**Future Ritual response**

I cannot take the future, or ritual, for granted. A future ritual is something we do together and I definitely don’t agree with all of you. How to be together, then? How to remember what we came for?

In order to watch, to be there, receiving, thinking with, thinking about, *F U T U R E R I T U A L* - a series of performances, a series of series, a plural in the singular, a singular plurality, a thread, a plait - I’ll agree to disagree; to struggle, to writhe, to wiggle with my eyes and words, to embrace partiality, to allow the risk of cliché, the cliché of risk, to bounce off my burning body and onto yours.

The body burns because it’s embarrassing to watch performance, to perform audiencehood, to acquiesce to encounters you never sought out or imagined; to allow intimacy into square feet you would rather keep for yourself; a fragile, unsafe self. The mutual suspension of comfort for something else is perhaps the most precious ritual of all, though, so for now I agree to be thrown sideways into other people. Into other people’s futures. Into other people’s rituals. Let’s begin, I think. I stop thinking.

Kitty Fedorec has a suitcase of cassette tapes. She’s gothed-up, wig flying in our faces, daring us to diss or squirm or admire too lovingly, revealing our own fandoms, our own dominions. I lean forward. There are atlases on the floor. She stands on them. A string of dances, steady and studied.

She dances in defiance of something and I wonder whether every dance *ever* is in defiance of something. I think about my recent desire for only dances, no dancers. She speaks about mental health and feeling under constant threat. She speaks about the nation state being unwell. “The nation state wishes it was an eagle.”

She conducts a participatory war game with two audience members and I think about individual identity within and against national identity; the requirement to participate in nationhood, to “be a good sport”. I feel caught out; I’ve said ‘yes’ to this; to party politics; to paying taxes; to pressing send; to submission. Perhaps we can’t make art without making conversation with the parasites; the war machines. We’re already good sports for turning up, turning out, turning our love for possibility into social capital. To turn away is to taint the possibility of togetherness actually being pleasurable at some point in the future. I wonder whether the nation is always doomed to make war, whether the individual is always doomed to be a national treasure, whether outbreaks of violence are always synonymous with war and what would it be to violently break the state, our collective state of loneliness; the individual, the art institution, the dancer, the family, the monarchy, the dutiful subject, the artwork-as-commodity, the infinite misunderstandings of each other, into a billion shards? I wonder about this country. I wonder how to get rid of the billionaires. I wonder about sunken ships. And sunken desires for escape. How to raise them from the bottom of the sea?

I can’t remember how she ended up naked, but I do remember her singing with her band, which suddenly arose from the corner of the room, like solid ghosts. Gold leaf falls off her face. She’s only wearing a biker jacket, and a pair of Ray-Bans. I want to hang off her. Every word.

Joseph Morgan Schofield acts with and upon their body, calmly not-so-calmly piercing skin as if it was fabric. Not-so-calm because it requires me to be there, the witness, diluted in my witnessing, distracted, wanting rather to drape myself over the person next to me and breathe only *in* for a while, as Joseph takes care of breathing out. Or is it the other way around? Joseph does the breathing in, we do the breathing out. The tip of my tongue presses lightly into my front teeth and I suck the sides of this stupid, mute, always-active organ inwards, creating a rush of cold air between top and bottom jaw. “Thssshhhhhh.” Would I bite the bullet? Would I grab the needle? Would I feel pleasure? I feel only their body matters. I feel heroic for not running up and saving them and then I feel stupid and then I feel sad and then I feel brave and then I feel hot. We’ve all agreed to watch and learn. We consent to every moment because they’ve consented to the longest moment and all the moments and all the labour before and afterwards. The cleaning, the white flannel that turns red, the tentative, too-casual post-show discussions, the avoidances, the calm after the storm, the storm swirling above and around us as they tip hot wax onto their arm.

There’s a tension between action and impact, reaction and smooth, calm observation. Body as observant subservience. Malleable bloodstream. Tightening skin. Decisions made long ago coming back to serve us an enormous platter of fuck-the-present, hold-on-tight, simply-close-your-eyes-if-you-need-to *feeling*.

I’m starting to really want a tattoo.

DAS GLAMOUR are two but actually three people. I’m reminded of a Twitter meme about an imagined future with no men. Funny how fast a group of three becomes societal in scale. Perhaps I’ve re-internalised the compulsion to reproduce that haunted me for a while between 2014 and 2017. I can see them reproducing like spider plants - asexually - which isn’t to say they don’t have sex, but that sex is at last discontinuous with making babies - before and beyond my eyes and into a future beyond patriarchy, a world and word that feels so vintage already. Perhaps I’m getting ahead of myself. Perhaps you’re not ready to sign up to this spider future. In any case, I’m not entirely sure how we get from here to there without killing anyone - cookshops of the future, etc - so for now I’ll scale it down and focus on these three; this time.

It was 2018. It was autumn. I was wearing black. I was squatting, open-mouthed, with a group of other open mouths in a recently-defunded arts space to *watch silently* one of the most unapologetically constructivist, bish bash bosh, open-heartedly curious, in-love utopic, choreographic body-voice-drum-song works I’ve ever squatted open-mouthed in front of.

They yodelled. They stood on boxes. They stamped. Their voices were clear and calm and technical and guttural without the machismo of *musicians* and definitely none of the desperate, aspirational subjecthood of dancers*.* They just sang because singing is an animal faculty. They moved because moving is in them. Because singing and moving and drumming are pure vibration. Pure desire.

Are they the vision of a future with only dances, no dancers? Who is the artist here? Who is the muse? Who has been taught? Who did the teaching? Who downloaded the holy text and from where? Who is this serving if not everybody? Who *are* they if not the ghosts of a future ritual without the need for fixed meanings or labour-as-we-know-it or nations or property or anxiety, except the continuous consideration of which pleasure we’ll take next?

Is there violence in dragging ritual from its deep history and chucking it into the future? Or chucking the future upon it? Maybe. But then I’m not much of a pacifist. I like things that smash together. I like shards. I like to read futures from fragments. We’re all witches here, DAS GLAMOUR seem to say, and don’t care for our agreement or disagreement. Just that we’re here. And it’s not that special. Perhaps performance isn’t that special, just unusual.

How many times have you slipped through time into a dark room to *watch silently* the glitter, the reddening skin, the guitar strings, the erotic implications, the lighting rig, the other nervous witches? Let’s assume there is the potential to agree on a future. Or many intersecting futures, at least. You cannot produce your future separately from mine, or theirs, so don’t even try. Don’t even try.

DAS GLAMOUR sing, and their song stays with me:

“desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire, desire”