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Issue Four

Constructing a Monstrous Offspring: A Few Steps Toward the Process of Montage.

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> Then he continues by fits and starts the gestures of the drama which he is unaware he is acting out.
>
> Jean Genet (1)

Proceeding by fits and starts, this paper will be arranged as a montaged assemblage. By appropriating the technique of montage, inaugurated within the realm of modernism, I will attempt to create a post-modern experiment. The material of this fitful accumulation will be composed of a loose collection of monsters or monstrous offspring. As they line up (and they will not be able to help but fidget), their awkward forms will admit an ongoing debt to the magnanimous conjunctions of the imagination: a faculty that has always lent itself to the monstrous. (2) Here, the figure of the monster will be organised as an imaginary body bound up in the ongoing process of constructing subjectivity. Such an 'imaginary body' designates an uneasy collection of 'ready-made' images, symbols, metaphors and representations. (3) This paper will be concerned with the arrangement of these 'fragments', that is, the construction of subjectivity through the process of montage. Once a search for the ungainly figure of the monster begins the ubiquity of its display becomes unnerving. It appears, for instance, at the juncture between the work of Gilles Deleuze and the eighteenth century empiricist philosopher David Hume. Desiring to sire a monstrous offspring, Deleuze takes Hume's work from behind and poses the following problem, "how does the subject constitute itself within the given?" (4) Subjectivity, according to both Deleuze and Hume, is a fiction of the imagination, but this is not to suggest that the expression of subjectivity should be disregarded. Rather, its perpetual construction requisitions material from the plethora of the given by way of the expansive leaps of the imagination, which brings it into close proximity with the monstrous.

If the archetypal monster can be imagined as a concatenation of mismatched or disparate parts, stolen from the dead or appropriated from a past now turning toward decay, then the process of montage may illuminate a means of composing such a monster. It is important to note that, etymologically, the monster can be designated an object of display. The process of montage is also concerned with display, both in its aesthetic and filmic manifestations. Montage is derived from the French *monter*, to assemble, but with just a small slip, to assemble becomes to show, *montrer*. The figure of the monster is apt to facilitate such slippages. The assemblage that is the monstrous offspring recollects a Surrealist game, which in*corp*orates the efforts of a number of participants in disjointed collaboration. This game is called *cadavre exquis* (exquisite corpse), the rules of which require that each participant, in turn, inscribe an image or word fragment upon a page, which is progressively folded and concealed so that no player knows what to anticipate when the final result is unfolded. (5) However monstrous the cadaverous outcome might be, it is celebrated by the participants as a wondrous construction.

The self proclaimed monster that I will examine in most detail is the writer Jean Genet. Jean-Paul Sartre suggests that, from the midst of the 'sweet confusion' of childhood, " [Genet] has learned that he is and, by the same token, that this person is a monster." (6) Genet's discovery is elided with an ongoing act of construction, for he continues to actively generate and multiply the monstrous. Throughout his text, *Our Lady of the Flowers*, Genet deploys his subjectivity, not only through the character of Divine, but through the misadventures of the young boy Culafroy. Genet writes: "I close my eyes. Divine: a thousand shapes, charming in their grace, emerge from my eyes, mouth, elbows and knees, from all parts of me. They say to me: 'Jean, how glad I am to be Divine and to be living with Darling.'" (7) Genet also manifests various gestures to augment his self in construction across any number of the minor queens, pimps and convicts that people his story; his subjectivity in process is folded and unfolded across innumerable bodies. By way of this deployment, Genet can anoint himself, through the voice of Divine's mother Ernestine, as monstrous.

Genet imagines Divine's mother, who stands in for his own, realising that she has "brought forth a monstrous creature, neither male nor female." (8) The writer reconstructs him*self* as relegated to the obscene, "which is the off-scene of the world." (9) Imagining himself on the 'outside' or as 'abject', (10) the contours of his subjectivity, inclusive of the corporeal, elude definition. Genet constructs himself as both abject and grotesque. Paradoxically, both of these characteristics are sufficient to engender wonder. Where the grotesque finds its place in the sacred grotto, in this instance represented by the confines of Genet's cell, the abject is that which is always on the outside. Though he is imprisoned, the writer Genet locates himself beyond the constraints of polite society, conducting "a really dead man's existence ... on the margin of the living." (11) Here the monstrous designates a liminal zone or a heterogeneous space. As Michel Foucault points out, heterogeneous space perturbs thought, it is that which lurks at the periphery of an otherwise well defined site. (12) A site, for instance, such as modernism.

Deleuze suggests that it is not only the 'sleep of reason' but the 'insomnia of thought' that gives rise to monsters. Recall, for instance, the pale, sleep deprived face of Frankenstein as he readies his construction. The monster is the sign of difference, on this count both Deleuze and Foucault agree: "Thought 'makes' difference, but difference is monstrous." (13) The monster disrupts the hegemony of the Same; it disturbs expectations, proceeds at a marvellous speed and breaches boundaries; especially that sacrosanct boundary that wraps the body in the containment of its own skin. When Frankenstein's monster realises his difference from humankind, he is most appalled by the fact that he belongs to no community of others: "When I looked around" he says, "I saw and heard of none like me." (14) The appearance of the monster shocks the senses of all those who apprehend its ill defined form, but more importantly the monster evades easy categorisation.

The monster, especially Frankenstein's monster, as Marie-Hélène Huet insists, is an "aesthetic shock", even a "failed aesthetic endeavour." (15) I would like to recuperate this apparently failed venture and ask why the monster must be conceived as a "bad encounter, a bad occasion"? (16) Though the monstrous resists definition, I wish to examine and recuperate its effects by way of a particular practise. As such, I will outline below a list of procedures that pertain to the process of montage. Shock is certainly one of the effects of montage, whereby two or more otherwise disparate realities are drawn into the proximity of each other in a moment of incomprehension or, alternatively, of creative realisation. Walter Benjamin appealed to the effect of shock meetings and chance encounters when he invoked the use of montage for his own philosophical endeavours. (17) Benjamin, who subsumes the process of montage within his notion of allegory suggests: "If it is to hold its own against the tendency to absorption, the allegorical must constantly *unfold* in new and surprising ways." (18) Here allegory is conceived in a specific sense, as the means by which a concrete or imagistic fragment is (re)collected from a past in order to illuminate a present. In what follows, I will suggest that the writer, Jean Genet, closely attends to the allegorical process, which is a process of montage.

The allegorical fragment is related to the process of montage in that the latter organises the former. In this respect, Susan Buck-Morss notes two effects which result from the process of montage: either the fragments collected together in a present(ation) remain in unreconciled juxtaposition or the fragments are so artfully fused that they appear to depict a seamless reality that erases any hint of artificiality. (19) Benjamin, who conceives the unfolding of history as a vast accumulation of debris, (20) seeks to expose the seamless depiction of reality as 'myth', suggesting: "Allegories are, in the realm of thoughts, what ruins are in the realm of things." (21) The process of montage organises the allegorical fragment in varying degrees between unification and disorganisation, identity and diversity. Through the use of allegory, Benjamin sought to depict the modern age and history in general as a construction or an unfolding event composed of shifting fragments. (22) Celeste Olalquiaga suggests that Benjamin's conception of allegory, which privileges "random looking, fragmentary insights, and imagery...[anticipates] the postmodern gaze." (23) Benjamin's untimely vision is located in the midst of the realm of modernism, but his notion of allegory exposes the creases and hairline cracks that are displayed across this fabric. Once this cartography of disjunction is applied to the self, that which is constructed is the monstrous. The insistence of the Cartesian self, conceived as invariable and uninterrupted, becomes fissured, and thrown into what Hume has described as a flux of perceptions. (24)

Deleuze not only augments Hume's notion of the self by celebrating the artifice of its construction, but approaches the history of philosophy in general by way of a gesture, which he describes in terms of an act of buggery. (25) Through this profane and violent act, Deleuze imagines the philosopher with whom he becomes so conjoined conceiving a monstrous offspring. Deleuze effectively thwarts the linear narrative of the history of philosophy to suture thinkers and concepts otherwise diachronically arranged, in synchronous moments of intensity. By confusing what was otherwise a carefully arranged chronology of historical events, Deleuze might be described as participating in the activity of montage. Furthermore, Deleuze writes: "It seems to us that the history of philosophy should play a role roughly analogous to that of collage in painting," (26) and collage bears a close relationship to the process of montage. Both activities require the appropriation of fragments from one context and their subsequent application in another: "beau comme...la rencontre fortuite sur une table de dissection d'une machine à coudre et d'un parapluie." ("As beautiful as the chance encounter of an umbrella and a sewing machine on a dissecting table.") (27) That which results is a juxtaposition both wonderful and disturbing.

The violence of the above method of appropriation resonates with Deleuze's recommendation that "theft is primary in thought." (28) Deleuze not only confiscates ideas from the history of philosophy, as though it were that vast accumulation of material that Benjamin invokes, but he effectively feminises the philosophers he 'enters'. Also requisitioned is that aspect of the procreative domain conventionally reserved for woman. In this respect, Huet finds it interesting that the feminine imagination, which had been traditionally blamed for the creation of monstrous offspring, is subsequently reclaimed as a tool by masculine thinkers who reassign the creative impetus of the imagination from the maternal to the paternal. (29) As I hope to illustrate, Genet complicates this simple binary by passing effortlessly from one gender assignation to the other and circulating amidst a variety of body morphologies. But with respect to Deleuze's sexualised, textual encounter, that which proves most interesting is the manifestation of the body, whereby the body is at once admitted and occluded.

Genet is also a thief, he is named a thief while positioned in the realm of childhood and takes this appellation seriously. He is affected by the onanistic magic of words. (30) The occupation of thief is well suited to his enterprise; he confiscates all the materials he deems necessary for his task of writing. Genet writes from within the confines of a prison cell, pilfering the paper designated for the humble making of bags in order to inscribe his fiction. He appropriates both images and ideas from dog-eared paperback romances, adventure novels, newspapers and used-up magazines. Genet also steals the stories of others, the testimonies of fellow convicts and snippets of gossip from the guards. He has an eye for the *object trouvé* (found object) and pleasures himself by putting it to use. I suggest that Genet attends to one of a list of procedures that pertain

to the process of montage: *confiscation*, that is, to lift, steal or appropriate elements from one context in order to use and misuse them in another. Again it is important to recall Foucault's conception of heterogeneous space: cordoned off from the general public, the prison constitutes exactly such a space and houses, at once, a litany of gestures which are repetitively practised by the initiate. (31) Genet relates these gestures in such minute detail that they explode in fleshy constellations.

Genet confiscates his fragments from sources that are not solely textual and visual, but also corporeal. The body in bits and pieces is deployed throughout Genet's text, recollected from the interludes the writer has enjoyed with other men and taken from the context of the writer's own body. Genet recounts, for example, the memory of a fellow inmate from whom he creates a character in his fantasy:

> He was perhaps the handsomest Negro I have ever seen. How lovingly I shall caress, with the memory of him, the image I shall compose, thanks to it, of Seck Gorgui. (32)

Genet appropriates the palpable memory of his fellow inmate, Clement's "elastic muscle [which] he dug into me without using his hands" (33) and deploys this fragment of the body amidst various of his characters. Where Deleuze presents but at once conceals his scene of buggery, Genet constructs such a scene in minute detail, evoking a palpable sense of the corporeal.

Genet participates in the category of collector, one of those figures alongside the *flâneur*, the prostitute and rag-picker, with whom Benjamin admits a fascination. Genet is a bower bird; he collects colourful objects and decorates the walls of his cell with the images of desirable men. He misappropriates beads, otherwise reserved for the fabrication of funeral wreathes, to frame his most prized pieces: the disembodied faces of murderers and thieves. According to Benjamin:

> To the collector, in every one of his [sic] objects the world is present, and indeed ordered – but according to a surprising relationship, incomprehensible in profane terms. (34)

Genet compresses the world into the confines of his cell and therein proceeds with the construction of his fantastic confabulation. I suggest the ordering of Genet's collection is paratactic and that parataxis constitutes a further montage procedure, whereby ideas are strung together without the benefit of a conjunction. (35) Deleuze in particular is fond of parataxis, for it opens up an entire territory of the 'between' or of relations, always externally wrought, between one concept and another. (36) Parataxis also provokes a stammering or a stuttering that transforms language so that it becomes fissured. (37) It follows that a writer, such as Genet, is enabled to sculpt what he has called the 'language of the enemy' by rearranging it for his own use. (38)

Genet's text can be read as a series of fragmentary tableaux, paratactically accumulated and arranged in such a way that they confound a strict chronological reading. Segments of Genet's narrative might be removed or rearranged or simply read in isolation. The text, in other words, does not form an organic, but an inorganic or fragmentary whole. Where the organic work recognises a relationship between the parts and the whole, the particular and the universal, the inorganic work is composed in such a way that, as Bürger suggests, "the element of unity is withdrawn to an infinite distance." (39) Sartre notes that the episodic structure of *Our Lady of the Flowers* corresponds to the masturbatory habits of the writer. According to Sartre, *Our Lady of the Flowers* is an "epic of masturbation"; (40) Genet writes to 'get off'. Furthermore, there is a sense in which the text is interminable, as though the writer could indefinitely continue pleasuring himself. The reader, whom Genet was not at first expecting to be anyone but himself, (41) is pressed close against both the body of the narrator, Jean Genet, and, in turn, against the bodies of a select committee of his characters. Genet, through repetitive acts of auto-eroticism, compulsively writes and reads his own text as he fondles and caresses his own body, realising at once an otherness concomitant with his flesh.

Between concepts of the self and the other, and between the parts that gather to form Genet's text, resonances can be observed. Still, these resonances should not be mistaken as lending the work a coherent unity. (42) Cutting across the tableaux that compose Genet's text, one such resonance serves to perpetuate the repetition of a meticulously described gesture. Within different narrative sequences both Divine and the young boy Culafroy make enormous gestures, which seem to share the same expansiveness and concoct what appears to be a continuity between childhood and adulthood. But with each occurrence of this gesture there is a subtle shift. Divine's enormous gesture is, in fact, composed of two smaller gestures, the second "grafting itself on just as the first ceased" (43) and dampening what was going to be a tremendous arc of her arm. This arc instead falls short and becomes strange or 'hybrid', a montage of segments. On the other hand, the trajectory of Culafroy's gesture, which is stolen from a 'tragedian' continues:

> A gesture that went beyond the room, entered into the night, where it continued onto the stars, among the Bears, and even farther; then, like the snake that bites its tail, it returned to the shadow of the room, and into the child who drowned in it...this final laceration sawed his soul apart; the silence, the shadow, and the hope of separating these diverse elements, which fell away severally, thus dashed to the ground an attempt at construction. (44)

With this gesture the lived body unfolds itself into a universe which returns to enfold the lived body: Culafroy drowns within a gesture that has imbricated him with a radical otherness. The result of this doubling of folds is a diversification, a becoming-multiple, a construction that indefinitely forgoes completion.

To further explore the monstrous or the transformative capacities of the lived body, I would like to introduce Maurice Merleau-Ponty's notion of flesh. Flesh denotes the reflexivity of the sensible; that the body can touch and be touched, see and be seen. (45) The body, bound up with subjectivity in process, is intercalated with a world at a present moment. Merleau-Ponty writes:

> Things are an annex or prolongation of itself; they are encrusted into its flesh, they are part of its full definition; the world is made up of the same stuff as the body. (46)

Genet participates in the reflexivity and reversibility of the *flesh*; he unfolds himself into a sensible world and, in turn, enfolds this world into himself. This activity is ongoing, for a fully realised reversibility of positions between self and other, inside and outside, is never quite satisfied. (47) Thus, Genet can maintain a perpetual state of erethism. (48) Imagine Genet's flesh folded and unfolded like a game of *cadavre exquis*. The results of this game are both unexpected and monstrous, a juxtaposition of parts organised around the intervals that come between each segment or body part. I proffer juxtaposition as another procedure of montage, which is enacted through the reassignment of confiscated fragments.

Throughout Genet's text the most explicit juxtaposition recurs between the prison cell and the fantasy that the writer has constructed. From the midst of a scene composed between two or more characters and various props, all the fantastic workings of Genet's fiction can be suddenly evacuated. Genet writes, "Darling, Divine and Our Lady flee from me at top speed, taking with them the consolation of their existence." (49) Genet's characters become 'diluted' or insubstantial as his cell periodically crowds in around him. Nevertheless, the division between the 'real' and the 'fictional' is not uncomplicated. Through repetitive juxtapositions the apparently 'real' space of the cell becomes transformed and is confused with the construction of fictional space. Genet positions his characters, for example Darling, in cells that resemble his own, describing his own cell through a fictionalised inhabitation:

> My cell is an exactly cubic box. In the evening as soon as Darling stretches out in bed, the window carries the cell off toward the west, detaches it from the masoned block and flies off with it, hauling it like the basket of a balloon. (50)

Genet facilitates a slippage between what is real and what is fictional, through this loophole he breaches the walls of his cell and escapes.

With the confusion of the 'real' and the 'fictional' I arrive at a further principle of montage, which I will name *tropological passing*. (51) Here language enters into the realm of 'free play'; it is let loose from its significatory bindings and enabled to celebrate the ludic. Thus, Genet writes, "[f]rom his nostrils [Darling] plucks acacia and violet petals." (52) Through the tropological (53) is recognised the subversive use of words (also images, gestures, etc.), that words can be turned away from their original meaning, which is itself problematised. The transformative qualities of objects and words was also manipulated by the Surrealists, who sought to de-familiarise everyday objects through a systematic derangement of their use. (54) It follows that Genet celebrates, rather than denigrates, the occupations of thief, murderer, pimp, prostitute and 'queen'. Genet construes language as magical, he arranges the utterance of words so as to achieve transformations. By uttering a word such as "spun" a young boy named Culafroy, that is, Genet's subjectivity deployed as a child, transforms his situation by propelling his body into movement. (55)

I would also like to augment this aspect of montage with Barthes' notion of obtuse meaning, which is excessive in that it is supplementary to communication and signification. (56) Obtuse meaning is, in many respects, no meaning at all: it neither represents nor copies an original source, but problematises the position of the referent, putting into a play a field of permutations that confound 'straight' signification. When confronted with the character of Divine, the reader cannot ascribe her/him with sexual identity; she/he is 'gay' or ludic but never 'straight' nor bound by a heterosexist logic. The field of Divine's body (which is simultaneously Genet's and the child Culafroy's body) is crisscrossed with innumerable gestures perpetually undergoing permutations, as Genet writes:

> While walking. Everywhere. Her body was always manifesting itself. Manifesting a thousand bodies...You might have taken her for some mad tragic actress who, unable to re-enter her own personality, keeps trying, trying... (57)

Genet describes Divine/himself as a "monstrous creature" (58) a concatenation of disparate bits and pieces; a juxtaposition, a montage. Above all, Divine locates that position through which Genet can *pass* at will between the masculine and the feminine.

As it turns out, the flesh that composes the monster Genet imagines himself perpetually becoming, secures no unitary primordial ground for the writer. Here I suggest it is not so much a matter of flesh as exfoliation, a term employed by José Gil who writes: "Being in space means to establish diverse relationships with the things that surround our bodies." (59) A doubling of folds occurs here, whereby the body is both informed by and forms space. I suggest this notion of exfoliation, which privileges no prior unity of body and perceiver, promises access to Deleuzian 'lines of flight' and the way toward a creative philosophy. A subjectivity such as that invented by Genet suffers such eruptive exfoliations or as Genet so describes, "that disquieting air of being multiple." (60) With respect to aesthetic practise, the Surrealist André Breton suggests that the process of unfolding and connecting images is hard to grasp and effectively eruptive. (61) These eruptions manifest lacunae or fractures in the self and it is Deleuze's contention that creativity is made possible from the midst of these fractures, at those moments when the self becomes so forgetful that it can travel the otherwise unforged paths of becoming other. Similarly, the game of *cadavre exquis* is organised around intervals or interruptions, what Benjamin describes as "the fundamental devices of all structuring." (62) Before each player inscribes their fragment a break occurs, the 'canvas' is passed along, not only that but the material of inscription is folded.

The fold is the means by which subjectivity can be constructed out of the forces of the Outside or the world or the given. As Hélène Cixous writes: "There is the world and the self: everything ... It is the meeting of two equivalents", and this encounter, according to Cixous, is a "marvellous thing." (63) But it is a meeting of a particular sort, like two sides of a piece of paper or cloth, folded and refolded in such a way that Deleuze can posit the "inside as the operation of the outside." (64) The fold is the means by which

subjectivity can be constructed out of the forces of the Outside or the world or the given. That which is enabled is a reversibility; Genet finds himself entranced by the sweetness of his own work, for he forgets that a moment past it was he who wrote. (65) Genet suggests that his encounters occur outside time, in those fractures wherein he loses himself, only to be confronted, in turn, with lucidity and insomnia (66) (the 'insomnia of thought') and the interior walls of his cell.

Approaching the closure of his text Genet claims, "I already feel that I no longer belong to the prison." (67) The writer has, through his innumerable exfoliations, breached the boundaries of his containment. But by no means should this text be considered 'finished', as Deleuze recommends: "Writing is a question of becoming, always incomplete, always in the midst of being formed...It is a process, that is, a passage of Life...to the point of becoming imperceptible." (68) Genet, who imagines himself monstrous, constructs a text punctuated by episodic shocks and surprising juxtapositions. Constructing his fragmented processional, Genet periodically escapes along 'lines of flight'. His monstrous capacities enable him to smuggle his shifting subjectivity across otherwise impermeable borderlines. Still, a tension persists that threatens the writer with delirium, for the writer's work is an ongoing struggle between containment and eruption, invoked as the creative stammer of subjectivity. (69) The 'line of flight', which is privileged by Deleuze and Félix Guattari as the most creative trajectory of thought, sometimes exudes the odour of death and its impetus can go awry. (70) Death, boredom and also fatigue impair the adventures of creative philosophy. Deleuze writes: "Fatigue marks the point at which the soul [sic] can no longer contract what it contemplates." (71) Suffering fatigue, the imagination baulks at the further conjunction of ideas.

An ongoing, though stricken creativity can be loosely organised by way of an open list of montage procedures, appropriated in part from techniques deployed in the realm of modernism. The organisation of this paper is also informed by the appropriation of the process of montage, that is, I have composed a loose assemblage of disparate ideas anticipating the arousal of surprising effects in the shifting forms of various monsters. Despite what remains a relentless process of construction and destruction, Genet deploys subjectivity, inclusive of the hecceity of the lived body, as his mode of resistance. He displaces the closeted domain of his cell and through language, or his particular variety of 'wild-flowering' metaphor, unfurls a variety of other spaces, other situations. The monster can break out and celebrate its difference, enabling at once the inauguration of a creative philosophy, which is always involved in the making of something new.

Endnotes

1. Jean Genet, *Our Lady of Flowers*, trans. Bernard Frechtman, intro. Jean-Paul Sartre (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1990 [1951]), p. 196.

2. Marie-Helene Huet, 'The Age of Imagination', *Monstrous Imagination* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1993). See also Rosi Braidotti, 'Signs of Wonder and Traces of Doubt: On Teratology and Embodies Differences', *Between Monsters Goddesses and Cyborgs: Feminist Confrontations with Medicine and Cyberspace*, eds Nina Lykke and Rosi Braidotti (London and New Jersey: Zed Books, 1996).

3. See Moira Gatens, *Imaginary Bodies: Ethics, Powers and Corporeality* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), p. viii.

4. Gilles Deleuze, *Empiricism and Subjectivity: An Essay on Hume's Theory of Human Nature*, trans. and intro. Constantin V. Boundas, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991 [1953]), p. 109.

5. For a description of the Surrealist game of 'cadavre exquis' see Mary Ann Caws, 'Game: Exquisite Excessive Corpse', *The Surrealist Look: An Erotics of Encounter* (Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 1997).

6. Jean-Paul Sartre, *Saint Genet: Actor and Martyr*, trans. Bernard Frechtman (London: Heineman, 1988 [1952]), p. 23.

7. Genet, *Our Lady*, p. 88.

8. Ibid., p. 230.

9. Ibid., p. 232.

10. Judith Butler designates the 'abject' as that which refuses to be imbricated into the order of things, so prescribed by cultural practices. Butler points out that though the 'abject' is (de)posited on the 'outside' of 'culture', it cannot be anything other than an effect of cultural practices. Still, the abject 'troubles' binary oppositions such as inside/outside, masculine/feminine. I suggest that the 'abject' can be designated as 'monstrous'. Judith Butler, 'Gender and Performance', *Body and Flesh: A Philosophical Reader*, ed. D. Welton (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), p. 39.

11.Genet, *Our Lady*, p. 232.

12. See Michel Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', *Diacritics*, 16, 1986.

13. Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (London: The Althone Press, 1994 [1968]), p. 29. See also Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Routledge, 1970 [1966]), p. 156.

14. Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein or The Modern Prometheus* (London: Arrow Books, 1973), p. 120.

15. Huet, *Monstrous Imagination*, p. 132.

16. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 29.

17. See Katrien Jacobs and Ned Rossiter, 'Ruins of Performance Art in the City', *Parallax*, vol. 5, no. 3, 1999.

18. Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne (London: NLB, 1977), p. 183. My Italics

19. Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing*, p. 67.

20. With his depiction of the 'angel of history', Benjamin imagines history as an accumulating pile of debris. Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, p. 249.

21. Benjamin, *The Origin*, p. 178.

22. Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing*, pp. 74-77.

23. Celeste Olalquiaga, *Megalopolis: Contemporary Cultural Sensibilities* (London and Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), 1992, p. xii.

24. David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. and intro. Ernest C. Mossner (London: Penguin Books, 1985 [1739]), p. 300.

25. Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), p. 6.

26. Quoted by Ian Buchanan from Gilles Deleuze's *Difference and Repetition*. Ian Buchanan, 'Introduction', *A Deleuzian Century?, The South Atlantic Quarterly,* 96:3, Summer 1997, p. 381.

27. Nesselroth quotes Lautreamont's unusual association of images, which was subsequently made famous by the Surrealists. Peter W. Nesselroth, *Lautremont's Imagery: A Stylistic Approach* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1969), p. 13.

28. Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, p. 200.

29. Huet, *Monstrous Imagination*, pp. 7-8.

30. In his chapter entitled 'A Dizzying Word', Sartre writes a lengthy meditation on Genet's 'metamorphosis' into a thief, suggesting that Genet is first named a thief by others (specifically adults) when he is ten. Gent subsequently internalises this appellation, demonstrating the 'magical' power of words. Furthermore, Genet goes about constructing what it means to be a thief. He celebrates the possibilities of becoming-thief through such texts as *Our Lady of the Flowers*. But the question remains, does Genet successfully subvert his original naming or categorisation as thief? Jean-Paul Sartre, *Saint Genet: Actor and Martyr*, pp. 17-48.

31. Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', p. 26.

32. Genet, *Our Lady*, p. 141.

33. Ibid., p. 142.

34. Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing*, p. 342.

35. Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), pp. 1-19.

36. Ibid., pp. 1-19.

37. Gilles Deleuze, 'He Stuttered', *Gilles Deleuze and the Theatre of Philosophy*, Constantin Boundas and Dorothea Olkowski eds (New York and London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 24-25.

38. Scott Durham, 'Editor's Preface: In the Language of the Enemy', *Genet: In the Language of the Enemy*, Scott Durham ed., Yale French Studies, no. 91. (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press), p. 2.

39. Peter Burger, 'The Avant-Gardiste Work of Art', *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, Theory and History of Literature, vol. 4, trans. Michael Shaw, foreword Jochen Shulte-Sasse (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. 56.

40. Jean-Paul Sartre, 'Introduction', *Our Lady*, p. 10.

41. Bettina L. Knapp, *Jean Genet* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989), p. 13.

42. Deleuze and Guattari, in configuring their notion of a 'concept' and a 'plane of immanence' also propose the lineaments of open, fragmentary or inorganic 'wholes'. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, trans. Graham Burchell and Hugh Tomlinson (London and New York: Verso, 1994), p. 16.

43. Genet, *Our Lady*, p. 93.

44. Ibid., p. 113.

45. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, 'Eye and Mind', *The Primacy of Perception*, ed. and intro. James M. Edie (U.S.: Northwestern University Press, 1964).

46. Ibid. p. 163.

47. See Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (St. Leonards, N.S.W.: Allen and Unwin, 1994), p. 102.

48. Roland Barthes, 'The Third Meaning: Research Notes on Some Eisenstein Stills', *Image Music Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (Glasgow: Fontana/Collins, 1977), p. 62.

49. Genet, *Our Lady*, p. 104.

50. Ibid., p. 195.

51. Sandy Stone highlights the negative aspects of *passing* as it applies to gender assignations. The transsexual who successfully *passes* enforces a forgetting of their past and subsequently approaches all new relationships through a series of lies that reconsctruct their past. Conversely, I want to establish the notion of *passing* as an activity that confuses the fixity of gender roles, also the fixity of meaning of signification as it is annexed to words. I want to misappropriate the notion of *passing* and construe it as an activity that is ongoing, an activity in which the diverse 'exfoliations' of a subject are each accepted in turn and none repressed or forgotten. Through a passing that breaches boundaries (sexual, significatory, etc) I suggest the "myriad of altereties" that Stone celebrates can, after all, be achieved. Sandy Stone, 'The Empire Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto', *Writing on the Body*, eds. K. Conboy et al (New York, 1997), p. 354.

52. Genet, *Our Lady*, p. 195.

53. Regarding the tropological turning of words Foucault consults the 'subtle grammarian' Dumarsais who claims, "by necessity [or as there are fewer words than there are things which require naming] and choice, words are often turned away from their original meaning to take on a new one which is more or less removed but that still maintains a connection. This new meaning I call 'tropological'...". I propound a stronger claim whereby the displacement of the designation of words owns up to no origin, but is open instead toa perpetual shifting. Michel Foucault, *Death and the Labryinth: The World of Raymond Roussel*, trans. Charles Ruas, intro. John Ashbery (London: Athlone Press, 1987 [1963]), pp. 15-16.

54. Andre Breton, 'Surrealist Situation of the Object', *The Surrealists Look at Art*, ed. Pontus Hulten (Venice, CA.: The Lapis Press, 1990), p. 168.

55. Genet, *Our Lady*, p. 157.

56. Barthes, 'The Third Meaning', pp. 54-55.

57. Genet, *Our Lady*, p. 230.

58. Ibid.

59. Jose Gil, 'Metamorphoses and the Body', *Theory Out of Bounds*, Vol. 12, trans. Stephen Muecke (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), p. 127.

60. Genet, *Our Lady*, p. 199.

61. Andre Breton, 'The Automatic Message', *The Surrealists Look at Art*, p. 150.

62.Walter Benjamin, 'What is Epic Theatre', *Illuminations*, p. 148.

63. Helene Cixous, *Coming to Writing and Other Essays*, ed. Deborah Jenson, intro. Susan Rubin Suleiman, trans. Sarah Cornell et al (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1991), pp. 167-168.

64. Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, trans. Sean Hand (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1988 [1986]), p. 97.

65. Genet, *Our Lady*, p. 107.

66. Ibid., p. 117.

67. Ibid., p. 236.

68. Gilles Deleuze, 'Literature and Life', trans. Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco, *Critical Inquiry*, 23, Winter 1997, p. 225.

69. Deleuze writes: "A thing, an animal, a person are now only definable by movements

and rests, speeds and slownesses and by affects, intensities". According to Deleuze this movement causes subjectivity to stutter: Deleuze and Parnet, *Dialogues*, p. 93.

70. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi, (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1987). See also Paul Patton, 'Conceptual Politics and the War-Machine in Mille Plateaux', *SubStance*, no. 44/45, 1984, p. 66.

71. Gilles Deleuze, *Difference*, p. 77.

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