

Touching Queerness: Performing Utopia in a Public Bathroom

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Introduction

AS A KID, MY FAVORITE MEMORIES WERE OF GOING to the theater. I loved the magic of escaping to a place that was unfamiliar to me, taking in the lights and colors, the dancing adult bodies that I would never encounter in my everyday life. The celebration, joy and catharsis I experienced as an audience member stayed in the theater, and the stage acted as a mediating space that separated the imaginative from the everyday. The spectacle of theater felt necessarily tied to the theater buildings themselves: the theater was a space of magic, escapism, and possibility. As I left the theater and took the bus home, my mind would wander through the world of the show I had just experienced. I would watch the buildings and pedestrians that the bus drove past, and the world of the show would weave with the reality I was going back to. I would fantasize about the dances and drama I had just seen, imagining the same movements taking place in the parking lot that the bus passed, dancers hanging out of windows in the city buildings, a scene happening knee deep in the lake, a dance number unfolding in the crosswalk we stopped for.

Site-specificity allows those fantasies to come to life. In site-specific dance, the potential to dance with a window or to roll around a parking lot are not only a child's imaginings of the theater they are leaving, but also a relevant application of performance and its ability to exist in our everyday lives. The full application of the theatrical imagination includes asking childlike questions like *Where else could this happen? Why not do this everywhere?*

Site-specific dance is performance that is designed to exist in a space that is outside a theatrical stage. Pieces that fall under the umbrella of site-specific dance are choreographed to explicitly interact with the architectural structures, natural landscapes, and social settings of a place. Practices of site-specific dance became popularized in the United States by postmodern choreographers like Trisha Brown, Pina Bausch, and Dianne McIntyre. Their work became relatively popularized in the 1960s and 1970s, during which site-specific dance as a genre was seen as an embodied extension of the ideological postmodern movement. Like other forms of postmodern art, site-specific dance was designed to subvert and respond to dance traditions that impose stylistic hegemony onto dancers' bodies. Site-specific dance is a tool that allows choreographers to divest from dominant imprints, and instead focus on how our bodies as dancers exist in relation to each other and to natural and constructed architectures around us. For the purpose of this essay, I consider site-specific dance any dance performance designed to exist in a space outside a theatrical stage. Performances that fall under the umbrella of site-specific dance are choreographed, improvised, or performed to explicitly interact with the architectural structures, natural landscapes, and social contexts and histories of a place. Studying site-specific dance has led me to more interesting questions than any other dance tradition I have participated in. It urges me to wonder how I can move in disruptive, interesting, honest, joyful ways that dance with or against the spaces around me.

In this essay, I examine the bathroom alongside transness, both as sites where gender is controlled and mediated through power. I begin by tracing the way that power is passed from governing bodies to its citizens through norms, and explore the possibility for site-specific dance to change this exchange of power. I then unpack theories of queer utopia and connect them to site-specific dance, informed by the idea that site-specific dance can insert new meanings and possibilities into the spaces it takes place in. I propose the form of site-specific dance as an intervention that

can specifically be used in gendered bathrooms to interrupt the cycle of disciplinary power that establishes the scripts of bathroom etiquette. Finally, I detail and reflect on the site-specific dance that I performed in a men's bathroom on Macalester college campus, through which I attempted to create a dancing queer utopia in a space I normally associate with discipline and control.

As I explore site-specific dance, I engage an interdisciplinary body of literature to un-discipline the trans subject. I borrow Diana Taylor's work with Foucault's understanding of state power, which I invoke to address the nature of the power that defines bathrooms as spaces. I then trace ideas of queer citizenship through the work of performance scholars Diana Taylor and José Esteban Muñoz. I also use Olga Gershenson and Barbara Penner's bathroom scholarship to articulate that bathrooms work as key spaces of control and gender creation, and function to hold the collective unconscious. Central to my argument is Muñoz's theory of queer utopia as a series of "adjacent happenings," performances within the present that hint at queer future, using everyday space as the location of utopia.¹ Muñoz discusses many happenings that activate queer utopia as they use public space: there are kernels of queer utopia in public vigils in New York City, in moments when gay people share sexual experiences in public space, in queer night clubs with agency-based sexual economies. This project emerges from my desire to perform queer utopia within the everyday.

In tandem with this essay, I choreographed and performed a site-specific dance project in a public men's bathroom on Macalester College campus, and distributed the piece as a film publicly available online.² This work is an effort to multiply my own experiences of the men's bathroom, creating a site-specific queer utopia that I can access as a possibility within my everyday life. The uniting aim of this work is to perform queer utopia in everyday space, using site-specific dance. I am interested in apprehending and expanding the meanings of everyday space in ways that undiscipline gender normativity.

Muñoz uses the term "dominant imprint" to refer to the idealized conception of a body that is desirable as it dances or exists.³ This dominant imprint is present in many areas of life—he specifically mentions the dominant imprint of acceptable white male homosexuality—and Muñoz connects it to the attention given to performers who are white, conventionally attractive, and "well-muscled."⁴ These imprints start in the collective imagination and work to control and homogenize the looks of various performance industries via who is chosen to perform, resulting in styles of dancing that reproduce anti-Black and transphobic ideas of desirability and "correct bodies" in dance.⁵ The scheme of a dominant imprint establishes something that site-specific dance has the power to draw attention to and work against. Many choreographers like Muñoz, Eiko Otake, and Trisha Brown have used the form of site-specific dance to destabilize the dominant imprint.

This dominant imprint and the processes of subverting it allows me to locate my own positionality in a matrix of power and bodies; I approach this analysis as a white, queer, nonbinary transgender man. My performance experience is primarily in theater work that takes place on a traditional theatrical stage, and I participate in the tradition of modern dance as a student and performer. While I problematize dominant imprints within dance, I also exist in a body that is largely included in the dominant imprint rather than one that is dismissed by it. My whiteness allows me access into hegemonic dance traditions that are willing to accept my body as traditional—ballet and modern dance, for example, allow me to dance as a 'neutral' body that is read as a blank slate. My transness is a part of my body that locates me somewhat outside of dominant ideas about

¹José Esteban Muñoz, "The Future is in the Present: Sexual Avant-Gardes and the Performance of Utopia." *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 52.

²The film can be found at this link: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cb79yN5oxJNTYnhOWDcQF-skE9K531XB/view?usp=sharing>

³Muñoz, 57.

⁴Muñoz, 57.

⁵Muñoz, 57.

desirability in dance, as trans people are seen as the opposite of a neutral dancing body. Trans often connotes change, marginality, dirtiness, a body that cannot be read as innocent or normal. My queerness also informs my dance work; I understand queerness as something that is always present, however unspoken, in every dance tradition. Being a queer and trans dancer often means selectively stylizing your body for a straight and cisgender audience. In this way, the position I occupy as I write and dance is at the same time central and marginal. Explicit connections to my personal experiences and positionality are present throughout this essay, and I often use the term “we” to refer to larger communities of white queer and trans performers that I am part of.

I embark on this project with the intention of coming into conversation with many dancers, choreographers, performance scholars, and postmodern theorists who work to uncover and problematize the politics of how we dance and what our physical movements embrace. All forms of dance exist in the body and, therefore, can serve as expressions of power. This power can be personal and oppositional, if we use our bodies to protest and subvert dominant imprints, or it can be hegemonic and traditional if we reproduce hierarchy through our movements. Among the foundational assumptions of my project is the idea that transness offers the opportunity to question and transform correct and incorrect ways to move and exist in a body. Site-specific dance is a tradition that problematizes the spaces where oppression and freedom take place, and transness provides a lens through which I can read both my own body and the public spaces I exist in.

Site-specific dance (hereinafter, SSD)⁶ lays a foundation for art that subverts power and hierarchy. It has the ability to expose the intentionally constructed habits of the everyday in a space, as well as the ability to create new meanings in those spaces. In this questioning and multiplying of meaning, SSD creates futures that exist within the present. Following José Esteban Muñoz’s understanding of utopia, individual site performances can act as “outposts of a new society,” a queer future that questions and resignifies everyday spaces.⁷

I argue that gendered public bathrooms provide sites where modes of power, gender, defiance, creativity, and performance converge to make these performed futures possible; SSD is especially necessary in public bathrooms given that they are spaces of heightened surveillance, assimilation, gender, habit, shame, and control. In response to the locating of trans discourse in these “unmentionable” spaces, site-specific bathroom dance offers the possibility to reimagine these everyday spaces through pleasure and discovery; to create futures where they seem least possible.

I Site-specific Dance and Power: Destabilizing Fixed Meanings

In performance scholar Diana Taylor’s “Gendering the National Self” from *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina’s “Dirty War,”* she provides language through which we understand how power flows from a governing body into its citizens. Taylor problematizes the idea of a stable, logical self, asserting that “the state works in a ‘rational and seductively horizontal way’” by making rules, archetypes, and ideals to control its citizens.⁸ In the case of Argentine history, Taylor presents the Soldier-Male and the Ideal Woman as rationalized, fixed ideas the nationalist government established—through media campaigns, disinformation tactics, and leading by example in their own presentations—in order to control Argentine citizens through gender. These ideals, she claims, seduce citizens who then reproduce them in daily ways, policing

⁶Site-specific dance practices, which I refer to as SSD, are also referred to by performance scholars as site dance, site-specific dance, spatial dancing, environmental dance, or dancing in place.

⁷Muñoz, 55.

⁸Taylor, “Gendering the National Self,” *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina’s ‘Dirty War.’* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 31.

themselves in order to perform these ideals in their various “participations in the social arena.”⁹ I use the definition of the state that Taylor borrows from Foucault: governing bodies and agencies that hold power and define power relations throughout the society they belong to. According to Foucault, the state codifies power relations at all power levels in a society, providing laws, regulations, and institutions that affect the people’s everyday lives. Part of the deception of the state-created ideals that Taylor identifies is that they normalize monolithic and binary thinking and behavior, such that even in resistance to these norms, its citizens often end up reproducing the nationalist and binary logic presented to them.

To reproduce the state’s logic of gender in Taylor’s case would be to present a fixed, stable and opposite vision of gender in order to counter or disprove the one presented to uphold the nationalist military project. A central feature of SSD’s potential to question and change the location of power is its ability to break this logic and refuse to be seduced by the binaries and horizontal definitions of the state. SSD does not answer with a monolithic rebuttal, a second vision, but rather with a refusal to operate within a single vision at all.

In “Site-specific Dance: Revealing and Contesting the Ludic Qualities, Everyday Rhythms, and Embodied Habits of Place,” Tim Edensor and Caitlan Bowdler claim that SSD “eludes... rather than confronts” power.¹⁰ The power they address lies in the personal, daily interactions that make up national patterns like the ones Taylor exposes. The “politics of playing,” as Edensor and Bowdler understand them, are “primarily bound up in experiencing vitality” rather than creating strategic opposition.¹¹ In this way, to dance somewhere is to have a conversation between a body and a place that is “non-cognitive and more-than-rational.”¹² By labelling dance non-cognitive, Edensor and Bowdler do not mean that dance is mindless, which is a longstanding assumption about the discipline within academia. The non-cognitive nature of dance is a strength rather than a deficit—they do not mean that dance requires no skill, planning, or analysis, but rather that dance does not require us to use false dichotomies of brain vs. body. Dance is expansive enough to facilitate a conversation between a body and a place that goes beyond the rules that academic spaces set for what analysis can be. Dance is not an oppositional response to monolithic power, but rather a refusal to use the same logic of power. The form is always “inviting the reconsideration of the order of things”—using the bodies that make up and respond to power to “multiply the readings of the city.”¹³

Because of its potential to expand meaning and space outside of hierarchical structures, Site-specific dance has been used to engage and question hegemonic power like the nationalistic binaries that Taylor describes. In her chapter “Gendering the National ‘Self,’” Taylor invokes Lacan’s theory of the gaze—the idea that looking and being looked at creates a “field of the Other, in which we are all objects, all part of the spectacle.”¹⁴ Through this gaze, the hegemonic screens of race, gender, and class meet the everyday in the realm of the visible: “Individual and state formation take place, in part, in the visual sphere through a complicated play of looks: looking, being looked at, identification, recognition, mimicry.”¹⁵ Taylor goes on to suggest that “public spectacles... are the locus for the construction of communal identity,” that this visual sphere requires spectacle for a sense of togetherness and co-creation of the self and the other.¹⁶ If the physical mimicry of state-mediated identities and norms is critical to reproducing this cycle, then performances that

⁹Taylor, 57.

¹⁰Tim Edensor & Caitlan Bowdler, “Site-Specific Dance: Revealing and Contesting the Ludic Qualities, Everyday Rhythms, and Embodied Habits of Place.” *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 47, no. 3 (2015): 713

¹¹Edensor & Bowdler, 713.

¹²Edensor & Bowdler, 713.

¹³Edensor & Bowdler, 713, 723.

¹⁴Taylor, 30.

¹⁵Taylor, 30.

¹⁶Taylor, 29.

differ from the norm in everyday spaces can guide us to interrupt the reproduction of this cycle, and envision how different communal identities could emerge from spectacle.

It is instructive at this point to consider examples of site-specific dance that converse with the state in the public realm. One performance that explicitly engages militaristic power using bodies and site is Lamia Abukhadra and Leila Awadallah's collaborative performance "Rethinking Public Spaces: The Wall." The piece took place in Minneapolis in August of 2017, with the intention of representing the destruction of Palestinian communities in the United States and internationally. The artists built a "40 ft long, 10 ft tall structure resembling those built in ethno-nationalist, settler colonial states around the world" in Prospect Park Community Garden.¹⁷ For the month of August, Abukhadra and Awadallah danced at and with the wall, held community paint days, and invited the community to engage with the wall in order to activate the space. At the end of the month, the artists invited community members to join them in demolishing the wall, breaking it down physically in order to expose the wall's power as a facade. The implications of this performance radiate out specifically to the expanding settler-constructed walls at the United States-Mexico border, as well as the Israel-Palestine borders. Abukhadra and Awadallah engaged the state directly by performing with a symbol that is central to the state's power; by holding community events at the site before collectively demolishing the wall, the two artists invited participants to have new associations and thus destabilize the meaning of the wall as a symbol of state power.

Through this performance, the artists make the symbolic site of violence into a place where Palestinian-American artists dance, touch, care for each other, smash furniture, paint, yell, laugh, relax, and ultimately break down the wall. These actions propose many options and realities, many lived performances happening simultaneously in relation to the wall. This performance did what Edensor and Bowdler theorize is the strength of SSD: it brings play and opportunities for vitality into a space that was originally designed to divide and enact oppression. This also challenges the type of state-imposed national order that Taylor discusses in *Disappearing Acts*, and interrupts the cycle of individual and state formation. Rather than enact a singular strategic opposition (defiance in response to the expected communal fear), Abukhadra and Awadallah constructed many ways of being with a wall that defy the seductive and rational cycle of the state's power.

Although site-specific performances like the aforementioned example do not use the logic of power to delegitimize the governments they reference, the freedom and subversion they offer still poses a symbolic threat to government bodies. In his chapter "The Future Is in the Present," José Esteban Muñoz describes a citywide performance of queer solidarity and mourning after the murder of Matthew Shepherd that was met with police violence and arrests. The vigil-performance consisted of five thousand people walking through the streets of New York City. Muñoz describes that when the queer mourners "saw [their] masses" and were able to experience a moment of "accessing group identity" in their sheer numbers, "the police responded by breaking up the group, factioning off segments of [their] groupings, obscuring [their] masses."¹⁸ The grieving communities were not protesting the NYPD or the New York Government that night. Yet even without being explicitly invoked, these structures of control were threatened by this queer performance of solidarity and outrage. These governing bodies recognized the symbolic threat to state power that minoritized performance poses in its ability to bring together and illuminate new ways of being. As Muñoz asserts, "the state understands the need to keep us from knowing ourselves, knowing our masses," and it responds to solidarity and subversion with the languages of surveillance and force.¹⁹ Subverting the language of violence and power is threatening to the structures that use those—we as performers must know this because the state knows this.

¹⁷Lamia Abukhadra, "The Wall," *lamiaabukhadra.com*, 2017.

¹⁸Muñoz, 64.

¹⁹Muñoz, 64.

II Dancing to Expose the Rules

With Taylor's understanding that the state sets binary ideals for its citizens, and Muñoz's proposal that public queer performances threaten state control, I now examine instances of site-specific dance that utilize this ability to problematize public spaces. These performances engage Muñoz's queer citizenship by adopting a creative and multiplying lens toward everyday locations, and I explore theories of citizenship that speak to the way that SSD operates on norms. While Abukhadra, Adwallah, and Muñoz enact performances that explicitly subvert and challenge governing powers, the subversion that site-specific performance provides access to does not rely on a performer invoking specific violences. This destabilizing of fixed meaning does not happen only through engagement with explicit projects of fascism or colonialism, but also through questioning the norms that go unnoticed in everyday life. Site-specificity exposes the everyday through disruption.

Muñoz, Edensor, and Bowdler all frame this ability to engage with and change daily public habits as a question of citizenship. These citizenships they theorize are not a question of legal status or collaboration with the state, but rather one of belonging, symbolic ownership, and community presence. Muñoz calls attention to the strategic desexualization of public spaces—bathrooms, parks, locker rooms, streets, and alleys—and refers to this process as helping make up a “dead citizenship of heterosexuality.”²⁰ For those places to take part in the dead citizenship of heterosexuality, they must be scrubbed of any suggestion that queer people throughout history have used them to find sexual connection or community; there can be no public admission of practices like cruising. Once these histories are denounced, the spaces can exist in a form that is deemed appropriate for a heterosexual public. In their desexualized forms, these spaces allow straight and cisgender people to move through them in their daily routines, unaware of the pleasures, dangers, and possibilities these spaces hold for others. The dead nature of this heterosexual citizenship that Muñoz emphasizes seems to lie in its passivity—nothing about this process is active, driven, or present. There is no awareness or investment in the pasts or futures of public space.

Site-specific work has the power to make that system clear and expose our complacency in it. Edensor and Bowdler frame this opposition as a different kind of citizenship, declaring that performers “intentionally engage in the community and foster public discussion as an active citizen” by using their bodies to purposely “transgress, play, or dissimulate.”²¹ By enacting a generative opposition to the “dead citizenship of heterosexuality,” SSD has the ability to create an active queer citizenship in relation to space and site.

The form of site-specific dance, as Edensor and Bowdler understand it, is specific in its ability to rupture the dichotomy between public and private, bringing private or intentionally invisibilized dynamics into public spaces. Edensor and Bowdler analyze three dances that take place in the “almost-everyday” and claim that by bringing the senses into everyday scenarios, these dances make the everyday obvious, providing contrast as well as hinting at alternative possibilities for existing in public space. In one of the performances they address, *Traffic*, 2004, dancer Wayne Sables is clothed in red and moves erratically through a crowd on a busy street in Leeds, performing a sequence of movements “alternatively standing still amidst the moving throng, cutting across the tide or engaging in more expressive, expansive maneuvers that are more disruptive of the human surge.”²² Sables “foregrounds the rhythm of the crowd, as he provides a vivid counterpoint to the collective steady pace of the pedestrians.”²³ The other movements he makes also exist in contrast to the group's slow movements: he jumps, circles his arms, pauses, rolls on the pavement. It is the sharp contrast to the default rhythm of the crowd that attracts the most attention, soliciting

²⁰Muñoz, 49.

²¹Edensor & Bowdler, 723.

²²Edensor & Bowdler, 714.

²³Edensor & Bowdler, 714.

expressed shock, surprise, and disdain, even while some passersby choose to intentionally ignore him. Common reactions of shock, anger, and confusion also expose a collective investment in the rhythmic norms of public existence. By breaking an unspoken rule of crowd movement, Sables exposes the norm itself, as well as the ways we invest in and rely on it. Spectators and crowd members' reactions of upset in response to his change of pace and quality of movement invite us to interrogate our own attachments to the norms we memorize and ignore.

Diana Taylor's Foucauldian analysis of the visual realm helps us understand that site-specific dances like these take part in changing the realm of what is visible in a space, which then also changes what is possible. Taylor asserts that what is visually available in a space dominates what people think is possible—the invisible eludes us “because we think looking is sufficient.”²⁴ By making other ways of existing and moving visible, we also make visible what is considered normal and default. In the case of *Traffic*, enacting the invisible but imagined possibility of running, jumping, playing in a moving crowd exposes the expectations of how a crowd moves, and how the members of the crowd relate to and mimic each other. Among the assumptions that this piece exposes are the expectation that people walk in a slow and uniform way, beliefs about the way people should hold their bodies when in a crowd, and the instructive technology of the traffic lights. In the words of Edensor and Bowdler, this dance works to expand “the potentialities for experiencing the city by challenging the conventional manoeuvres and strictures that constrain bodies.”²⁵ By exposing the social expectations of a crowded street and demanding attention, *Traffic* also hints at what Muñoz's active queer citizenship might look like in practice. Sables' public play can act as a “vehicle for becoming conscious of... things and relationships that we would otherwise enact or engage without thinking”—in Muñoz's terms, Sables' piece allows us to think outside of the dead citizenship of heterosexuality, questioning lifeless dynamics that we might otherwise reproduce.²⁶ From *Traffic*, we can start to see a way of moving that holds a commitment to bringing the private into the public, experiencing play and pleasure in common spaces, living in and around others without unconsciously reproducing expected patterns of movement and interaction.

III Becoming Other: Dancing to Change Public Spaces

The rupture of the private/public dichotomy is crucial to site-specific dance's ability to change the meanings and possibilities of spaces. I argue that in addition to providing alternative ways of movement and being that problematize what is ‘normal,’ enacting different danced realities changes the meaning of the sites themselves. In this section, I weave these performance theorists' work together to explore how meaning is made of public space, and how those meanings can change.

Edensor and Bowdler claim that “space is [both] produced and experienced by the performer,” that jumping and dancing in a space adds those actions to the history of, and therefore the fundamental meanings of, the space.²⁷ In this way, dance functions as a performative act, or a speech act; something that instantly creates a reality once it is performed. J.L. Austin's speech act theory defines speech acts as performative linguistic interactions that create a reality. For example, saying “I do” during a wedding ceremony functionally (if not legally) creates the moment when someone enters into a marriage, and a verbal proclamation of “guilty” or “not guilty” at a trial determines someone's future inside or outside of a prison. Speech used to create a promise or an apology acts similarly, and immediately creates an imagined or realized resolution to a past problem. In treating speech as a concrete action, “the speaker tries to produce certain consequential effects” for themself

²⁴Taylor, 30.

²⁵Edensor & Bowdler, 714.

²⁶Edensor & Bowdler, 718.

²⁷Edensor & Bowdler, 711.

or for an audience.²⁸ Dance does this through the language of the body; similar to a speech act, a physical movement has the ability to invoke and create a reality the moment that it happens.

Edensor and Bowdler embrace the idea that place is made by what people do in it; they borrow theorist Rob Sullivan's proposal that "places are created by a stunning array of performative acts, acts transforming unbound space(s) into demarcated space(s)."²⁹ If a space is made up of people's experiences of it, then experiencing a space in a unique way through movement adds to the interpretations of, and therefore meanings of, that space. Edensor and Bowdler address this experience-based transformation that dancers take part in, referring to transformative movements as the "tactile gaze" through which "the textures of the ground can be imaginatively apprehended, along with sounds and smells."³⁰ Through this tactile gaze the dancer adopts toward a site, the place is "sensually transformed" as the dancer touches and experiences the dimensions of the site.³¹ In *Traffic*, Sables' dance highlights and then changes the dimensions of the sidewalk. During his dance, the crowd of people changes shape to accommodate his running, rolling, laying down. Some passersby walked in the street to avoid his performance, making the street a pedestrian space. Others stopped to watch on the sidewalk, shifting the sidewalk to be a place of spectatorship and pause rather than one of anonymity and hurry. Experiencing a unique relationship to the space multiplies the interpretations—and therefore the meanings—of the space.

Muñoz theorizes queer intimacy in a way that easily falls into conversation with Edensor and Bowdler's ideas of space and tactile gaze. He presents public gay sex as a performative act that operates similarly to SSD, an action with the power to reconstruct intimacy and the spaces where it takes place. He challenges other queer theorists and historians³² who discuss public gay sex as a disruptive act that exists outside of space, those who ground their theories in the fact that all public spaces are intentionally hostile to this kind of intimacy. Muñoz claims instead that fucking in a public space transforms the space itself into a container that can hold the reality of the intimacy experienced there. He sees these sex acts as "rituals that reconstruct intimacy" which prove, as they are enacted, that "history [has], actively and already, created for us whole galleries of institutions, good and bad, to accommodate our sex."³³ In this interpretation, the moment gay sex takes place in a bathroom or alley, queer intimacy becomes part of the meaning and history of that bathroom or alley—it is from that point always within what is possible in that space. According to Edensor and Bowdler, the same must be true of SSD; public dance, similar to public sex, makes the site a container for the performance itself, changing the possibilities of the site forever.

In my own SSD project, which I named *The Bathroom is a Body*, I changed the meaning of the men's bathroom for myself by changing my tactile memories of the space. Since pleasure is an instructive overlap for me between my experiences of transness and dance, I started my choreography process with the question: how can I enjoy the bathroom? During my rehearsals, I intentionally broke out of the disciplinary script of the bathroom's prescribed uses—to walk in a straight line to a stall, use the bathroom, walk to the sink, wash your hands, and walk out. I began by recreating these movement sequences from the disciplinary bathroom script I was familiar with, for example, walking in a straight line across the space or washing my hands at the sinks. With repetition, I discovered moments in the usual script when I had the desire to explore more—my body would ask me "what would it feel like to sit on the sinks? To spread the water on my arms and the walls? Would it feel good to lay on the floor, or rest my head on the hand dryers?" As I spent more

²⁸Tore Nordenstam. "On Austin's Theory of Speech-Acts." *Mind* 75, no. 297 (1966): 143.

²⁹Edensor & Bowdler, 718.

³⁰Edensor & Bowdler, 711.

³¹Edensor & Bowdler, 714.

³²Muñoz specifically challenges historian Joan Wallach Scott's assessment that gay performance operates through fixed identity and "unreconstructed narratives of experience" in public space. Joan W. Scott, "The Evidence of Experience." *Critical Inquiry* 17, no. 4 (1991): 773-97. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1343743>.

³³Muñoz, 51, 52.

time listening to my body in the bathroom, it told me where I could find kernels of pleasure within the architecture of the bathroom. I used Edensor and Bowdler's claim that site-specific dance is about "the pleasurable experience of using place otherwise" as a map, following what felt good as it carried me into and out of everyday routines.³⁴

The title of my dance, *The Bathroom is a Body*, also reflects that this project challenged me to treat the bathroom as a dance partner. In my pursuit of pleasure through site-specific dance, I also asked "what might the bathroom want?" Though I did not fully personify the space for my project, I found myself in places within the bathroom that I suspect are rarely occupied. This led me to think about the body of the bathroom as a series of limbs and parts; which of these limbs are dusty, ignored, in need of movement? When I danced under the bathroom's shelves, or hung from my hands on a stall door, for example, I became aware that my presence made those unlikely spaces in the bathroom more lived in. I shared weight with walls, stall doors, hand dryers, much like I would share weight with the arms, legs, or back of a human dance partner. I found tactile pleasure in running my hands under the sink at new angles to use the water on the counter and walls, and enjoyed the sound of the hand dryers as a built-in soundtrack to the dance. These machines responding to my physical presence with their motion sensors affirmed the pleasure of using the bathroom for dance, and collaborating with them to enjoy the space opened new doors for fun tactile exploration outside of the everyday. Throughout the rehearsal process, this changed the meaning of the bathroom for me from a place of discipline and control to a body of architecture and machines that I can collaborate with to make meaning.

IV Dancing Utopia

Utopia is a thread that is present in Muñoz's performance theory, as well as in Edensor and Bowdler's understanding of site-specific dance; both theories instruct us toward a reality that is just out of reach, accessible through intentional movement and subversion of our current realities. Here, I explore Muñoz's queer utopia alongside SSD both as generative acts of future-creation with the power to denounce and change accepted norms. I then situate my own bathroom dance performance in a tradition of SSD work that seeks to create utopia, and articulate what danced utopia can mean.

In "The Future Is in the Present," José Esteban Muñoz connects this transformation of public space to the creation of a queer future. In Muñoz's reading, public minoritarian performances—dance, sex, protest—act as "outposts of a new society," separate but connected events that act as windows into a future world of vitality that exists in the present asynchronously.³⁵ In his words, "Minoritarian performance—performances both theatrical and quotidian—transports us across symbolic space, inserting us in a coterminous time when we witness new formations within the present and the future."³⁶ These futures exist in and through the enacting of an active queer citizenship, which brings awareness and transformation to space and the everyday. Whereas the "dead citizenship of heterosexuality" exists through the mindless reproduction of norms, an active queer citizenship slows and speeds up time, and has the potential to make us aware of our expectations for ourselves, others, and the spaces around us. According to Muñoz, this destabilizing queer citizenship not only transforms spatial meaning in the present, but also constructs a simultaneous queer future: "Certain performances of queer citizenship contain what I call an anticipatory illumination of a queer world, a sign of an actually existing queer reality, a kernel of political possibility within a stultifying heterosexual present."³⁷ SSD has a key role in this futurity: these "adjacent

³⁴Edensor & Bowdler, 714.

³⁵Muñoz, 55.

³⁶Muñoz, 56.

³⁷Muñoz, 49.

happenings” or performances that de- and re-construct public space, act as “outposts of a queer future” that Muñoz theorizes, specifically outside the world of surveillance.

Central to the queer future that Muñoz introduces is the individual performer’s experience; a window into this future does not require mass or even group recognition. It is enough for one performer to glimpse this future as they dance, fuck, act, or protest. Edensor and Bowdler’s “tactile gaze” seems relevant here—Sables, for example, during his performance of *Traffic*, might be able to access, as he jumps and rolls over a sidewalk, a future in which a sidewalk is understood in terms of how the pavement’s texture feels on one’s body, or in terms of how one feels if they sit unmoving on the pavement. By displacing the expectations set in a place—around interaction with others, pace and rhythm, movement—a performer can experience a future in which they do not participate in self-surveillance to keep themselves within these dead, heterosexual expectations. Edensor and Bowdler affirm the power of taking oneself and one’s body out of these systems of “self-surveilling...adhering to performative conventions” asserting that the habits that can (de)stabilize the past and future “reside in the matter of the body.”³⁸ To use the matter of one’s body, which can be used to stabilize the habits of a place, for a new and destabilizing purpose, is to create a future with your body.

Lamia Abukhadra and Leila Awadallah’s “Rethinking Public Spaces: The Wall” also creates a minoritarian, experience-based future for the performers themselves. Muñoz explicitly includes performance responses to government oppression like this one in his ideas of queer future, clarifying that future is created by “performances that I describe as sexual avant-gardist acts whose ideological projects are both antinormative and critical of the state.”³⁹ To be in community with other Palestinian-Americans, to embrace with dance and art, and then to demolish the wall as a group, is an experience of an anticolonial future that is independent and also critical of the state. These are actions that are illegal in both Palestine and in the United States, where Palestinian populations are followed by police-surveillance, and Palestinians are expected to self-surveil in order to stay safe from the police violence that accompanies borders. The threat of violence that exists at the literal borders that the artists invoke (United States-Mexico, Israel-Palestine) is too high for them to safely perform at these sites without self-surveilling for the purpose of survival. Abukhadra and Awadallah instead create their own wall, which sidesteps the legal stakes of enacting this future. At this wall in a Minneapolis garden, they perform a citizenship that is entirely separate from ideas of nation and surveillance, which has the power to create a future within the present. In protest, in public sex, and in SSD, the future can be an experience of the individual.

Abukhadra and Awadallah’s performance fits perfectly into Muñoz’s understanding of queer futures. According to Muñoz, a central indicator of these futures in the present is that they are performances that subvert systems of government surveillance in addition to opting out of self-surveillance in the realm of the everyday. One example he provides is a performance of queer future that took place in Washington Square in New York City, during Rudy Giuliani’s time in the mayoral office. Giuliani had severely increased police presence in Washington Square, and installed surveillance cameras in the park, making it the “most surveilled public place in the city.”⁴⁰ This newly formalized government surveillance with human and technological dimensions was met with an anonymous performance of queer future made by a group of queer artists of color in the city. Each week, a set of stickers had been plastered across the park, at first reading “w.b.w” for “we are being watched,” then getting more specific to detail the evils of the state’s power, explaining on the stickers themselves that

³⁸Edensor & Bowdler, 712, 719.

³⁹Muñoz, 56.

⁴⁰Muñoz, 62.

“You are on closed Circuit Television. The NYPD also installed surveillance cameras [here].... The use of state-sanctioned violence against queers, youth, people of color and the homeless in an effort to ‘clean-up’ this city must stop. Giuliani’s ‘quality of life’ campaign is driving us out of the places where we have always hung out.”⁴¹

This performance through the medium of stickers reimagines the space of Washington Square Park as still belonging to the group of “queers, youth, people of color and the homeless” that the police were stationed there to criminalize and keep out. Muñoz explains that “while technologies of surveillance colonize symbolic space, the anonymous performance of stickering contests that reterritorializes and imagines another moment: a time and place outside the state’s electronic eye.”⁴² Abukhadra and Awadallah’s piece also imagines a future outside the electronic eyes of the many states that have attacked and displaced Palestinian communities. The symbolic wall they embrace and destroy creates an experience of that future in a context that cannot be criminalized or controlled by the government.

Another uniting theme between Muñoz’s performance of queer futures and Edensor and Bowdler’s exploration of site-specific dance is the presence of pleasure for the performer, as pleasure is necessarily involved in both SSD and imagined queer futures. The fundamental examples that Muñoz provides of performances that create futures are based in sexual exploration and pleasure that is non-regulated. He emphasizes throughout the piece that cruising is a decentralized, pleasure-prioritizing public sex practice where futures emerge. More specifically, he cites the unique “alternative economy” future created in a gay strip club and bar Magic Touch in Jackson Heights, Queens—one of the first in the city to be shut down in the early 1990s. This future economy as Muñoz describes it was a non-regulated space where the performers, mostly Latino and African American dancers, took pleasure in their performances and had agency over the sex work they did. After performances, “the boys would mingle with the audience for an hour or so. Tips were stuffed in bikinis and boots, deals were brokered, conversations ensued.”⁴³ This bar took part in “an alternative economy in which flesh, pleasure, and money meet under outlaw circumstances” which subverted the standardized and regulated “routes in which heteronormative late capitalism mandates networking relations of sex for money.”⁴⁴ Performers created a window into a queer future in this bar by engaging in sex work with an agentic relationship to pleasure, in a meeting place that mixed social and professional, resisting the regulations the city would soon mandate.

In the context of New York City in the 1990s, this embrace of public gay pleasure existed in direct response to widespread shame, AIDS-related medicalization of gay bodies, and the direct threat of being arrested for sex workers of color. However, this prioritization of pleasure in queer future is present even in non-sexual contexts. The anonymous group that created the sticker performance chooses not to emphasize Washington Square park as a site of survival and need, but one of pleasure. Rather than emphasizing their survival (which is also explicitly threatened by police presence), they write about the violent police surveillance disrupting their pleasure, their free time together as communities—they are being forced out of the places where they have “always hung out.”⁴⁵ In the project of stickering the future, community pleasure and leisure are also central priorities.

The theme of pleasure is something that Edensor and Bowdler emphasize as foundational to site-specific dance as well. They see SSD as a participation in “the pleasurable experience of using place otherwise.”⁴⁶ The very act of allowing yourself to see the potential of public space, outside of

⁴¹Muñoz, 62.

⁴²Muñoz, 62.

⁴³Muñoz, 58.

⁴⁴Muñoz, 59.

⁴⁵Muñoz, 62.

⁴⁶Edensor & Bowdler, 714

what you have memorized as the correct everyday relationship to it, is a commitment to pleasure. At the center of SSD is the work of bringing play and pleasure into places that are not explicitly created for those purposes. In *Traffic*, Wayne Sables finds pleasure by subverting the rhythms of the everyday on a crowded street, using his own body to play with and against the prescribed movements and paces.

In my own dance, I used pleasure as an instructive choreographic tool. I have discussed my decision to frame the bathroom as a dance partner, and the way this framing led me to reject the prescribed movement script of the bathroom. I attempted to create a shift that mimicked Sables' choice to enjoy the crowded street at his own pace, and discovered fun and joy in using the machines and architecture of the bathroom differently. This weaving of pleasure into my dance affirmed what I knew about Muñoz's queer citizenship: unlike citizenships built on nation, which rely on singular goals and ideals, Muñoz's queer citizenship molds itself to each person performing it and experiencing it. There is no uniting goal to the queer future creation Muñoz describes, aside from inserting pleasurable expressions of queerness into the present and destabilizing dominant hierarchies of space. Each iteration of site-specific trans citizenship looks different because it happens at the meeting place of the individual's desires, the dynamics present to excavate in the space around them, and the limits of what is possible in the space. As I allowed my dancing body to tell me what my own trans citizenship can look like in a men's bathroom, I was also instructed by Edensor and Bowdler's claim that SSD invites us to "become other" in relation to everyday spaces, to try on "a host of alternative practices that suggest that 'things, relations, and selves could be otherwise.'"⁴⁷

Given that problematizing normality and subverting state control has the power to create queer futures within the present, it is equally important to note performances that may appear to do one or both of these, but that fail to enact queer futures in that they either reproduce dominant power hierarchies or collaborate with the state. One example that Muñoz provides of a performance environment where queer pleasure is present in the form of sex work, but where queer future is not created, is the Manhattan gay burlesque club The Gaiety, one of the last to survive in New York City. Notably, the Gaiety was not a place where queer future was created because of the presence of government surveillance practices and the overwhelming whiteness of the environment. The club survived by "adopting many of the state's policies before the state actually instituted them," such as hiring security guards, creating strict rules against physical touch between patrons, and prohibiting dancers from negotiating private shows on their own terms.⁴⁸

Continuing their performance to hierarchical and state-instructed gay sociality, the Gaiety also exclusively employed dancers who matched the "dominant imprint" of gay male desirability, meaning most were white, conventionally attractive, and "well muscled."⁴⁹ Unlike at Magic Touch, where the "interclass and interracial" crowd of patrons and dancers could flirt and negotiate unofficial private shows with or without physical touch, the dancers and patrons at The Gaiety answered to rigid rules about private shows and touch.⁵⁰ The dancers "did not seem to take... pleasure in dancing" in this masquerade of a queer future.⁵¹ Muñoz describes how this environment fails to create any kind of freeing pleasure based queer economy of touch: "Tall, blond white boys... who barely dance are instead objects to be desired from afar and engaged only in private, thus conforming to a culture of sex work that can be characterized as primarily being about privatized networking relations," continuing both government-style regulations and normative conceptions of desirability and touch

⁴⁷Edensor & Bowdler, 712.

⁴⁸Muñoz, 57.

⁴⁹Muñoz, 57.

⁵⁰Muñoz, 57.

⁵¹Muñoz, 58.

being private and controlled.⁵²

In my search for examples of site-specific performance that exists outside of the norm of everyday expectations for interactions, but that does not provide a window into queer future, I found a tweet written by a straight, cisgender white man who is a classmate of mine at Macalester. In response to a tweet I posted about feeling the necessity of following the strict social codes and scripts when using bathrooms as a trans person, he posted a comment bragging that he “pees in the sink sometimes” in public bathrooms. Though the comment was written with the intention of adding comedy and surprise to a difficult situation, it highlighted the fact that there are ways of performing outside of daily norms that are still hierarchical. The comfort that he felt in his ability to pee in the sink without facing violence or fear led him to an action that reproduced the same hierarchy that makes trans people unsafe in bathrooms. This cis man peeing in the sink, this assertion of complete comfort and ownership over shared space, does not create a queer future, nor does it participate in an active queer citizenship. This action illuminates the dead citizenship of heterosexuality; it is devoid of imagination and transformation, and yet full of power and hierarchy. It instead defies the expectations of a public space while continuing to assert the controlling power of straight, white cisgender masculinity in men’s bathrooms. That is not and cannot be queer utopia, which is specifically enacted by those the space does not allow room for. Those with power taking up more space is not part of the utopia Muñoz discusses, and not what I propose. To perform queer future is to embrace pleasure in spaces that were not created with our pleasure in mind, to experience connection outside of the state’s plans for us, and to assert that those who dominate the spaces where we experience oppression do not own the spaces themselves.

In addition to the principles of prioritizing pleasure and subverting the state to transform public spaces, Muñoz’s theory of queer future is grounded in the idea that we already have the spaces we need for the future. While the things we need to do in this future—protest, embrace, dance, fuck, cry—are outside of what we have been told to do in public, the spaces we have can hold these actions. Many queer theorists disagree, and instead imagine their queer futures taking place in a different space that looks utopian to them—a place that was not created with homophobic or colonial intentions. Theorist Mimi Nguyen goes as far as to suggest in *Queer Cyborgs, New Mutants* that queer future should take place in a digital space because it represents “a situation in which the interiority is no longer easily located on the subject’s flesh” and allows for crucial distance from dynamics of embodied violence in the physical world.⁵³ Muñoz counters this with the assertion that performance changes the meanings and possibilities of the space it takes place in, such that any space we have is already the space we need for our queer futures. The strongest assertion of this that Muñoz presents is that once two gay men have sex in a space, however hostile it is to them, they have inserted their queerness and their sex into the history and essence of the place itself: “history had, actively and already, created for us whole galleries of institutions, good and bad, to accommodate our sex.”⁵⁴

I recognize both Nguyen’s and Muñoz’s understandings of utopia in my filmed dance performance. While I performed in an embodied way, using my physical body and tactile gaze, the way I share this dance with others is through the internet. The online distribution of this project also brings me to cyborgness: the digital nature of this final product complicates the location of the dance as both physical and computerized. Do I become a cyborg when I am a disembodied mover on a screen, as people watch the film from their own devices? Is the dance film itself a cyborg, because it depicts a living animal, unmoving architecture, and automated machines, dancing together at once? I created a moving, breathing dance from the theoretical - a collaboration between

⁵²Muñoz, 57.

⁵³Mimi Nguyen, “Queer Cyborgs and New Mutants: Race, Sexuality, and Prosthetic Sociality in Digital Space.” *American Studies: An Anthology* (Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 376.

⁵⁴Muñoz, 52.

academic disciplines, between the written and the danced, an object that lives in my mind as a physical memory but exists as a digital artifact. In this way, I created an embodied utopia from Muñoz's framing that can also be communicated in digital space as a portal to utopia outside its initial physical context. *The Bathroom is a Body* both asserts that the physical spaces we have are the spaces we need, and also plays with disembodied cyberspace as a location for utopia.

Muñoz's embrace of immediate physical space as a container that can take on many meanings is not unique to his theory, but shared by dancers and artists through time who have not had formal dance or art studios available to them. Dianne McIntyre, the dancer and choreographer whose work created a foundation for the emergence of postmodern dance, describes using dance to legitimize and enjoy her everyday living spaces from a young age. She shares that as a three year old, she would dance in her front window as cars drove past,

“dancing around the living room to music on the radio... hoping that people in the cars passing by would think that was a dance studio. I didn't exactly know what a dance studio was, but that's what I wanted people to think: this was a dance place, where people were doing art dance.”⁵⁵

This process she describes, which was intuitive to her as a young dancemaker, is one of grounding the realm of possibility and imagination in the space she had available to her. Dance immediately took her to the understanding that Muñoz arrives at, that the spaces we have are the spaces we need. The fact that she created a dance place in her mind and in her living room, even before she knew or recognized the idea of a dance studio, is a direct and organic application of Muñoz's theory. Being fully present in our bodies, against and outside of prescribed purposes of space, can generate futures that we could not imagine or experience before. McIntyre's desire for people to see her doing “art dance” was a small window into a future she would later create through her work, in which her choreography would transform ideas of both art and dance, as well as where and how they are performed. Understanding McIntyre's early experience of dance alongside Muñoz's queer utopia hints at how the tradition of dance can be used as a future-creating tool; anywhere can be a dance place, anywhere can be a utopia.

Site-specific dance allows us to make a similar shift in our framing—to think of the spaces we have as being perfectly made and available for whatever we need and want to do in them. In SSD, the future we need does not take place in some other, imagined space, rather, it is here and must be here. Institutions of power, both daily and governmental, want us to imagine that the spaces we have available to us can only be used in the scripted, self-surveilling ways that have been modeled on a large scale for us, and that if we want to do something else we must go somewhere else. This is not true. SSD says no—it's right here, available to me here, the busiest streets are the same places where I can run, jump, relax, laugh, lay down, disrupt, enjoy myself. SSD is a framework that fundamentally affirms the project of present-utopia that Muñoz imagines. Muñoz's vision weaves together with Edensor and Bowdler's analysis; the alternative economy of Magic Touch, the tactile gazes of Sables, and the childhood performances of McIntyre all create windows into a future that embraces and transforms the spaces in which it takes place. My dance project fits into this framing of utopia within the present locations of my life. Together, they affirm: queer future takes place here and I belong here when I am creating it.

⁵⁵ Artsprize, “Choreographer- Dianne McIntyre,” 2012. YouTube video, 0:08- 0:38, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ozSOkjzW5Y8>.

V Bathrooms, Dance, Future, and Control

Envisioning danced futures that unite private and public, redefine public space, and bring queer pleasure into scripted places points me to the site where the creation of queer future seems most necessary and most difficult: public bathrooms. Informed by these theories, I chose a gendered bathroom as a site for utopia. In this section, I explore Olga Gershenson and Barbara Penner's bathroom scholarship and discuss the prescribed meanings that there are to question in bathrooms. In "The Private Lives of Public Conveniences," the introduction to their essay compilation *Ladies and Gents: Public Toilets and Gender*, Olga Gershenson and Barbara Penner establish a historical understanding of the linguistic and social stigma around public bathrooms, and how these factors are used to control a population. They establish specifically that bathrooms are public spaces with rich private lives as the locations where gender is negotiated and systematized, where pleasure is present and intentionally repressed. I discuss this matrix of power as one way that bathrooms participate in and dictate the boundaries of citizenship, and discuss public associations between trans people and public bathrooms.

Gershenson and Penner discuss bathrooms as places where citizenship is defined and enacted. This connection to citizenship creates many points of overlap with Muñoz's idea of queer utopia and with Edensor and Bowdler's understanding of SSD as an intervention. The two authors introduce bathrooms as places with a functional and "civic purpose."⁵⁶ This assertion that bathrooms are a civic space establishes that practices of citizenship, either associated with nations or otherwise, are carried out in bathrooms. On a state level, public bathrooms reflect the government of a place; the type and number of bathrooms available reflect national ideas of need, gender, and what the public is entitled to. We could therefore look at the architecture of public bathrooms for clues as to what a nation's ideal citizen looks and acts like—the lack of wheelchair-accessible stalls, lack of all-gender bathrooms, and presence of longer waiting time for women's bathrooms in most public places are all telling of the United States' ideal citizen. These measures actively deter those with mobility-related disabilities, transgender people, and all women, from comfortable engagement with public life. As Gershenson and Penner explain, this ideal citizen subject created by a nation's bathrooms—in this case, an able bodied, cisgender man—is present in virtually every public space.

This gendered, mediated citizenship connects to Diana Taylor's assertion that gender and the state are always forces that reflect and affect each other. The architecture of public bathrooms points to the truth in the idea that "both concepts of gender and the state" are connected as they change, "reflecting and simultaneously producing each other."⁵⁷ Gershenson and Penner also emphasize that bathrooms collaborate with the state to create and solidify ideas of gender: "The physical differences between 'gentlemen' and 'ladies' remains central to (and is further naturalized by) [the] design" of public bathrooms.⁵⁸ "Sex-segregated toilets," according to Gershenson and Penner, "are just 'one small part of that scheme of sex-role differentiation which uses the mystery of sexual anatomy... to maintain the primacy of heterosexual sexual attraction' central to patriarchal power relations."⁵⁹ Heterosexuality is made to seem more natural by the presence of completely separate male and female spaces, and the potential for homosexual desire or attraction in bathrooms becomes shameful and disruptive. Additionally, the lack of casual everyday interaction between people of different genders in bathrooms secures the idea of an immutable physical and social difference between men and women - an idea that makes trans existence marginal and dangerous. The physical spaces of public bathrooms are where the state mediates individual and group conceptions

⁵⁶ Olga Gershenson & Barbara Penner, "Introduction: The Private Lives of Public Conveniences." *Ladies and Gents: Public Toilets and Gender* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple Univ. Press, 2009), 1.

⁵⁷ Taylor, 32.

⁵⁸ Gershenson & Penner, 1.

⁵⁹ Gershenson & Penner, 1.

of self and gender, and the architectural norms that Gershenson and Penner problematize, affirm that this gender- and nation-building is concentrated in public bathrooms.

The two citizenship frameworks that Muñoz provides—the dead citizenship of heterosexuality and an oppositional, active queer citizenship—are also present in Gershenson and Penner’s introduction. Their description of public bathrooms confirms the ability for these spaces to be used as part of the former option: as spaces of control, unconscious reproduction of rules, desexualization, and complicity in violent norms. Gershenson and Penner reference Foucault’s notion of disciplining, claiming that bathrooms take part in this process by creating “docile bodies,” spaces in which “every aspect of the body, including sexual desire, is overseen and regulated” through the separated stalls and strict social scripts.⁶⁰ The repetition of this strict, identical architecture encourages individuals to take part in an engagement with the everyday that is empty and, notably, desexualized.

Like separate and gendered bathroom stalls, Muñoz discusses surveillance cameras as measures taken in response to the patterns of gay cruising in the 1970s, intended to prevent men from accessing pleasure with other men in bathrooms. These “defensive fortifications, armored with anti-social deterrents” are architectural technologies that seek to sterilize bathrooms from even the possibility of homosexual pleasure or connection.⁶¹ This repeated stylization and desexualization of bodies also affects people’s individual understandings of their own gender and sexuality. Taylor affirms this fact in her assertion that “individual sexuality and eroticism have, historically, tied into the erotics of the state,” implying for bathrooms that the complete refusal to allow for gay pleasure or trans existence has an effect on individual gay and trans people’s self conceptions.⁶² The intentional lack of multi-stall all-gender bathrooms in most public places in the United States also works to isolate transgender people and create a public conception of trans bodies as different, unnatural, and sectioned off from other bodies and lives. However empty and unthinking individuals’ engagement with bathrooms is, the bathrooms themselves take part in a process that creates a seemingly mandatory heterosexual citizenship wherein the state creates ideas of gender that people reproduce through their interactions with public bathrooms.

However, Gershenson and Penner also hint at the possibility of active queer citizenship being performed in bathrooms. Because of the taboo around bathrooms, embracing them as sites of study or performance is an active oppositional choice. When Gershenson and Penner—two women academics—set out to compile essays and accounts of bathrooms as spaces where gender is created and enacted, they were met with dismissal and fear. The project of the book was called “an immoral, even scatological, perversion and a waste of public funds.”⁶³ They note this fearful response as evidence of the necessity of actively engaging with bathrooms as individuals and academics. Both editors were accused of getting sexual pleasure from researching the subject, and many people wrote in projecting their own discomforts onto them. Other academics considered Gershenson and Penner’s work on bathrooms at the same time trivial, incorrect, perverse, sexual, unnecessary, and disgusting. By engaging with bathrooms from an academic perspective, their careers were immediately sorted into the same categories of perversion and taboo that trans people are automatically assigned. These responses show that any critical and active engagement with bathrooms threatens the mindless heterosexual engagement that is expected of people. Any academic or personal engagement with bathrooms as sites is pathologized, discouraged, and understood as both queer and threatening.

My own experience with this project also affirms the threat that critical engagement with bathrooms poses to those who do not wish to problematize the spaces where they perform their everyday actions. In my proposal to study SSD in bathrooms as a project within the discipline of Women’s

⁶⁰Gershenson & Penner, 18.

⁶¹Gershenson & Penner, 4.

⁶²Taylor, 31.

⁶³Gershenson & Penner, 2.

Gender and Sexuality Studies, I received feedback that mirrored the confusion and disapproval that Gershenson and Penner were met with. A cis woman who works as a political scientist responded to my proposal, incredulous that I refer to bathrooms as primarily violent places. In her feedback, she emphasizes how glad she is that bathrooms are scripted spaces, detailing the comfort and camaraderie she feels in women's bathrooms and urging me to expand my lens outside of the trans-specific one I adopt in my study of bathrooms. The idea that another person would experience the bathrooms that are normal to her only as places of violence, fear, and shame threatened the stability and centrality of her gender identity.

This feedback pushing back on my proposal to study bathrooms from a trans perspective alerted me to the larger social pushback I can expect as I undertake this project. This feedback solidifies what Gershenson and Penner show about the controlling space that bathrooms hold in our minds, and confirms the importance of more academic exploration of bathrooms. The physical and social mechanics of using a public bathroom prioritize a cisgender subject and enable that subject to feel ownership over bathrooms as a whole, to an extent that the suggestion of a different reading seems unthinkable and fabricated. However, her feedback also reflects the fact that even within systems of gendered control, women's bathrooms can act as places for some women to support one another and survive patriarchy together. While I have experienced this complex web of control and solidarity, I know that problematizing and expanding the readings of bathrooms threatens those who are invested in their own performance of an empty citizenship in those spaces. I believe it is possible to embrace the solidarity that can happen in women's bathrooms while simultaneously problematizing the scripts that make gendered bathrooms oppressive and controlling. Even bathrooms that work as spaces of comfort can teach people to take pride in their ability to reproduce controlling norms of self-surveillance, expanding Muñoz's dead citizenship of heterosexuality and making active queer alternatives more difficult and dangerous to perform.

This public negotiation brings me back to Taylor's assertion that formations of gender and the state affect each other, and to understand that this impact runs in two directions. For each way that the state is present in the social and spatial rules of our lives, there are routes of personal and collective resistance that have the power to push back against these, to create our own schemes of gender that will in turn affect the state and our collective experience of the everyday. We are not only subjects of this pattern: we collaborate in this project of normalization, and can therefore choose to change it.

Despite the ways that queer people can perform active queer citizenship to change the spaces around them, they can also be complacent in a dead heterosexual citizenship. In his 1999 book *The Trouble With Normal*, Michael Warner illustrates the ways that gay people participated in projects of assimilation into a heteronormative national identity in the United States. This assimilation into performed heterosexuality in public spaces is now often referred to as homonormativity, popularized by Lisa Duggan in 2003. Homonormativity promises social acceptance to gay people provided that they mimic heterosexual and capitalist ways of existing in public, reproduce ideas about monogamy and productivity, and presenting their identities as desexualized and non-threatening. For Duggan, homonormativity is "a politics that does not contest dominant heteronormative assumptions and institutions, but upholds and sustains them, while promising the possibility of a demobilized gay constituency and a privatized, depoliticized gay culture anchored in domesticity and consumption."⁶⁴ Homonormativity proposes a collaboration with the state's processes of sanitizing and desexualizing public space in exchange for respectability. When homonormativity works, the "gay men and lesbians willing to denounce gay culture" in the public eye are rewarded with "large audiences" of straight people who were willing to grant them respect that they denied most gay

⁶⁴Lisa Duggan, *The Twilight of Equality? Neoliberalism, Cultural Politics, and the Attack on Democracy*. (Boston: Beacon Press, 2014), 50.

people.⁶⁵ Warner's work exemplifies Taylor's assertion that the state "works in a 'rational and seductively horizontal way.'"⁶⁶ Homonormativity proposes a collaboration with the state's processes of sanitizing and desexualizing public space in exchange for respectability.

When put in conversation with Muñoz, Warner's and Duggan's work explains why many gay people do not invest in generating queer future, and instead attempt to insert their individual lives into a heterosexual present. Sometimes the people working against queer futures do not look like my straight and cisgender classmate peeing in the sink as a way to multiply his power in bathrooms. Queer and trans people often decide to work against expansive queer futures by upholding monolithic norms, attempting to make themselves respectable and desexualized in the search for the privilege that their straight cisgender peers receive. Muñoz also denounces this future-denying assimilation, claiming of gay men who advocate for a desexualized gay identity that "rather than investing in children, they invest in an assimilation that is forever over the rainbow."⁶⁷ By not investing in children, they do not take part in heterosexual futurity, and by investing in assimilation, they deny themselves the experience of building queer futures. If we acknowledge the power that our bodies have to break habits and create multiplicity, we must also know that our same bodies have the power to solidify those habits and assimilate to oppressive norms. Queer people, too, can participate in the dead citizenship of heterosexuality.

Edensor and Bowdler discuss site-specific dance with this same understanding that physical habit creates and furthers norms of a space. They discuss that it is "through habits" that "the past is accumulated and stabilized," a process that SSD can intervene in and "multiply the readings of the city" by creating non-stabilized relationships to place.⁶⁸ What does it change to multiply the readings of public bathrooms, to defy historicizing habit there? As Gershenson and Penner's work exemplifies, bathrooms are a place that many wish to keep in the realm of the unconscious. I argue that the fact that public bathrooms "act as the unconscious of public spaces" makes them an effective place for SSD.⁶⁹ Bathrooms are a meeting place between the state's imposed reality and our personal ideas of gender, which make the project of accumulation and normalization easy, even "seductive" as Taylor writes. The examples that Edensor and Bowdler provide of SSD bringing the unconscious into visible reality—notably, Sables' expression of a crowd's subconscious desires—led me to think of bathrooms as the perfect place for SSD projects. The more unconscious assumptions, attachments, and realities we have associated with a space, the more material site-specificity has to work with and uncover. Bathrooms, like many spaces of violence and identity-building, need SSD as a crucial disruptor in the cycle of surveillance and normalization.

While bathrooms do function as spaces full of the unconscious, they also become places of public debate and attention when transgender identities and rights are being negotiated on a national level, specifically in the United States. Bathrooms and their command in the domain of the unconscious become different and more public spaces once they are weaponized against trans people for a public arena. In response to the perceived threat of trans people using public bathrooms alongside cis people, public officials suddenly approach bathrooms as necessary places of debate and attention. Bathrooms entered public legal discourse in recent memory after a cascade of states implemented bathroom bills which criminalize individuals using bathrooms that do not match the gender assignment on their birth certificate.⁷⁰ In 2017, these bills became popular enough that it was no longer

⁶⁵Michael Warner, *The Trouble with Normal: Sex, Politics, and the Ethics of Queer Life*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 68-69.

⁶⁶Taylor, 31.

⁶⁷Muñoz, 55.

⁶⁸Edensor & Bowdler, 719, 723.

⁶⁹Gershenson & Penner, 1.

⁷⁰In 2017, "Sixteen states...have considered legislation that would restrict access to multiuser restrooms, locker rooms, and other sex-segregated facilities on the basis of a definition of sex or gender consistent with sex assigned at birth or 'biological sex.'" Joellen Kralik, "'Bathroom Bill' Legislative Tracking, National Conference of State Legis-

uncommon to hear politicians discussing their plans to implement gender-verification measures in bathrooms. In the four years since then, legal efforts to block trans people from bathrooms, or response efforts to “allow” them in have become a staple of political debate and news coverage. Due to this dynamic, bathrooms are the central way that trans people are discussed and defined on a national scale in the United States. This is strategic - the unspoken associations with bathrooms (dirtiness, shame, disease, hypersexuality, fear) bear dangerous similarities to public associations with trans identities. Structuring our only discussions about trans people around places that we collectively refuse to talk about heightens the taboos around transness. This in turn makes it harder for trans people ourselves to casually organize and resist by discussing our genders without them being legislated, criminalized, or pathologized.

The two taboos of bathrooms and transness unite in the public and political realms through fear-driven narratives about trans people using bathrooms in unprescribed ways. Among these repeated fears are reactions of shock around trans people using their incorrect bodies to use cis people’s correct and orderly bathrooms—a woman might stand to pee! a man might sit down to pee, or never use a urinal at all! Collective homophobic and transphobic fears around dirtiness and intimacy also become weaponized against trans people, and trans women are targeted specifically. The transmisogynistic myth of the figure of a trans woman preying on young cisgender girls in bathrooms is a dangerous cisgender fantasy invoked in electoral politics and everyday discussions. This works to stigmatize, criminalize, and hypersexualize trans women and put their everyday safety in jeopardy. Though cisgender politicians are almost always the ones who bring bathrooms into public debate, their anti-trans narratives rely on the implication that trans people want to bring bathrooms out of the safe and private location of the collective unconscious and into the public.

Gendered public bathrooms are where the cisgender imagination can run wild with its fear and suspicion, producing dangerous stereotypes and forcing trans people to individually prove themselves as non-threatening. Gendered public bathrooms are the places government officials reference when they accuse trans people of hypersexuality, portray us as confused or predatory. Gendered public bathrooms are where many trans people are attacked and assaulted.⁷¹ Countless trans people have given me advice on how to better pass as cisgender so that I can try to avoid being attacked in bathrooms. The temptation to erase all signs of one’s own transness is especially strong in these spaces and with these stakes. In the face of this violence and the caricaturization of bathroom dynamics that the public political discourse paints, it is tempting for trans theorists and performers to denounce the sites of these bathrooms altogether. Trans people’s lives do not revolve around bathroom use, so why should we locate our dance or art there? Many trans activists, academics, and performers respond to this pattern of forced association by only discussing trans life in spaces that are more humanizing, rejecting bathrooms in an effort to disassociate transness from cisgender bathroom anxieties. However, I embrace bathrooms as the place where trans people exist in the cis imagination. Muñoz’s queer future necessarily takes place in spaces that are hostile to queer life—that is its power. I found in my dance that a trans future, modeled after Muñoz’s understanding of utopia and enacted through site-specific performance, is possible in public bathrooms.

If trans people do not write about, study, discuss, or perform in public bathrooms, we cede the spaces to dominant, transphobic public readings. To “multiply the readings” of bathrooms requires us to embrace bathrooms as generative sites, and attempt to create a pleasure-centered and self-

latures,” *National Conference of State Legislatures*, 2019, <https://www.ncsl.org/research/education/-bathroom-bill-legislative-tracking635951130.aspx>.

⁷¹In 2016, the National Center for Transgender Equality found that in public restrooms, 12% of trans people reported being verbally harassed, 1% reported being sexually assaulted, and 1% reported being physically attacked. Many organizations consider these underestimates (*National Center for Transgender Equality*, “Trans Survey,” <https://transequality.org/issues/us-trans-survey,2016>).

defined trans future in the place where trans lives are most restricted and pathologized.⁷² As a trans performer and student, gendered public bathrooms interest me as a site for theory, performance, and future-building. They are also the place that holds perhaps the most public baggage around transness, and the place where, personally and politically, I feel most controlled and least able to experience agency. To stray from the script of a bathroom I am using is to stray from the likelihood of my own safety. When scripts feel necessary for safety, what can an active trans citizenship look like in a public bathroom? I propose that alongside the trans people who work to relocate transness away from bathrooms in public minds, that some of us stay in the bathrooms and explore them, both physically and ideologically.

In my assertion that trans performers should use site-specific performance in bathrooms to change public realities, I want to clarify the scope of change that I propose. Though large-scale change is possible through continuous subversion of norms, individual digression from the accepted script does not immediately create a new, widely-shared reality that replaces norms in real time. For example, Wayne Sables' dance *Traffic* did not permanently transform the busy street in Leeds into a place where pedestrians regularly and freely decided to disregard the rules of the crowd to run, dance, and lay down. However, his presence as a dancer made those actions possible in the imaginations of those watching. It is impossible to know how many small-scale response performances Sables' work generated, but it is possible to imagine a spectator that day going home and attempting the movements Sables performed, trying on how it feels to play on a sidewalk in a way they could not imagine before his performance. This personal repetition that can be accessed by expanding one's imagination is key to Judith Butler's framework of the performativity of gender.

I borrow from Butler's theory when conceptualizing large-scale change based on individual performance. In *Gender Trouble*, Butler situates gender as a performance that emerges through a repetition of acts, a phenomenon constantly being produced and reproduced. "Gender is a kind of persistent impersonation that passes as the real," a process through which people make and remake their own genders, consciously and unconsciously.⁷³ In Butler's theoretical understanding, gender is continuously made everyday through a combination of performances and interpretations: aesthetics, power dynamics, social interactions, taboos, cultural interpretations, and individual external presentation all have a role in this continuous creation. No person has the ability to entirely flip public conceptions of gender through their personal presentation, just like no dancer can single handedly change the universally accepted ways of interacting with a site. Only through examining cultural norms and patterns can we understand the archetypes of gender we are creating and reproducing as a whole. However, the individual is also not powerless in the process of making gender. Butler writes that they "waffle between understanding performativity as linguistic and casting it as theatrical," understanding that the two are "invariably related."⁷⁴ Discussing gender creation as "a speech act [and] an instance of power" allows us to recognize that the movements our bodies make and the words we use to describe them create their own realities.⁷⁵ By invoking J.L. Austin's speech act theory, Butler allows for the conclusion that performances of gender act similarly to SSD. Both are performative acts that multiply realities of gender and space by articulating new iterations of gender and site, respectively. This performative quality means that new archetypes of gender can emerge everyday; there is room for pockets of future genders and gender signifiers because our bodies and relationships are the places where gender plays out.

Butler's model allows for trans and queer people to learn and teach each other new genders and ways of embodying them. They provide the example of butch lesbians who become parents, asking "when and why... do some butch lesbians who become parents become 'dads' and others

⁷²Edensor & Bowdler, 723.

⁷³Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. (New York: Routledge, 1989), xxviii.

⁷⁴Butler, xxv.

⁷⁵Butler, xxv.

become ‘moms’?”⁷⁶ They emphasize the fact that once a single butch lesbian becomes a dad to their children, the role of a dad is forever within the realm of possibility for other butch people. Being a dad, then, becomes one of the many iterations and possibilities within butchness and womanhood. Though this action does not immediately insert being a woman dad into universally accepted schemes of gender, individual butch women who become dads make it possible for others to complicate and combine the identities of woman, lesbian, butch, and dad in the future.

Like site-specific dance, personal gender presentation and gendered word choice can be a “vehicle for becoming conscious of... things and relationships that we would otherwise enact or engage without thinking.”⁷⁷ I think that individual rebellions from the scripts of bathrooms (through site-specific performance) should be framed in the way that Butler frames individual rebellions from gender. Edensor and Bowdler agree, and cite Butler’s theory to distinguish between intentional and unreflexive performances of gender and dance. They emphasize Butler’s “conception of the unreflexive performativity of gender,” a dynamic in which new ways of enacting gender do not emerge because the people in question reproduce gender without intentionality or self awareness. Butch parents using the both ‘mom’ and ‘dad’ to describe themselves is the opposite of an unreflexive performance of gender, because it is an action that intentionally creates worlds and possibilities. Edensor and Bowdler claim that SSD “exemplifies both registers; the dancers consciously and communicatively perform the unremarkable... habits of the public, while at the same time, the public themselves, as they walk [around the performers] are largely performing other kinds of unreflexive movements.”⁷⁸ The intentional and the unreflexive meet in the form of SSD; one can dance in a way that reproduces empty dynamics, or in a way that generates new worlds. This same framework maps onto Muñoz’s heterosexual and queer citizenships, both of which emerge through performance: the former reproduces without intentionality, and the latter performs to highlight norms and multiply possibilities. Intentional dance performance and gender performance both directly shift an individual’s experience of what is possible, and hint at the possibility of normalizing what is currently seen as strange and unrealistic. In my project of dancing in a bathroom, I focused primarily on shifting my own experience of place, and relied on the theories of Butler, Muñoz, and Edensor and Bowdler to trust that individual experience has the ability to create larger meanings and futures, queer and otherwise.

I incorporated this understanding of queer utopia and meaning-making into a site-specific dance performance in a multi-stall men’s bathroom on Macalester’s campus. I inserted my own pleasurable trans experience of dance into the history of the room, and created a window into queer trans future for myself to experience in this otherwise violent and scripted facility. I found that once I had embraced movements like rolling on the floor, laying on the sinks, and climbing stall walls, the prescribed script of the bathroom was no longer appealing to me. The bathroom’s everyday uses faded away as a script I had memorized for my safety, and while I danced alone in the bathroom, I experienced joy that belongs to a utopia in which the meaning of space is made by pleasurable movement.

Because of the solitary nature of the performance, one question this project raises is whether queer future can be an individual experience. While Muñoz clarifies that an individual performer can create and experience a window into queer utopia on their own, many of the examples he provides—the future economy created in a strip club bar, the experience of having sex with other men in public spaces meant to deter gay affection—rely on an audience or a shared experience. In a historical moment when many communal practices have become necessarily singular due to the danger that the pandemic poses in public, my performance also seeks to ask whether queer utopia is something we can hold individually until we can be together in public spaces again.

⁷⁶Butler, xi.

⁷⁷Edensor & Bowdler, 718.

⁷⁸Edensor & Bowdler, 718.

The individual nature of my performance allowed me to spend time alone in places where I have experienced harassment, shame, and fear. This allowed me to interact with the architecture of the room, to explore what amount of violence and cisnormativity is enforced by the dimensions of the spaces themselves and what is enforced by a critical mass of people being in the spaces. Is transphobia still an active force in a gendered bathroom if one trans person is safe and alone there? I found that I was able to experience a future free of others' judgements and gazes, and this window into utopia is a memory I can access as I navigate the everyday.

I have no way of measuring whether this queer future I created for myself will allow others to access the same window into the future. Despite that, I believe, as Muñoz does, that "outposts of a new society," however small in scale, are connected and activate each other.⁷⁹ Just like everyday performances of gender and individual SSD performances, each singular piece can activate the imagination and expand what is possible. I distribute the dance film in the hope that my experience of embodied trans future can provide a window into that for those who watch the videos.

One thing I can measure is how this performance affects my own memory and experience of the future as an embodied performer, as an active queer citizen. Using Edensor and Bowdler's assertion that SSD is a way to create new sensory memories rooted in the "pleasurable experience of using place otherwise,"⁸⁰ I sought to create pleasurable tactile memories that would change the location of these bathrooms in my personal memory. Will this experience of my own tactile gaze in a bathroom change the reality of these bathrooms when I use them in the future? Or will the controlling cisgender gaze return to dominate my experience? Does inserting trans joy and dance into the permanent meaning of these bathrooms change anything about the everyday experience of trans people in those same bathrooms? The next time I am using a public men's bathroom with other people present, will the queer utopia that I created still be a place I can access in my mind? Will the memories of how the floor, sinks, and stalls felt on my skin and dancing body be accessible to me once I am again surrounded by others who are performing a dead, heterosexual and cisgender relationship to the space where I danced?

VI Conclusion

As I reflect on this performance project that created trans future in the tradition of the queer-present utopias that Muñoz describes, SSD was the most relevant tool available to me. The visibility of SSD allows it to work as a tool through which performers can evade the monolithic power of norms, through which I could take my body out of the constant reproduction of gender and violence that exists in bathrooms. The questioning and multiplying processes that SSD takes part in are full of opportunities to expose, problematize, change, and create meanings within public spaces. These opportunities allow me to engage with myself, my peers, other trans people who I share the digital product with as I examine and work outside of the everyday. SSD also works to challenge rules on many levels, personal and political; I found that as I danced, I was present with my previous memories of the bathroom, with other performers elsewhere who have taken on projects of queer future, with the state and its role in mediating gender, as well as with my own body and vision for queer future. Using SSD's unique ability to expose and problematize using tactile experience, I created new screens through which I can see the everyday in the spaces around me.

Muñoz's queer future—and the constraints, surveillance, and control mechanisms that present barriers to it—is especially present and necessary in public bathrooms. I have argued that gendered public bathrooms are some of the most salient locations for SSD, because they represent some of the most clear and violent ways the state controls gender through habit. Gershenson and Penner

⁷⁹Muñoz, 55.

⁸⁰Edensor & Bowdler, 714.

draw attention to how present bathrooms are in the collective unconscious, identifying their role as spaces where the taboo and the shameful are placed and made invisible. Taylor's study of simultaneous formations of state and gender affirms that spaces like bathrooms mediate and control public expression of gender to line up with the government's imposed notions of gender. In the case of bathrooms in the United States, this shows up through hostile architecture, sex-segregated bathrooms with two binary options, and surveillance meant to deter any expression of homosexuality or transness. Again, SSD remains uniquely relevant here in its ability to work around rules, multiplying one's options rather than proposing an opposing set of rules. Lamia Abukhadra and Leila Awadallah's 2017 performance "Rethinking Public Spaces: The Wall" symbolically defies the governments of Israel and the United States by refusing to create a simple opposition. They do not perform only joy and bravery in response to the fear and grief these governments impose—instead, the artists embrace many emotions and movements. They multiply what is possible.

In bathrooms, where the stakes of working outside of the provided gendered scripts are extremely high, a tool like SSD is necessary because it can subvert rather than confront power. Edensor and Bowdler's work emphasizes SSD's ability to do just that. Through the performances of Wayne Sables and Dianne McIntyre, we see that SSD is a force of multiplication, not of rebuttal. Public bathrooms are spaces of accumulation, where bodies are sorted and gender is created through habit. SSD is a tool with the ability to bring these violent and gendered meanings out of the unconscious in bathrooms, exposing the cycles that happen there. Yet even more importantly, site-specific performance in bathrooms can change individual trans people's experiences of bathrooms, adding experiences of tactile play to those of fear or discipline. As violent and anti-trans as most bathrooms are, I am not among the first to take interest in them—Muñoz shows us that realities of queer intimacy and pleasure already exist in the permanent history of bathrooms. We just have to access them. Trans people must use these spaces for our futures, using our own bodies to reclaim bathrooms from the cis imagination. To experience vitality through play in a public bathroom is to access utopia, to bring our private joy into a space that we have been told cannot be a home for our existence at all. For trans performers, dancing in public bathrooms expands what is possible in our everyday lives; if we can perform utopia here, we can perform it anywhere.

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