silence.

As most people that study music from a young age, being precise about what I was hearing dictated my understanding of the possibilities the world held. My relationship with processing sound is deeply ingrained in years of training that have heightened my sensitivity to auditory stimuli, allowing me to discern nuance in pitch, tone, rhythm, and timbre. This way of working extends beyond music, influencing how I experience everyday sounds. I find myself paying meticulous attention to detail, noticing patterns and subtleties in the cacophony of noises around me. Similarly, my emotional connection to music spills over into my perception of environmental sounds, imbuing them with a deeper emotional resonance. I often navigate my surroundings using auditory cues, instinctively mapping out spaces based on the sounds I hear.

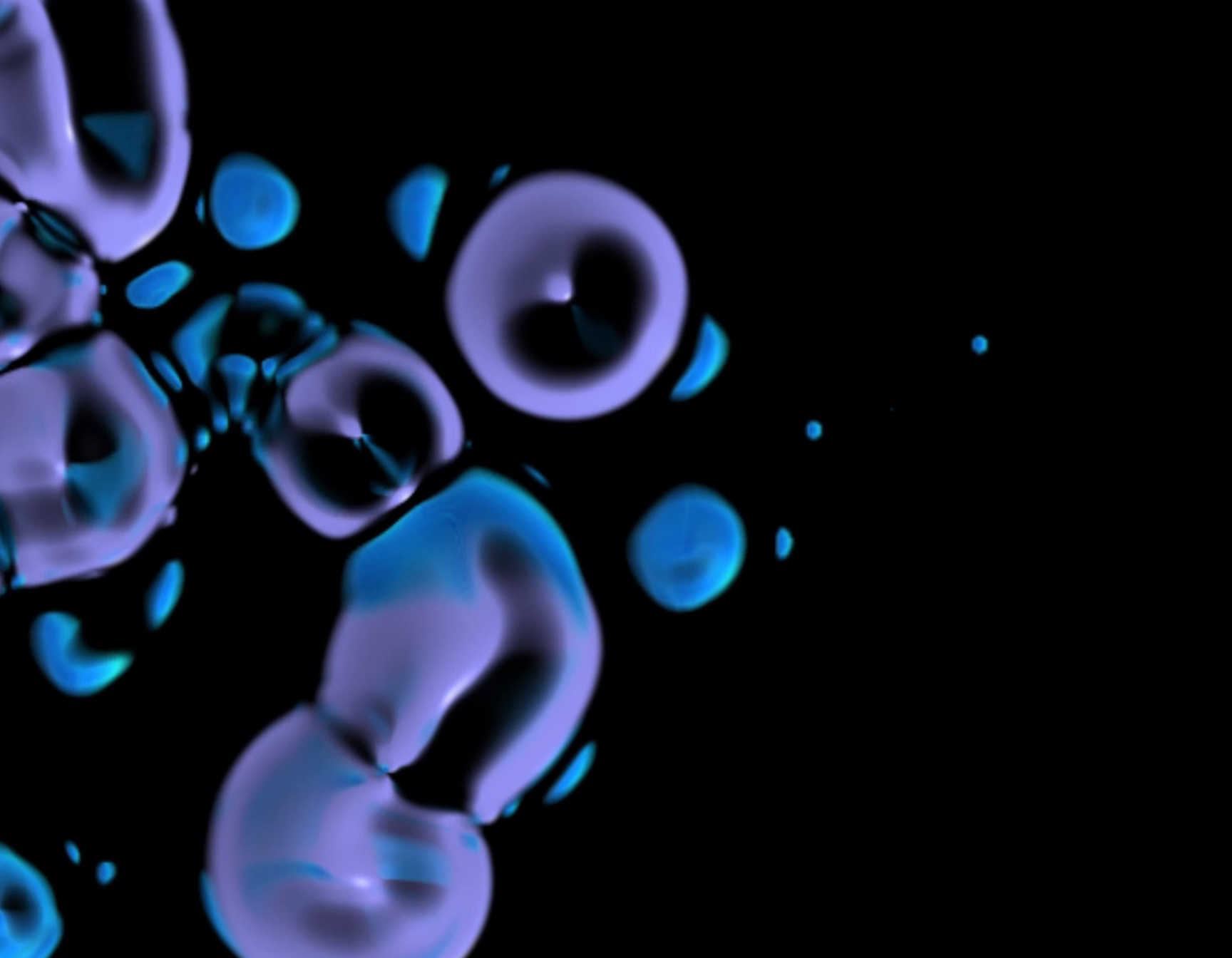
This heightened awareness and sensitivity shape my creative interpretation of sound, allowing me to reimagine mundane noises as sources of inspiration.

Sound, you are something tangible. Felt through our bodies as our nerve endings transform vibrations into electrical impulses that then travel along the auditory nerve to the brain. Rich with variation in duration, pitch, speed, distance, and frequency, sound is a multifaceted element that is remarkable in its ability to evoke.

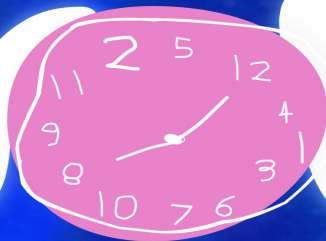
A simple hum, glass breaking, a group of friends laughing. These sonic experiences can transport us to a specific time or place, triggering feelings of nostalgia, joy, or melancholy, adding depth to our interactions with the world, informed by these experiences. Thank you for coloring everything in.

with such sincerity,

Catherine x



BE LATED ANWAL



cat ashley

Director's note

This piece stems from my unceasing research on the relationship between states of being, horology, and gesture. I've spent stretches of time asking the people, texts, and experiments around me to define time in a way that I can understand, and stand with. I've yet to fall into a rapport with mechanical time that feels stable, but I am infatuated with the possibilities that come from centralizing biological timekeeping over standard metrics of timekeeping. Society has come to prioritize man-made constructs, but this biotic neglect leads to disrupting the organic pacing we once relied on. This produces quite a mess. Time is woven into how everything works. It's led us to conceive life in terms of progress - one thing to the next, tasks to be completed over and over and over and over again. Further marrying us to gestures most efficient to complete these tasks. Time knows no stasis, and tracing the passage of time is our most naturalistic posture. So, in this shared space, I encourage you to settle into how time moves through you. Belated Avowal, a far too late cry. A promise.





Director: Catherine Ashley

One: Catherine Ashley

Two: Daniel Sohn

Three: Sophia Nelson

Time: Vyetle Tiya

Projection Design: Catherine Ashley

Sound Design: Daniel Sohn, Catherine Ashley

Graphic Designer: Yangqi Deng

Scenic Associate: Prithi Khalique

Audio Engineer: Daniel Sohn

Media Engineer: Catherine Ashley

When there is asterisked text, that is what One hears while the text in parenthesis is what's said. Three is off stage. To engage with her, speak to the center of the house.

One and Two enter the space. They turn on the show computer and mixer. Two settles in their space. One finds somewhere to watch.

SCENE 1

1st movement

THEREMIN KEY: C# Minor Pentatonic

KORG: 108

DX7: _08

Three: *Whenever you think it's time I'm ready to go a little further than I can right now, but in a minute I might be able to catch you for a second and go back on my words and make sure you get there on time. *

(hey sorry i'm late, are you ready to go?)

One: I'm all set.

Three: I don't mean to put you in a bind.

Two: Yeah, yeah it's all good.

One: I can't really hear what you're saying

when you talk like that.

Three: Do you still want to go?

One: Yeah, um, well, I do. But now I'm just thinking about the way you spoke.
Can you even repeat what you *said?*

Three: I can't really remember... it was something about being late or on time?

THEREMIN DRONE.

A beat.

One: Oh. okay. *yeah okay.* Ha.

Three: Silly! I love talking to you.

SCENE 2

2nd movement

THEREMIN KEY: C# Major Pentatonic

KORG: 108

DX7: _08

One: do you guys keep a journal?

Three: I don't write down my thoughts. I can't give them all permanence.

One: that makes sense. If I had to read my

internal monologue on paper–

Three: I would implode.

One: I like to write things down in general, though.

Two: I like the idea of a note. A short message, functions as a reminder, helps–

One: – WiTH meMoRY rECALL.

Two: Oh, YoU rECALL hEARIng thAT?

THEREMIN DRONE in D major.
5ths. Lower pitch correction.

Three: *Note to self: Start keeping notes to keep track of things to check off and check on when you've almost gotten where you might be going before it's too late to finish what you wanted to start. *
(Note to self: Make a checklist.)

One: I don't get what – *I can't hear what you're saying.*

3rd movement

DX7: _08. KORG: 110 joins. DX7: _08 drops out.

One begins to write. They pause and begin again. They stop.

One: do you guys keep a journal?

Three: I don't write down my thoughts. I can't give them all permanence.

One: that makes sense. I mean, If I had to read my internal monologue on paper–

Three: I would implode.

One: I like to write things down in general though...

Two: I like the idea of a note. A short message, functions as a reminder, helps–

One: – with memory recall.

Two: Oh. You recall hearing that?

Three: Note to self: Make a checklist.

THEREMIN DRONE in D major.
5ths. Lower pitch correction.

One writes again, with haste.

SCENE 3

One: I'm almost done.

Two: Ready when you are.

Three: (to Two) What is the point of this?

One: I've been working on this for you. For both of you. I don't think I'm going to get these words to you in any other way.

Three: What if they don't?

One: Why are you doing this?

Three: What is the point in you saying it over and over again, repeatedly continuing to almost finish a completed project if you're not going to produce a final end product to eventually share with us? (you're always "almost done"). You're always "almost done".

One: Because 'almost' holds different weights.. (speaking their language) Almost falling asleep and almost getting hit by a car aren't the same thing. Last week I was almost done but I found that today's almost is closer to what I'm interested in sharing.

Two: (diffusing) Hey. We've got nothing but time.

One: fitting.

Loving You Prelude

KORG: 109

DX7: _08

SCENE 4

A great pause. lingering notes fill some space.

Two: How long is too long to wait?

One: Depends on who you are.

Three: Depends on what you're waiting for.

One: Depends on if you can track how long you're waiting. When time isn't moving through you but is moreso circling around you, it can feel more comfortable to stay put.

Three: What are you waiting for?

Two: You're right. I should just do it.

One: No like. Literally. What is it that you're waiting for?

Two: That doesn't matter.

SONG: LOVING YOU

Guitar: ON, SP 404: ON Bass: ON

SCENE 5

One: *(with fervor)* I'm almost done!.

Three: You've rewritten a lot.

One: Are you watching me?

Three: Yup. We are in the same room.

One: I have to start over a lot.

Three: So you've almost started. You're not almost done.

One: Ohhhhhhhhh.hmmm.well.

Two: It's all relative—

One: Uhh. I have been working on this for weeks on weeks—

Two: It's the first time they've written something for us—

One: at this point?? Really, what makes you think—

Two: —and I'll take it whenever it comes.

Three:

ONE DAY I'LL STOP MAKING SURE YOU PULL EVERYTHING FROM EVERYWHERE EVEN WHEN IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE THINGS ARE MOVING FORWARD TO BEING CLOSER TO THE IDEA OF ALMOST COMPLETING YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT MAKES SENSE AND WHAT DOES NOT.

(What is the point of you continuing to say it over and over again if you're not going to produce an end product to share with us? You've been writing for so long. I just don't get how there isn't something written down that you'd like to share by now).

THEREMIN DRONE in D major.
5ths. Lower pitch correction.

One: (*desperate*) I want you. To repeat back to me. What you just said. *Can you?* What makes you short circuit like that? You speak in a run on phrase that makes, really. No sense. It makes no sense to me. *I can't hear you.*

Three: Okay. I'll stay out of it.

THEREMIN DRONE in D major.
5ths. Lower pitch correction.

A beat.

One: What?

Two: She just said she'll stay out of it.

One: I mean, you heard her. You always hear her doing that right?

Can you hear me?

You never hear her?

Can you say something?

Two: I just heard her say, "I'll stay out of it."

Three: Maybe you should take a break from writing.

One: This isn't on me. You're the one doing this.

Three: I don't think this has to do with me.

SCENE 6

One is stuck. They find a way to get up and go to a new space. They lament, looping their bemoaned voice until it feels right. They leave that sound in the air. It moves half time. One reads their letter.

One: I can't count to ten and I can't tell time. always.

I can read a clock obviously, but why would I believe that a watch has a better understanding of things than I do? Stretched and ripped and torn and pilled and peeled and cut and it still has to be something linear?

Time can do all that and still just be one thing?
That looks one way?

You two are as close to me as anyone could be. So, the next step is to make sure there is space for space. I don't know how else to say that. I feel like it's not a big deal, but there's so much that comes with it, and I lose from it, and I miss out. Even when the three of us are in a room together. I feel like I'm not *real*. That

part is nice sometimes. But the greater sense of it is disorienting. I'm having some trouble with my memory. Memories are pockets of time wrapped with a bow of sentiment. I don't want to lose those things. Because the whole thing about time is that I won't get them back. I can't be there to make them happen again. So, I want there to be space for space.

with us.

Two: I can hear you.

I can hear you

Three: I can hear you.

I can hear you

Movement Coda

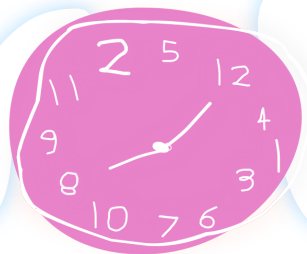
THEREMIN KEY: D Major

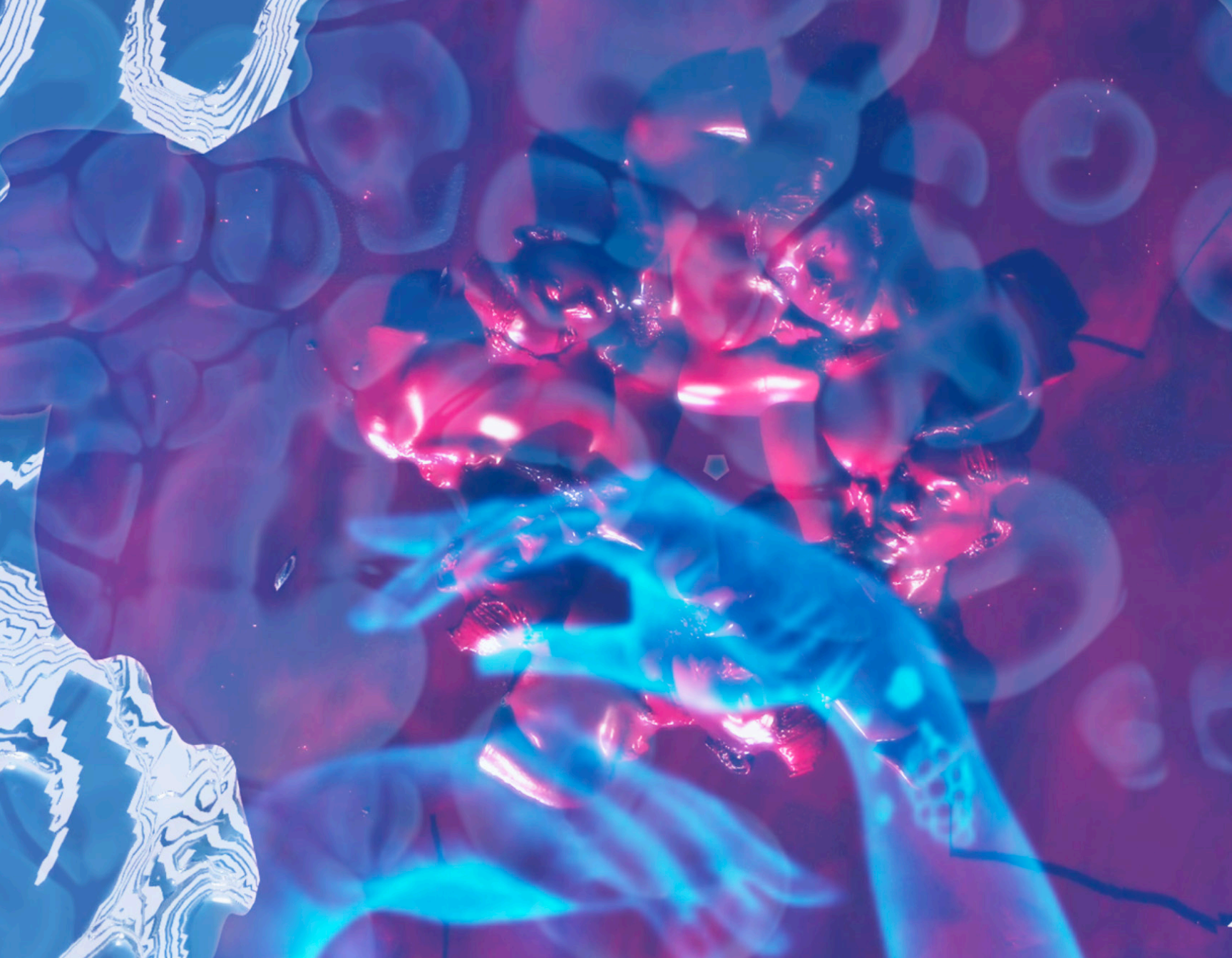
DX7: _08

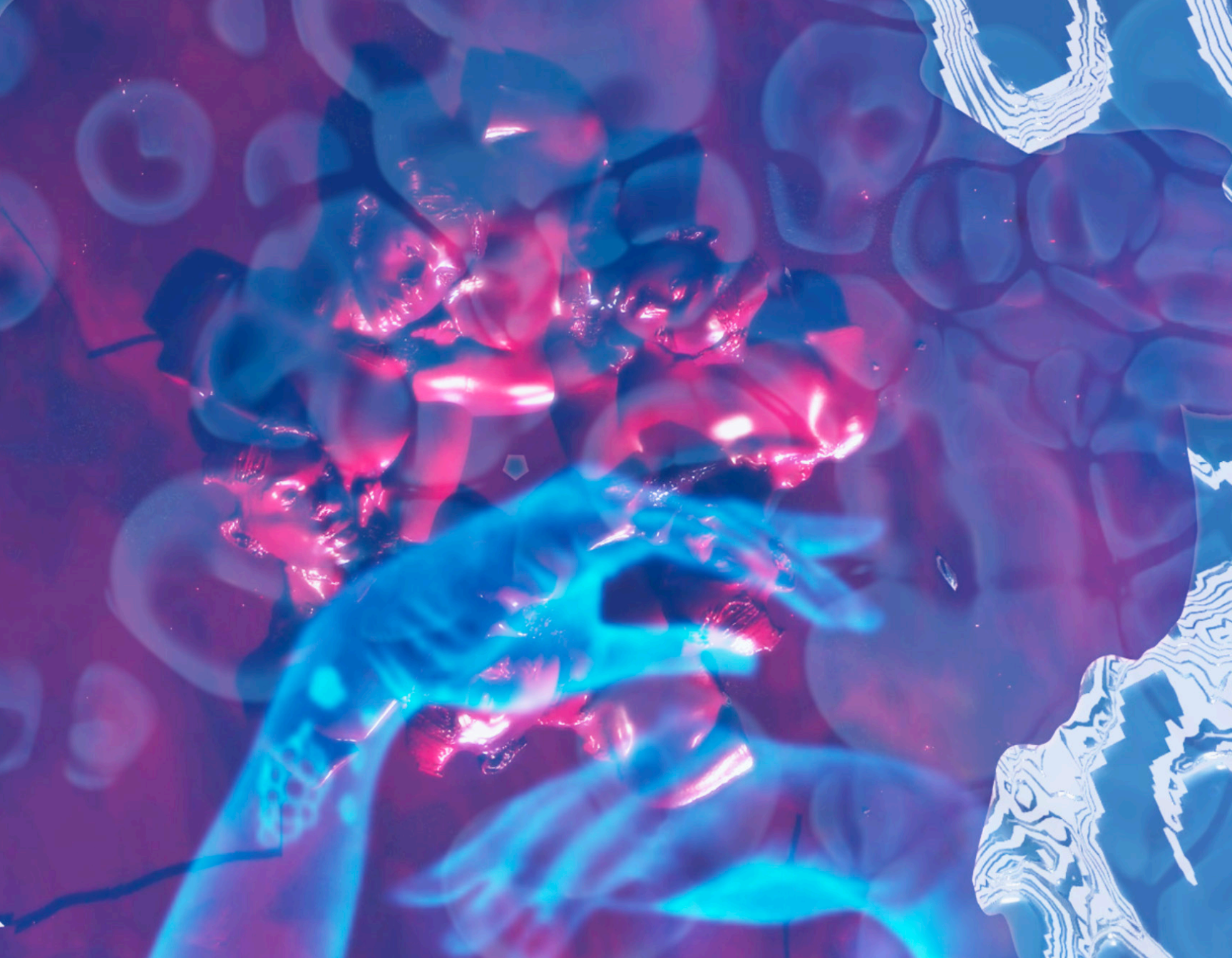




BE LATED
Always







Presented in tandem with this artist book, the installation component of *Half Dawn* delves into the entangled agreement between imposed and biotic regeneration, exploring ornate transformations facilitated by time and biological processes. At the heart of the piece, forms sculpted from artificial and natural materials are cohabitants, echoing the complex relationship between human intervention and organic renewal. Further, this amalgamation comments on the fusion between technological advancement and the innate regenerative capabilities of the natural world. As time unfolds in the space, the projections and sound interact asynchronously, temporally adjusting and tailoring individualized experiences with the work.

Half Dawn serves as a meditation on the fragility and resilience of our relationships with time, rest and existence while also acting as an opportunity to reconsider relationships with cycles of ruination and renewal.

