



PERFORMANCE
PHILOSOPHY

THE EROTICS OF GRIEVES

SIEGMAR ZACHARIAS AMSTERDAM UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS /
UNIVERSITY OF ROEHAMPTON LONDON

Dear Reader, this part is trying to give some orientation into the text before we start again in the middle:

The Erotics of Grievances, invites you into a practice of somacoustic reading/listening that integrates a re-conceptualisation of grieving with a listening practice that was developed as container for collective un-numbing. Situated within an era marked by violence, silencing, and systemic oppression, this work explores how grieving can be more than a solitary, passive state to be overcome, and calls on you to imagine a dynamic, embodied, collective practice and an active force of intimacy and solidarity, of resistance and regeneration.

Moving with Audre Lorde's concept of the erotic as a source of power and Fred Moten's idea of refusal in the erotics of fugitivity, this essay shifts the conversation from a singular, universal notion of grief to the plural and relational concept of *grievances*, emphasizing that mourning is contextually bound, layered, and multifaceted. Grievances are presented not as emotions to manage and overcome, but as active, disruptive processes capable of unsettling and reshaping personal and collective entrenched power structures and normative expectations.

As we deepen our capacities to witness, share, and embody grievances, we might experience our bodies as resonant spaces that co-sense and co-shape realities, re-memembering the connections to ancestors, land, and each other. I invite you to listen—not just with your ears, but with your whole body. What might emerge when we share our breath, our wails, our grieving?

You may listen to the sound piece now or later in the text when you are invited to. If you decide to do it now, please find a comfortable place, listen with headphones and find a heavy object that you would like to hold in your hand or place on your body as you listen. The QR-code will take you to the recording of *Practicing Futures while Grieving*, a piece on SoundCloud that is 46 minutes long. Press play. See you on the other side.



<https://soundcloud.com/siegmazacharias/practicing-future-while-breathing>

Take a minute to notice what has been coming up for you in terms of sensations, emotions, thoughts and images. If you want, take a minute to write things down for yourself. Drink some tea or water and let's start again.



Dear Reader, Griever, Listener, Lover,

I want to write about grieving as a portal to liberation and social transformation, yet I find it difficult to write and craft words while the only thing I want to do is scream, cry and shout, about the killings, dehumanisations and brutalities that are going on in Gaza right now... and about the criminalization of pro-Palestinian solidarity all around the world. I am not Palestinian, and I cannot write about Palestinian grief, and I won't; but I can write about my grieves and I must describe the context these words are coming out of and are falling into.

It is May/June/July 2024 and we have been made into witnesses of the genocidal military campaign of the IDF (Israeli Defence Force) against the Palestinian people for the last almost 10 months. The time a human takes to grow inside another human.

As I'm writing this I am sitting in a room with four walls and a large glass window. I am sitting in a room that is in the middle of Berlin. In Proto-Slavic language, *Berl* means swamp and *-in* is a suffix that denominates a place. So Berlin means "place in a swamp" and was given to the place around

700 CE by Slav settlers. Berlin is also the place where the largest number of Jewish Germans lived before the Holocaust. Berlin is also the place that has presently the biggest diasporic Palestinian community in Germany. And now Berlin is also the place of policies that silence surges and of violent police crackdowns on people who protest for human rights, for the right to life, liberty and security of person of Palestinians (UN General Assembly 1948a). The protestors here in Berlin are mostly Arabs, Muslims, anti-Zionist Jews, regime critical Israelis and other allies; mostly migrants and queer folks mostly from the global south who live here in Berlin, because when we moved here Berlin seemed a live-able place. Berlin is also the place where the government of Germany resides and pronounces its steadfast support of and alliance with the state of Israel, even in front of the International Court of Justice, where South Africa accused Israel of committing acts of genocide (ICJ 2023).

I am sitting in a room with four walls and a glass window that is not shattered. For the past ten months, I have been looking into another window—my mobile phone—watching the self-documentation of Palestinian people being dehumanized, displaced, slaughtered, and starved to death. I see men and sometimes children digging out other children and adults from under the rubble. I see humans hurt and mutilated, holding the lifeless bodies of their loved ones. I hear the screams and wails of parents cradling the severed parts of their children in bags.

In these past ten months, I have learned new words from UN experts, high commissioners, special rapporteurs, and international human rights organizations describing what is happening in Gaza. These terms are absent from the lexicon of the German government and mainstream media:

Domicide: The systemic destruction of civilian homes through attacks, bombings, and shelling, displacing millions into homelessness, the razing of entire cities and villages violating the human right to adequate housing in times of war (OHCHR 2023).

Scholasticide: The systematic obliteration of education by arresting, detaining, or killing teachers, students, and staff, and destroying educational infrastructure, violating the human right to education in times of war (OHCHR 2024a). There are no universities left in Gaza.

Epistemicide: The systematic destruction of indigenous knowledge, archives, traditional symbols, objects, architectures, and sites, and the killing of knowledge-holders and their pupils (Santos 2014).

These terms were new to me, adding to the familiar lexicon of brutality:

Ecocide: There is a push of legal experts to make ecocide into the 5th criminal act under international law. They define ecocide as “unlawful or wanton acts committed with knowledge that there is a substantial likelihood of severe and either widespread or long-term damage to the environment being caused by those acts” (Expert Panel 2021). This includes the killing of flora and fauna, poisoning of land and waters with explosives and white phosphorus, and the destruction of biodiversity.

Genocide: Coined in 1944 to describe the Holocaust, adopted by the United Nations in 1948, it encompasses acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group. This includes killing members of the group, causing serious bodily or mental harm, deliberately inflicting conditions to make life unliveable, preventing births, and forcibly transferring children (UN General Assembly 1948b).¹

Yet, there are still words missing in this gruesome lexicon:

How do we name the “systemic destruction of health services,” the assaulting, detaining, and killing of medical staff and patients, the obliteration of medical infrastructure, and the incapacitation of medical and humanitarian aid delivery? (Arslan 2024).

How do we name the systematic attack on freedom of opinion and expression, the persecution and killing of journalists, the shutdown of media infrastructures, and the censorship of expressed opinions? (UN General Assembly 1948a, Article 19).

And what word will we use to describe the neglect of the fundamental human right of the dead—the impossibility of preservation of the dignity of the deceased, including mutilating bodies, dumping bodies in mass graves, abducting bodies, the inability to bury those under the rubble, the desecration of graves, and the obstruction of death rituals? (OHCHR 2024b; UN News 2023; Wikipedia Contributors 2024a).

I am sitting in a room with four walls and a window that is not shattered, while Western powers continue to supply ammunition to Israel, ignoring the International Court of Justice’s declaration of probable acts of genocide, rendering the perlocutionary power of the court useless (ICJ 2024a and 2024b). Protests for a political permanent ceasefire are met with police brutality. Students worldwide occupy university campuses in protest demanding a ceasefire and divestment from institutions profiting from the “war on Hamas,” as Israel’s governmental officials like to call it. Here in Germany the call for ceasefire faces severe repression, often justified as preventing antisemitism—a conflation contested by anti-Zionist Jews, law activists, and legal scholars.²

In this necropolitical³ climate, I invite you to think with me about erotics of grieves (Mbembe 2003, 39–40). And for that we have to ask who is grieving what and whom? What kinds of grieves are we talking about? What practices of grieving are involved? Moving away from a singular, universalist notion of grief towards a multilayered conception of *grieves*. I’m inviting you to think/feel with Audrey Lorde’s concept of the power of the erotic and Fred Moten’s concept of the erotics of fugitivity and explore what the *erotics of grieving* might be. What might grieves enable, what might they resist? Might grieves begin to open up questions around the self-protective and exclusionary mechanisms of social infrastructures and hegemonic systems of oppression? Are grieves the cracks in the autonomous, sovereign Western, individualised subject of modernity?

We are taken by so many grieves simultaneously nowadays: we are grieving for the dead, grieving because of ongoing genocides,⁴ grieving because of the ongoing climate catastrophe, grieving because of social injustices, grieving the loss of the idea of a certain future. These and more

accumulate as personal, collective, worldly and planetary grieves. How can grieves assist in reorientating and reorganizing towards non-normative bodies of knowledge and flesh, as generative forces of liquefied encounters, affectivities, dependencies, and desires between multiple others. How might we imagine alternative enactments of the world if we acknowledge the erotic power of grieves? How might performance become a grieving practice and learning ground for developing and enduring dynamic systems that are not predetermined, but generative and co-created across diverse agents, socioeconomic locations and power relations? In other words, how can we be with the “hard shit” and learn to face and metabolise it, the uncontrollable the unfixable and the unknown? And how can we do that collectively and publicly in re-generative grieving practices?

GRIEVES

Grieving, as I have come to understand and practice it, is not a monolithic experience but a spectrum of ‘grieves’—each unique, each valid. It is not a static state but a collection of active processes, practices of doing, and being undone, and being done by grieves. This understanding emerged from my personal journey with different intersecting grieves: grieving with my younger sister Susanne Irina, as I accompanied her into death, grieving after her death; grieving the always too little and always too much of a mixed identity (Romanian, German); grieving a complicated migration story; grieving the extinction of thousands of nonhuman creatures, kin and ecosystems; grieving the unpredictable futures we are bequeathing to our children; grieving with friends and comrades who have lost friends and family to war and genocide; grieving the ongoing daily racism against my black and brown siblings, as a person who profits from being read as white and cis; grieving my complicity in racialised patriarchal capitalism; grieving my complicity in land and human exploitation as I’m writing on a computer.

Grieves is a term I coined to suggest that there is no universalist concept of grief, but that there are as many grieves as there are bodies and situations. I have stopped talking about grief as an absolute singular, just as we have given up talking about the universal idea of the body.⁵ I prefer writing grieves with a “v” to highlight a conceptualisation of “grieves” that has more to do with the ways in which we “do” grieving and how we are being “undone” and “done” by grieving than with a state of a pre-existing subject.

Cultural contexts determine the ways in which grieves are expressed, understood, and processed across cultures. For instance, in Mexico, Día de Los Muertos is a vibrant, communal celebration of life and death, a time to honor the deceased with joy and remembrance. Contrast this with the sombre, private mourning of some Western traditions, where grieving is often a solitary journey. Consider the traditional, embodied practice of the wake in rural Romania, where my great grandmother used to follow her call as a wailing woman. These wakes are communal gatherings that mix mourning with celebration, wailing with laughing, drinking and eating. Or let’s remind ourselves of the spreading of the ashes of loved ones into the Mississippi river during the AIDS crisis. These self-organised queer funeral rituals with a lot of glitter and exuberant costumes during Mardi Gras were, and still are, organised because the state and the church and sometimes the

biological families refused to bury people who died of AIDS. Who is *grievable*,⁶ when, how, and by whom? These practices highlight how grieves are culturally specific, with each community developing its own ways to face death, honour the dead, cope with loss and support the bereaved. It also already points to the fact that grieving is not merely a private practice but also very much shaped by and expressed as a political practice.

Our understanding and expression of grieves are historically contingent. When I grew up in Romania, elaborate mourning customs dictated what a grieving person should wear and what they should do and shouldn't do, creating a highly visible expression of their grieving. Today in the global north, contemporary Western societies often emphasize a quick return to so called normalcy, reflecting a shift in how we deal with death and mourning. Grieves are not a fixed state but practices that change with societal attitudes and norms, that in turn change throughout time. Social norms and values heavily influence how one's grieves are perceived and expressed and how we are constructed as grievers. These expectations shape our grieving, adding layers of complexity to our experiences of loss and endings. Race, gender, class, and sexuality intersect to create unique and asymmetrical experiences of grieves and accentuate how each is socially constructed and differently valued. Who dictates these values?

Grieves can manifest in various emotional responses, including for example sadness, anger, relief, or numbness. Grieving is not a linear process and can involve a complex interplay of emotions that do not fit neatly into predefined stages. We may experience them simultaneously, or bypass certain emotions altogether. This emotional complexity reflects the multifaceted nature of grieves, resisting simplistic categorization and highlighting the need for a more nuanced understanding. Personal grieves intersect and accumulate with collective grieves. There are those grieves that a whole group of people carries across generations. They come with legacies of colonialism, genocide and slavery, stories of forced migration, displacement, enslavement, brutal exploitations, dehumanisation and killings.⁷ There are those in which we grieve the futures that our children might not have in the face of climate catastrophe. And there are collective grieves around understanding one's own implication, complicity and entanglements with these histories of harm. Collective grieves are grieves that are shared to different degrees and in different intensities, in a community or globally. They are bigger than one person and affect groups of people and ultimately all of us across time and space in asymmetrical ways. What collective grieving practices can we cultivate to be with collective grieves like witnessing genocides, dealing with one's complicity in systems of oppression, witnessing and contributing to the climate catastrophe? I want to consider protests, and activism and collective care, and mutual aid as grieving rituals. Here are some initiatives that I participated in in the past 10 months in Berlin alone: I was at a protest/vigil organised by an activist group called *The Grieving Doves*, where all the names of all the children killed in Gaza up to the 1st of June 2024, International Children's Day, were read out aloud. It took fifteen hours. I hosted listening sessions as collective grieving practices. I am part of a collective that provides first aid plant medicine and bodywork for people who are physically and psychologically impacted by the ongoing brutalities. There have been protests and public vigils to honor the dead and the living.

Our grieves not only co-shape us but also co-shape how we are given to the world. This attends to the agency that grieving has over our bodies and our relations. It is time to move away from the idea of grief as merely a psychological state or a bad emotion that we need to overcome. Instead, we must centre the corporeal, embodied, shapeshifting, and transformative, political potentials of grieves and their relation to the social body, sociality and intra-connectedness.

Challenging the idea of a universal understanding of grief and emphasizing the plurality of grieving experiences, narratives and practices as grieves, acknowledges difference and asymmetries in the ways in which grieves are made possible or impossible, and at the same time it asks us to stay attuned to how grieves are part of practicing futures. It invites us to embrace the diversity of grieving experiences and reject normative frameworks that seek to standardize our responses to sorrow. Grieves invite us not to assume what grief is but to sense into the intersecting grieves and to listen, witness, and validate one's own and others' nuanced and diverse complexity of grieving experiences. This conceptualisation of grieves can integrate solidarity movements, protests, collective care, collective mourning rituals, and collective transformative justice work.

THE EROTIC—learning from Lorde and Moten

When I suggest an erotics of grieves, I think of the words of self-described “black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet” Audre Lorde and her essay “Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power”. Here is a reminder what she says about the erotic.

The erotic functions for me in several ways, and the first is in providing the power which comes from sharing deeply any pursuit with another person. The sharing of joy, whether physical, emotional, psychic, or intellectual, forms a bridge between the sharers which can be the basis for understanding much of what is not shared between them. And lessens the threat of their difference. [...] Our erotic knowledge empowers us, becomes a lens through which we scrutinise all aspects of our existence, forcing us to evaluate those aspects honestly in terms of their relative meaning within our lives. And this is a grave responsibility, projected from within each of us, not to settle for the convenient, the shoddy, the conventionally expected, nor the merely safe. (Lorde 1984, 56–57)

Lorde speaks to the ways in which the erotic develops in practices of sharing intimacy not just in a physical way but in intellectual, spiritual, emotional, creative ways. By calling it a power not merely a sensation or a force, Lorde addresses the political aspect of the erotic as a disruption of patriarchy, capitalism and individualism. In this sense the erotic has the power to disrupt oppressive powers and oppressive systems that hold us in place, that hold us in assumed safety and where the power of the erotic lies precisely in breaking open the structures of that assume safety. It does so through intimacy. For her this intimacy is the force that can hold us when we go outside of comfort and ease, and it helps us discern between values we desire to live by and values that we are coerced into.

And then I continue thinking with Fred Moten and *The Erotics of Fugitivity* (2018, 241–268). There he talks about an obscene ethics exemplified by the story of Betty's case:

In 1857, Chief Justice Lemuel Shaw of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts declared Betty to be free. Betty, a slave woman, had been brought from Tennessee into Massachusetts by her owners, the Sweets and by virtue of their travel and stay in Massachusetts, the Sweets' relation with Betty had been legally converted from one of enslavement to one of labor. It was within this latter context that Shaw determined Betty to be a contractual agent with free will. This case, driven in its ruling and circumstances by a question about the legal personality of a slave, would come to be called Betty's Case. [...] As matter of the legal issue of contract at the heart of the case, the law recognized Betty's free will. But as a matter of the facts surrounding the case, Betty curiously, even unthinkably, asserted and exceeded this legal freedom. For against the disapprobation and outright hostility of the abolitionists who had successfully brought the case before Shaw in her name, and immediately after Shaw's declaration of her freedom, Betty decided to return to Tennessee with her owners. In Betty's Case we find the crucible of mounting national tensions around the issue of slavery, the particular legal issues of contract and property at stake for the parties involved in the case, and the scandal of Betty's decision to return to slavery. (Moten 2018, 246, cited in Han 2015)

This is a legal document that Moten quotes and of course this is only in the voice of the judge. We never hear Betty's voice. The obscene ethics that Moten talks about when we try to understand what the erotics of fugitivity could be, is that Betty declines freedom, because she "refuses what was refused to her" (Moten 2018, 246). This practice of the refusal is to understand that the very idea of freedom is linked to the idea and the reality of her capture. The scandal is to choose against freedom under this system and to apply her free will to choose sociality over individual freedom. Because the alternatives here at stake are to be free and alone in Massachusetts or to go back with her owners and live with her people in Tennessee. Betty's choice points to the conceptual entanglement and interdependence of the concept of freedom of the modern individual with the concept of slavery. To refuse to perform adequately to what modernity has constructed as the free individualised subject, to refuse it from a position of having been denied full humanhood by the very same system, is to take a fugitive response. To be fugitive here then is not from the capture of the plantation but to be fugitive to the capture and control mechanisms of modernity. To refuse categorisation and capture under modernity and to choose sociality over individuality is what Moten calls the erotics of fugitivity.

The power of the erotic of the fugitive is to put in question and to refuse that which has been refused. To refuse those systems which give freedom or give the status of a subject.

EROTICS OF GRIEVES

Thinking with these two extraordinary descriptions of the erotic let's circle back into grieves. Grieving has the power to disrupt and to put you in touch with, to let you become intimate with and marked by these intense perceptions that are not only self-perceptions but more importantly

inquiries about your relational entanglements. In what relations are you with what and whom? What relations do you desire to live in with what and whom? I want to suggest that we experience this dis-rupture because of the loss of a relation with something or someone who was important, valuable and precious to us. This can be land, the ecosystem, a certain idea of a live-able future or a person. The intensity of the disruption in our lives breaks open not just our breathing patterns and social patterns but also might open up a space in which we become aware of how cultural, social, historical, and political patterns show up in and on our bodies and our ways of living and dying and grieving. Grieving can offer us the opportunity to learn how not to comply with these patterns. It teaches us how to resist and disrupt and not perform according to assumed structures by refusing to “get better,” to “calm down,” to “get it together,” to “keep going.” Grieving might teach us to sit with the unfixable, and sense into what values, relations, life-affirming practices appear in that space where we are broken open yet not apart. Grieving can be experienced as an opportunity to reconstitute not One-Self as an individual but as Many, with ancestors, with land, with waters, with humans, and more than humans, with the dead and the not yet born. It might open up a space to ask: How can you live with what has been given to you and what do you want to pass on? How can I contribute to an honouring and remembering of the past, a life affirming present and a live-able future for generations to come?

I want to invite you to be with some questions in an erotics of grieves: How do grieving processes violently disturb your life cycles, relational constellations, bodily functions, and value systems? How do theses disruptions give possibilities of reorientation? If you don't try to appease, to manage, to get through your grieves, might they become a portal, an opening, where the processes of adaptability become exactly where you ask: adapting to what? What forces of which powers are you being asked to adapt back into? Which of those structures, infrastructures, relations and behaviours do you refuse to adapt back into? What are the mechanisms of oppression that you are asked to adapt into? How can you refuse to assimilate into the prevailing structures. And how might you become attentive to the formation of new constellations? How might you tend to them and what would it take to adapt into those new formations? What practices of resistance and what practices of care, solidarity and joy might come up?

In an erotics of grieves we might experience ongoing connection and that this connection to the dead, extinct, destroyed, and lost makes palpable the awareness that we might be connected to the living as well in ways we were taught to neglect. And as we experience this inseparability we might start asking about the systems of domination and normativity in modernity that separate us through technologies of individualisation, exploitation, and exhaustion (Ferreira da Silva 2016). What connections have been severed? What connections have we been denied? Grieves activist Francis Weller describes as one of the five gates in which we meet grieves the “sorrow that calls forward the things that we might even not realise we have lost” (Weller 2015, 54). This sorrow evokes a sense of emptiness and hollowness that comes from experiencing separation from community and land and kin. When an acute grieves reaction reminds us that these bonds might still exist and be regenerated, we can tend to these grieving practices. Grieving can become a practice that not only lives in the cracks of the house of modernity but also helps to enlarge the cracks until seemingly stable constructs and structures fall (Machado de Oliveira 2021, 105–120).

The space in the cracks might grow and transform, when we find practices of attuning to them and tending to them.⁸ Indeed we might experience the responsibility that comes with experiencing connection. It is this experience of metabolic intimacy and response-ability that I want to call the erotics of grieving. It opens the space for reorientation and reorganization of non-normative bodies of knowledge and flesh as generative forces of encounters, affectivities, dependencies, and desires between multiple others. An erotics of grieves invites us to imagine alternative enactments of the world.

The audacity to grieve in a dominant culture that marginalises and pathologises grieving

The audacity to feel in a dominant culture that wants you to be numb

The audacity to breathe in a dominant culture that constrains your breath

The audacity to relate in a dominant culture that fragments and isolates

The audacity to witness in a dominant culture that wants you to look away

The audacity to speak up in a dominant culture that wants you silent

The audacity to be shaken in a dominant culture that wants you to be stable

The audacity to find joy in a dominant culture that wants you to consume

The audacity to not perform in a dominant culture that wants you to perform

The audacity to listen in a dominant culture that wants you to assume

LISTENING SESSIONS—performance as collective grieving

Dear reader, in a while I will invite you to listen to the sound piece—maybe for the second time. It is an invitation to listen, to attune, and to reconsider our relationship with grieves and inseparability. It is an invitation to listen with your whole body. It is an invitation to explore how, through collective practices of listening, we can reorient ourselves towards new constellations, new ways of being and knowing, and a more interconnected and solidaric existence. In this case it is an invitation to listen with somebody that you invite to listen together with, or to listen with everybody who has read and will read this paper and will have listened with you.⁹

Since March 2020 I have facilitated listening sessions where folks could gather, listen, and let the sound waves traverse their bodies. These sessions are framed as collective grieves-work, where any sorrow is acknowledged and given space to. I have committed to working with the acoustic energy of sound as a way to create spaces that allow us to experience the possibility of intimacy and alienation not as oppositions but as co-active elements of our infinitely entangled experience and existence. By following the movements between bodily discomfort, arousal, and calm, we can trace possible connections between pressure and expansion, cultivating a heightened somatic

awareness. All of this, for me, directly relates to the embodied experiences of grieves in their many forms, manifestations, and activations. The listening sessions I facilitate do not prescribe what grieves you should feel or how you should feel them. They simply propose to hold space for each other's grieves through embodied listening and to open up a space for collective exploration.

During the social distancing and lockdowns from March 2020 to March 2022, with the closure of theaters and strict contact restrictions, I wanted to provide a space where we could still experience connection. I sought to explore how performance could hold a space for collective public grieving practices, where we could grieve together, breathe together, witness each other, and experience touch—even if only through sound. Sound waves seemed the perfect medium to invite people into a remote yet somatic and visceral, immersive collective experience.

A wave is a disturbance that moves energy from one place to another. Waves travel through matter and space. Light waves travel through the universe connecting celestial bodies. Seismic waves travel through the layers of the earth, water, buildings and other infrastructures and shake up the very ground on which we stand, re-orient the particles, destroy existing structures and settle into new formations. Sound waves travel around the planet, through bodies of water and flesh, and other matter (Urban 2016).

Our bodies resonate with different frequencies—our hearts, eyes, sexual organs, bones, and lungs each vibrates at their unique rates. Depending on their density, your bones, fluids, flesh, and cavities vibrate in various ways. Everything moves and oscillates with everything else, as all things consist of vibrating energy.¹⁰ We vibrate at different speeds in different situations: in grieving, differently than in joy; in fear, differently than in ecstasy. You vibrate differently when you are calm or in rage, happy or distraught. Sound waves can support these internal vibrations, contributing to healing processes, or they can disrupt them and cause damage. We do not just hear with our ears but with our entire bodies, as sound waves touch us, pass through and between us, and move us.

WAVES - Listening Towards Social Bodies is a series of listening sessions that serve as sonic invitations to experience being shaken and connected together. These sessions are sound containers, inviting participants to wander together into a space where we do not need to be alone. Building on a feminist practice of regeneration and critical care, we sustain transformative quaking while asking: How can we be together otherwise? The invitation is to practice listening with our whole bodies while holding space for the complex grieves present in this time—grieves for the dead, grief because of genocides, the climate crisis, social injustices, a certain idea of the future, and many more. By embracing waves as disturbances, we acknowledge their transformative potential. They remind us that change often begins with a ripple, a small shift that can grow and spread, altering the landscape in profound and unexpected ways. Whether in the physical world or within our emotional and social spheres, waves as disturbances are powerful agents of transformation and connection.

Each listening session consists of three parts. First: an introduction that contextualizes the invitation as a space for collective grieving and offers some stories, about sounds, our nervous systems and ancestors or lands. Second: we listen to a sound piece simultaneously. The

participants are invited to notice what comes up for them. Third: we engage in a conversation where participants share their sensations, perceptions, feelings, and thoughts. These introductions and exchanges are always facilitated by me. For the sound pieces, I collaborated with Steve Heather, an Australian musician and composer. In *ANIMaterialities*, I recorded the wet sounds of the mouth cavity and internal visceral sounds. In *Resisting Disconnect*, I focused on breath, and in *Re-Generation*, I worked with humming. These three sessions mostly took place online and were listened to with headphones.

WANDERING INTO A SPACE WHERE YOU ARE NOT ALONE

These works explore the connections between acoustics and the nervous system, the body's capacity to self-regulate, and the potential to co-calibrate with other nervous systems in shared experiences. Our nervous systems are porous and interrupted and they are made of electrical impulses, and so when we share spaces we not only sit in a cloud of spit in which we inhale each other's insides, but we also sit in a network of electricity of interconnected nervous systems. So, what I'm trying to offer with the listening sessions is to co-sense not to be a single being. Co-sensing of an actual material/electric waves entanglement. There is a profound relationship between sound and the nervous system, particularly through the lens of the polyvagal theory developed by Stephen Porges (2011). The vagus nerve, the tenth cranial nerve, plays a vital role in regulating our autonomic functions, influencing states of fight, flight, freeze, rest, and digest. It is responsible for our feeling of safety and social engagement. It is named 'vagus,' meaning 'wanderer' in Latin, because it meanders through the body, connecting the brain to various organs, including the heart, lungs, and intestines. Somatic abolitionist Rezmaa Manekem calls it the Soul Nerve. Menakem (2017) specifically addresses how the soul nerve is affected by racialized trauma, and the historical and ongoing oppression of people of color. He argues that healing racialized trauma requires attention to the soul nerve and the body's physical responses, not just cognitive or emotional processing.

Practicing Futures while Grieving is the fourth listening session and was conceived as a live multisensory multi-modal installation in Düsseldorf and in Berlin in 2024.¹¹ I had organised a half-year program of listening, researching, and working with young makers. At the end, there was a festival and symposium with speakers and practitioners like Alexis Pauline Gumbs and Bayo Akomolafe, Neha Spellfish, Kathy Ann Tan, Dani D'Emilia, Eroca Nichols, Mithu Sanyal, and many others shared works around questions of regeneration and grieves with an audience. Together we asked how we could live together otherwise addressing depletion, renewal, and healing, offering decolonial queer perspectives on living through and having our bodies marked by exploitation, colonialism, and capitalism.

Differently than the previous online listening sessions, *Practicing Futures while Grieving* took place in a shared physical space. It was important for me to create a situation in which the participants could feel private in public. Together with textile artist Lea Kieffer we designed hanging and laying textile sculptures made from second-hand jeans. We also created different invisible yet vibrating scent spaces, designed by scent alchemist Liza Witte. During the online listening sessions there is

always an invitation to take a heavy object in your hand or place it on your body while listening. As people could not just take something from their homes, I made objects, out of water, earth, and crystals that I had grown on the jeans. These relational objects¹² were spread throughout the space and people could take them, handle them, place them on themselves.

Using binaural technology, the sound piece enveloped the listeners in a spatialized psychoacoustic experience employing a nine channel surround-sound set up. It worked with, for example, Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response (ASMR) triggers that evoke a tingling sensation, blurring the lines between sound and touch. This auditory-tactile synaesthesia fosters a heightened somatic awareness. It brings attention to different spaces, inducing a spatialized multi-selves-awareness that unsettles proprioception. These experiences of being shaken and connected, of wandering into a space where we do not need to be alone, where we share the intimacy of sensing each other's porosity, can contribute to an experience of grounding but also of discomfort, sensing an erotics of grieves as a simultaneously disruptive and regenerative force.

The sounds that you will hear in *Practicing Futures while Grieving* all come from my body. Their spatialisation is not produced through panning during the mastering process but by the movement of my body in relation to the binaural microphones. I move in relation to your ears. There is humming and purring and clicking and slurring. There are two frequencies in particular I worked with while humming. They are called solfeggio¹³ frequencies and are part of an ancient scale that is believed to have been used in ancient Sanskrit teaching and singing. In the global north it was used in Gregorian chants. The scale was forgotten in the West, some say it got prohibited by the Catholic church because of its powerful impact on the mental and physical health of its listeners. By using Pythagorean numerical reduction, Dr. Joseph Puleo, a physician and herbalist, "re-found" this scale of six electromagnetic sound frequencies (Horowitz and Puleo 1999). These frequencies are sometimes also called universal frequencies as they relate to the Schuman Frequency of the earth's electromagnetic field (BRMI 2020). This vibrational field between the earth and the ionosphere is the "Earth's heartbeat" as NASA calls it. It is generated by lightning activity and produces a very low frequency: 7.3–8Hz. It is the universal vibrational field that all entities on the planet earth are soaked in (Wilson 2013). All of the solfeggio frequencies have a sum of 3, 6, or 9 which are numbers that Nikola Tesla associated with the "key to the universe" as principles of growth and decay or construction and destruction. In soundhealing practices, solfeggio frequencies are considered to have an impact on different parts of the physical, emotional, and spiritual body and to have the capacity to heal, restore, and calibrate (Lorenz n.d.; Longdon 2020). I worked with 528Hz and 963Hz and their overtones.

528 Hz is sometimes called the love or miracle frequency. It is believed to support transformation and repair on a molecular level (e.g., Akimoto et al. 2018). It resonates with the heart and the solar plexus, contributing to regulating heart rate and blood pressure as well as having an impact on the endocrine system and its regulation of cortisol and oxytocin. It is also believed to support the regeneration of DNA, which is why some hospitals play music built around 528Hz before and after surgeries. Its effect is often described as dissolving tensions and inducing a feeling of calm and

compassion. As light and sound travel on the same electromagnetic wavelengths, 528Hz shares a location with the colour green, the colour of chlorophyll.

The second frequency that I worked with is 963Hz which is said to resonate with the frequency of the pineal gland. This little endocrine gland in the shape of a pinecone resides at the center of your brain, at the base of the two lobes of the frontal cortex inside the epithalamus, where the limbic system is connected to other parts of the brain, it is responsible for melatonin secretions that regulates wake and sleeping cycles in relation to circadian rhythms and the light changes of day and night. In some amphibians and reptiles this gland sits much closer to the bone and has a light receptor variously called the pineal eye or the third eye. Ancient Greeks believed it to be a valve, a guardian for the flow of pneuma. Descartes regarded the gland as having mystical purpose, describing it as the “principal seat of the soul” (Lokhorst 2018). More recent research has found that the pineal gland might be responsible for the body’s own production of the hallucinogen DMT. Although there is still much dispute and research to be done on the matter, clinical psychiatrist Dr. Rick Strassman holds that DMT is naturally released by the pineal gland facilitating the soul’s movement in and out of the body as an integral part of the birth and death experiences (Strassman 2001; Timmermann et al. 2018; Nichols 2018). If this is true then it would probably only be true for processes of dying, in which the body has the possibility to shut down in its own time. It would not be true for people who die in accidents or get shot or bombed.

Another sound material that I worked with in this listening session are fragments of Romanian lament singing. I heard them as a child when I would spend my summers at my great grandparents’ house in Romanian Moldavia. My great grandmother was a wailing woman in her village and would follow her calling to sing to the dead. When someone died, the door of the house would be unhinged and placed on a table in the largest room of the house. The dead person would be laid out on it in their best clothes and adorned with flowers or objects, like a walking stick or freshly baked bread reeves. The entire village would gather, come and go and stay. There would be crying and wailing and sobbing and laughing and eating and drinking and the wailing women would give rhythm and structure with their singing to this collective grieving practice that took three days.

There are many different wailing traditions in Romania, most of them are performed by women. The one my great grandmother was a part of was mostly practiced by one to three women. One voice would address the dead person directly. Believing that the soul is still in transition for three days the singing is supposed to both lure the dead back into life and accompany the soul into the other world, by reminding them of their deeds and losses and mis-deeds in their lifetime (Reteganul 1897; Bota 2020). In patriarchal rural Romania this was also taken as an opportunity to engage in political commentary on the side of the cis female singers while at the same time having direct communication with the dead. This speech was sobbing and a wailing more than lamenting. Being fully improvised and not adhering to a pre-given form or song it was giving rhythm and creating space for collectively crying in public. The other wailing women who took the second and third voice would not use words but make the sounds of birds and wind and trees and insects and other animals and weathers.¹⁴ If there was more than one woman, they would take turns in speak-wailing and sounding. When my great grandmother performed the duty of her calling she always

had tears in her eyes and when I once asked her what it was she was doing there, she said: "Wailing is breathing out loud for others." She never said whether it was for the dead or the living.

I think it is for both. To give your breath for those who cannot breathe anymore, or who could not take their last breath in peace, is honoring and supporting the dead in their transition. Giving your breath for those who cannot breathe because their grieving has taken their breath in shock and pain, or those who cannot breathe because in spite of them being alive their life is made unliveable by oppressive systems, or those who feel suffocated from the rage against those systems is supporting the living. Wailing as breathing out loud for others, if nothing else, can become a channel for energies to flow again, to work against stagnation and blockage and restraint. And as the wailing women in that Romanian village took turns, I want to suggest we take turns in holding space for each other's grieving and breathing. What I've learned from these traditions is the necessity to create a space where grieves can not only be expressed but also held and witnessed by community. It embodies the erotic dimensions of grieving, as in its vibrations we sense the entanglements of individual and collective, presence and absence, life and death, prayer and protest.

LISTENING: PRACTICING FUTURES WHILE GRIEVING

Dear Listener, as you probably don't have a 9-channel surround set up, using headphones might still be a good option. Otherwise, laying down between the left and right speaker pointed to your body could also work. Please take a heavy object that you might want to hold in your hand or place on your body. Heavy doesn't have to be big. It can be a small pebble that you want to place on your eyelid or on your tongue. Cats, dogs, books, potted plants, babies, and other humans have also served as heavy objects in the past. Choose what you want to be in relation to and invite it into the listening together. And with this I invite you to scan the QR Code and listen to the sound piece. Press play on the sound cloud track and see you on the other side:



<https://soundcloud.com/siegmazacharias/practicing-future-while-breathing>

After listening together, this is where part three would begin in a typical listening session where we exchange with each other what came up as we were listening. If you want, you can take 5 minutes and use automatic writing in which you neither stop writing nor edit or censure yourself; you can write down, take note of what came up for you, as sensations, feelings, images, thoughts, bodily reactions.

This is not the end. The listening sessions are meant as a beginning. A beginning of practicing an erotics of grieves. The erotics of grieves are not a commodified, appeased, assimilated universalised grief, where grieving is often required to assimilate quickly into the white heteropatriarchal capitalist demands of productivity. An erotics of grieves hold a force that can be experienced as disruptive and intimate, building solidarity and community as well as adding cracks into power structures and building counter power. Grieving can break you open. This might feel violent. It can unsettle your breathing patterns, your sleeping patterns, your relational patterns. You are beside yourself, maybe because for the first time you experience the fantasy of the individual, maybe because you experience yourselves as many, entangled with the living and the non-living, with humans and non-humans, with land as ancestor. An erotics of grieves is not just honoring the dead; it is mobilizing towards kin, be it human or more than human. An erotics of grieves makes you want to care for the dead, y/our kin, y/our ancestors, waters and lands. The word *care* has a deep connection with grieving. The etymological root of the word “care” is *chara* which is old high German for “grief, lament, or sickbed.”¹⁵ If a culture fears grief, can it really understand care? Is a culture that is uncomfortable with death able to honor life? What would it mean then to embrace death, to care for each other by hospicing the fantasy of the individual? (Machado 2022). What would it mean to become a death doula to colonialism, racism, patriarchy, ableism, and capitalism? How does our ability to relate to grieving relate to our connection with land? This is what an erotics of grieves can teach us. We don’t have to fix them, but tend to them and through them care for our communities. A beginning can be made by listening with your whole body, co-sensing how you are given as a resonant space for others, living or dead.

Notes

¹ In addition to UN General Assembly (1948b, Article 2), see the ongoing case South Africa v. Israel in the International Court of Justice.

² For a good summary on the situation concerning “anti-antisemitism” in Germany 2024 see Wikipedia Contributors (2024b). Several national and international cultural workers and academics who support the Palestinian struggle and/or are anti-Zionists have been cancelled because of accusations of antisemitism. A third of them are Jewish. Amongst them are Judith Butler, Masha Gessen, Nancy Fraser. For contextualisation within the German “Gedächtniskultur” (memory culture) and “Staatsräson” (raison d’état) see Frieze (2024) and Otto (2023). Since 6 December 2023, the Archive of Silence has existed as “a crowdsourced archive documents [of] silenced voices.” Their mission is to chronicle the alarming waves of erasure and violence directed at Palestinian advocacy in Germany. There has been an uprise of bans, cancellations and censorship. The list can be accessed here: <https://linktr.ee/archiveofsilence>.

³ For Mbembe necropolitics is a socio-political regime that creates "deathworlds" in which "vast (racialised) populations are subjected to living conditions that confer upon them the status of the living dead." Mbembe 2003, 39–40.

⁴ At the time of writing the Lemkin Institute (2024) issues active genocide alerts for Palestine, Sudan, Kongo, Yemen, Armenia, Ethiopia.

⁵ The universalist concept of the body is a fallacy that overlooks the ways in which bodies are shaped by intersecting social, cultural, historical, and political forces. This concept presumes that all bodies can be understood through a singular, neutral framework, often centered on Western, Eurocentric, and masculinist ideals. Such a universalist perspective erases the lived realities of bodies marked by race, gender, ableism, and class, reducing diverse experiences to a homogenized norm. Feminist, queer, critical race, and disability theorists have long critiqued this fallacy. For instance, Judith Butler (1993) argues that the body is never purely biological but always already embedded in social norms and discourses that regulate its intelligibility. Similarly, Sylvia Wynter (2003) and Denise Ferreira da Silva (2007) critique the universalist body as a construct that perpetuates the racialized and colonial logic of modernity, where the white, able-bodied male is posited as the normative standard, rendering other bodies as deviant or subhuman. Moreover, Hortense Spillers (1987) highlights how the racialized Black body, particularly within the context of slavery, was rendered into a flesh that could not participate in the humanist project of bodily autonomy. Jina B. Kim's scholarship (2020) explores the intersection of race, disability, and social justice, focusing on how Black and Asian American disabled individuals navigate marginalization. The fallacy of a universal body thus supports systems of domination by denying the differential ways bodies are subject to power, erasing the specific histories and materialities that constitute embodied subjectivity.

⁶ "The differential allocation of grievability [...] operates to produce and maintain certain exclusionary conceptions of who is normatively human: what counts as a livable life and a grievable death?" (Butler 2009, 14). Butler argues that not all lives are afforded the same value or recognition; some lives are systematically dehumanized and excluded from the sphere of grievable life. This exclusion often correlates with race, nationality, gender, and other social markers that determine which lives are considered legitimate subjects of human rights and mourning. Lives that are not recognized as fully human are also lives that, when lost, do not produce collective grief or public mourning.

⁷ Especially writers in feminist critical black studies have developed a rich scholarship addressing black mourning. Hartman's work, particularly in *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route* (2007), explores the legacy of slavery and the ongoing mourning it necessitates. She examines how the Middle Passage and the history of slavery continue to haunt contemporary Black life, shaping collective mourning. In *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being* (2016), Sharpe discusses the concept of "the wake" as both a site of mourning and a mode of living in the aftermath of slavery and ongoing racial violence. She explores how Black people live in the "wake" of slavery, constantly negotiating grief and survival. Moten's work often touches on the aesthetics of Black mourning and the relationship between mourning and resistance. In *In the Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition* (2003), he examines how Black music, particularly jazz, serves as a form of collective mourning and resistance. In "The condition of Black life is one of mourning," Claudia Rankine (2015) encapsulates the enduring grief that pervades Black communities in response to ongoing racial violence and systemic oppression. underscores the importance of acknowledging and understanding this state of mourning as central to the Black experience in America, while also pointing to the potential of mourning as a powerful form of collective resistance.

⁸ In 2021 Bayo Akomolafe hosted a collaborative learning festival called *We Will Dance with Mountains - Into the Cracks, a journey of depths and praxis and longing to other sites of power*, as he called it. The invitation was to build sanctuary together not as a mere place of safety but as a place to fall apart and become something else. The content of these gatherings can be accessed as Slow Studies Akomolafe (2021).

⁹ Developed for artspace, the listening sessions have migrated into educational work as somatic foundation building with students mostly at the studium generale at the University of the Art Berlin. They have been part of the grief immersion for death workers program, organised by Inviting Abundance, an online Grief Work platform by Will Daddario and Joanne Zerdy. They have been offered in social spaces for collective grieving, where people

come together, who might have family in Palestine, people, who have been impacted by police violence, people who struggled with their practice of daily witnessing of genocide. The sound pieces are freely accessible on SoundCloud and have been accessed and shared by former participants of the listening sessions with their clients, loved ones, and friends in tending to different grieves. I encourage collective listening and using the exchange about what comes up during the listening, as sensations, feelings, images, and thoughts, as gate openers to have difficult conversations about how we move with grieves towards liveable futures.

¹⁰ “This field was also the medium through which the vibratory nature of Akash could pass and be made evident in life. It is also within the Akash, it is believed, that the divine and primordial sounds of nature are “recorded” as vibratory codes and were interpreted by the Siddhas as mantras” (Chaudhary 2020, 43).

¹¹ *Practicing Futures while Grieving* took place in the Festivals RE_GENERATION: a festival for pleasure, solidarity and healing, 2023, Forum Theater Düsseldorf with: Siegmair Zacharias, Mithu Sanyal, Eroca Nicols, Neha Spellfish, Joy Mariama Smith, Monique LaPlante, Mzamo Nondlwana, Pêdra Costa, Paca Faraus, Carmichael Jones, Asad Raza, Evan Webber, Sandra Röseler, Matti Rouse, Liza Witte, Lea Kieffer, Steve Heather, Dani d’Emilia, mar~yã, Kathy-Ann Tan, Annick Kleinzen, Rahel Spöhrer. Funded by: Re_Generation receives support from Kunststiftung NRW and from the Federal Commissioner for Culture and the Media, as part of the Alliance of International Production Houses. In cooperation with Cheers for Fears. See the website for more information: <https://www.fft-duesseldorf.de/series-festivals/re-generation-eng>.

¹² I’m using Lygia Clark’s expression of relational objects found in Rolnik (2010).

¹³ The name derives from the syllables from the hymn to St. John the Baptist **Ut** queat laxis/ **resonare** fibrismira gestorum/**famuli** tuorum**solve** polluti / **labii** reatum Sanctelohannes. Ut 396Hz, re417Hz, mi528Hz, fa639Hz, sol741Hz. la852Hz.

¹⁴ “When we experience sound waves either directly from or mimicking nature—such as waves lapping on the shore or certain bird songs—we relax. Research has shown that the sounds of nature increase attention capacity and shift our nervous systems into the rest-digest state. Our breathing tends to slow, our heart rate decreases, and the nervous system releases oxytocin, the so-called love hormone, associated with feelings of connection to others. And, when levels of oxytocin increase, other more arousing hormones, such as the stress hormone cortisol, decrease” (Chaudhary 2020, 24–25). See also van Praag et al. (2017); Tal et al. (2017); American Music Therapy Association (n.d.).

¹⁵ Interestingly not connected to the Latin “*curare*.” See Online Etymological Dictionary (2024).

Works Cited

- Akomolafe, Bayo. 2022. “Slow Study: Bayo Akomolafe’s *We Will Dance with Mountains: Into the Cracks*.” *For The Wild*. <https://forthewild.world/listen/slow-study-bayo-akomolafes-we-will-dance-with-mountains-into-the-cracks>.
- Akimoto, Kaho, Ailing Hu, Takuji Yamaguchi, and Hiroyuki Kobayashi. 2018. “Effect of 528 Hz Music on the Endocrine System and Autonomic Nervous System.” *Health* 10 (9): 1159–70. <https://doi.org/10.4236/health.2018.109088>.
- American Music Therapy Association. N.d. “History of Music Therapy.” Accessed 15 December 2024. <https://www.musictherapy.org/about/history>.
- Arslan, Muhammet Ikbil. 2024. “Doctors Without Borders Warns of Systematic Destruction of Health Services in Gaza.” *Anadolu Agency*, 18 March. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/doctors-without-borders-warns-of-systematic-destruction-of-health-services-in-gaza/3167464>.
- Bioregulatory Medicine Institute (BRMI). 2020. “Schumann Resonances and Their Effect on Human Bioregulation.” <https://www.brmi.online/post/2019/09/20/schumann-resonances-and-their-effect-on-human-bioregulation>.

- Bota, Nicoleta. "Aspecte mitico-simbolice surprinse în bocetele din Țara Zărandului (loc. Dieci)." *Zarandul II*: 3–11. <https://biblioteca-digitala.ro/?articol=81352-aspecte-mitico-simbolice-surprinse-in-bocetele-din-tara-zarandului-loc-dieci--zarandul--ii-2002>.
- Butler, Judith. 2009. *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* London: Verso.
- . 2004. *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. London: Verso.
- . 1993. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex*. New York: Routledge.
- Chaudhary, Kulreet. 2020. *Sound Medicine: How to Use the Ancient Science of Sound to Heal the Body and Mind*. Rochester, VT: HarperOne.
- Ferreira da Silva, Denise. 2016. *On Difference Without Separability*, for the catalogue of the 32a São Paulo Art Biennial, "Incerteza viva" (Living Uncertainty): 57–65.
- . 2007. *Toward a Global Idea of Race*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Friese, Heidrun. 2024. "Institutionalized Anti-Anti-Semitism in Germany and Its Aporias." *European Journal of Social Theory* (pre-print). <https://doi.org/10.1177/13684310241268312>.
- Han, Sora. 2015. "Slavery as Contract: *Betty's Case* and the Question of Freedom." *Law & Literature* 27 (3): 395–416. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1535685X.2015.1058621>.
- Hartman, Saidiya. 2007. *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- The Independent Expert Panel for the Legal Definition of Ecocide [Expert Panel]. 2021. "Legal Definition of Ecocide." *Stop Ecocide International*. Accessed 13 May 13 2023. <https://www.stopecocide.earth/legal-definition>.
- International Court of Justice (ICJ). 2024a. "Summary of the indication of provisional measures." <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20240126-sum-01-00-en.pdf>.
- . 2024b. "Summary of the Advisory Opinion of 19 July 2024." <https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/186-20240719-sum-01-00-en.pdf>.
- . 2023. "Application instituting proceedings and request for the indication of provisional measures." <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20231228-app-01-00-en.pdf>.
- Inviting Abundance. 2024. *Grief Immersion for Death Workers*. <https://invitingabundance.net/grief-immersion-for-death-workers>.
- Kim, Jina B. 2020. "Disability in an Age of Fascism." *American Quarterly* 72 (1): 265–76. <https://doi.org/10.1353/aq.2020.0013>.
- Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention (Lemkin Institute). 2024. "Active Genocide Alerts." Accessed 24 June 2024. <https://www.lemkininstitute.com/active-genocide-alert>.
- Lokhorst, G.J. 2018. "Descartes and the Pineal Gland." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2018/entries/pineal-gland/>.
- Longdon, Erica. 2020. *Vibrational Sound Healing*. Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions.
- Lorenz, M. C. n.d.. "Solfeggio Frequencies." *Brainwave3d.com*. <https://www.brainwave3d.com/klangheilung/solfeggio-frequenzen/127/528-hz-solfeggio-frequenz-die-frequenz-der-liebe-heilung-und-transformation>.
- Lorde, Audre. 1984. "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power." In *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*, 53–59. New York: Crossing Press.
- Machado de Oliveira, Vanessa. 2021. *Hospicing Modernity: Facing humanity's wrongs and the implications for social activism*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books.
- Menakem, Resmaa. 2017. *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies*. Las Vegas: Central Recovery Press.

- Mbembe, Achille. 2003. "Necropolitics." *Public Culture* 15 (1): 11–40. <https://doi.org/10.1215/08992363-15-1-11>.
- Moten, Fred. 2018. *Stolen Life*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- . 2016. "Blackness and Non-performance". Afterlives/MoMA Live. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G2leiFByllg>.
- . 2003. *In the Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Nichols, David E. 2017. "N,N-dimethyltryptamine and the Pineal Gland: Separating Fact from Myth." *Journal of Psychopharmacology* 32 (1): 30–36. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0269881117736919>.
- Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). 2024a. "UN Experts Deeply Concerned Over Scholasticide in Gaza." Press release (April 18). <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/04/un-experts-deeply-concerned-over-scholasticide-gaza>.
- . 2024b. "Call for Input: Protection of Dead Persons and Their Human Remains, Including Victims of Human Rights Violations." OHCHR. Accessible at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/calls-for-input/2024/call-input-protection-dead-persons-and-their-human-remains-including-victims>. Accessed 24 June 2024.
- . 2023. "Gaza: Destroying Civilian Housing and Infrastructure Is an International Crime." Press Release, 8 November 8. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/11/gaza-destroying-civilian-housing-and-infrastructure-international-crime>.
- Online Etymological Dictionary. 2024. "Care (n.)." Accessed 15 December 2024. <https://www.etymonline.com/word/care>.
- Otto, Mark. 2024. "The German Question with Emily Dische-Becker." *The Dig* (podcast), 31 January. <https://thedigradio.com/podcast/the-german-question-w-emily-dische-becker/>.
- Porges, Stephen W. 2011. *The Polyvagal Theory: Neurophysiological foundations of emotions, attachment, communication, and self-regulation*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co.
- van Praag, Cassandra D. Gould et al. 2017. "Mind-Wandering and Alteration to Default Mode Network Connectivity When Listening to Naturalistic versus Artificial Sounds." *Scientific Reports* 7: 45273. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-017-14445-x>.
- Procter, Caitlin. 2024. "Israel Is Systematically Destroying Gaza's Cultural Heritage." *Jacobin*, 13 March. <https://jacobin.com/2024/03/israel-gaza-war-cultural-heritage>.
- Horowitz, Leonard G., and Joseph S. Puleo. 1999. *Healing Codes for the Biological Apocalypse*. Tetrahedron Publishing Group.
- Rankine, Claudia. 2015. "The Condition of Black Life Is One of Mourning." *The New York Times Magazine*, 22 June. <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/22/magazine/the-condition-of-black-life-is-one-of-mourning.html>.
- Reteganul. 1897. *Bocete adecă Cântări la Morți*. Gherla: Aurora.
- . <https://dspace.bcucluj.ro/handle/123456789/72890>.
- Roy, Arundhati, with Anthony Arrove. 2017. Talk at Lannan Foundation, 3 May. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YL5VD82DDFE>.
- Rolnik, Suely. 2010. *Lygia Clark: From Object to Event*. Raven Row. <https://ravenrow.org/texts/suely-rolnik-lygia-clark-from-object-to-event>.
- Santos, Boaventura de Sousa. 2014. *Epistemologies of the South: Justice against Epistemicide*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Spillers, Hortense J. 1987. "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book." *Diacritics* 17 (2): 64–81.
- Sharpe, Christina. 2016. *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Strassman, Rick. 2001. *DMT: The Spirit Molecule: A Doctor's Revolutionary Research into the Biology of Near-Death and Mystical Experiences*. Rochester, VT: Park Street Press.

- Tal, Idan et al. 2017. "Neural Entrainment to the Beat: The 'Missing Pulse' Phenomenon." *Journal of Neuroscience* 37 (26): 6331–6341. <https://doi.org/10.1523/JNEUROSCI.3217-16.2017>.
- Timmermann, Christopher, Leor Roseman, Luke Williams, David Erritzoe, Charlotte Martial, Hélène Cassol, Steven Laureys, David Nutt, and Robin Carhart-Harris. 2018. "DMT Models the Near-Death Experience." *Frontiers in Psychology* 9. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01424>.
- UN General Assembly. 1948a. "Resolution 217A (III)," *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, A/RES/217(III). <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>.
- . 1948b. *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*. <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%2078/volume-78-i-1021-english.pdf>.
- UN News. 2023. "Managing Deceased Bodies in Crisis." *United Nations News*, 15 September. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/09/1140832>.
- Urban, Tim. "Everything You Should Know About Sound." *Wait But Why*, 6 March. <https://waitbutwhy.com/2016/03/sound.html>.
- Weller, Francis. 2015. *The Wild Edge of Sorrow: Rituals of Renewal and the Sacred Work of Grief*. Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books.
- Wikipedia contributors. 2024a. "Israeli razing of cemeteries and necroviolence against Palestinians." *Wikipedia*. Accessed December 14, 2024. https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Israeli_razing_of_cemeteries_and_necroviolence_against_Palestinians&oldid=1254140887.
- . 2024b. "Anti-antisemitism in Germany." *Wikipedia*. Accessed 14 December 2024. https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Anti-antisemitism_in_Germany&oldid=1262386789.
- Wilson, J. 2013. "Schumann Resonance." NASA. Retrieved from <https://www.nasa.gov/>
- Wynter, Sylvia. 2003. "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation—An Argument." *CR: The New Centennial Review* 3 (3): 257–337. <https://doi.org/10.1353/ncr.2004.0015>.

Biography

Siegmar Zacharias was born in Romania and lives in Berlin. She is a performance artist and researcher. She trained as a death doula and studies traditional plant medicine. At the intersection of art, radical pedagogy and activism she creates performances, immersive installations, 24hrs praxis symposia that address the generative dynamics of transformation. She collaborated with uncontrollable materials such as smoke, slime, and drool. Working with the connection between sound and the nervous system, she developed a series of somacoustic listening sessions *WAVES – listening towards social bodies* as containers for collective grieving. She received an AHRC TECHNE grant to develop her PhD project on *The Erotics of Grieves* at Roehampton University. She teaches at Bard College Berlin, Studium Generale UdK, and is a tutor at DASResearch ATD Amsterdam for third cycle artistic research. With Kitty Zsiga, Shelley Etkin, and migrant and post-migrant women in a Berlin neighbourhood they developed the *SocialBody Apothecary* for intercultural plant knowledge exchanges and collective plant medicine making towards SocialBody transformation.

© 2024 Siegmar Zacharias



Except where otherwise noted, this work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/).