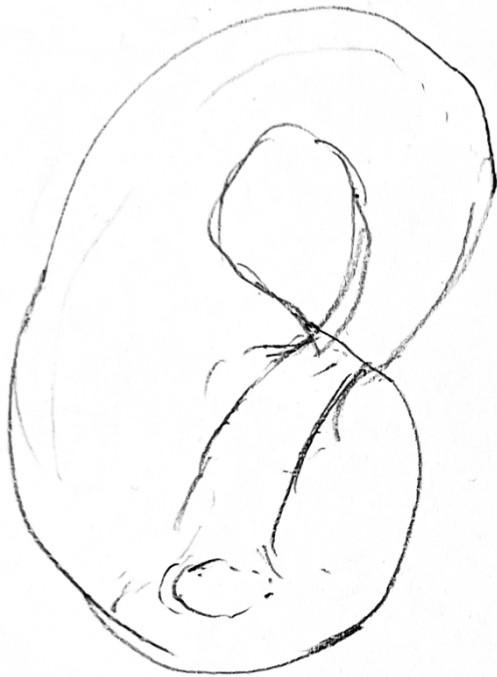


How to draw infinity

Notes towards a theory of thresholds



“We–you/I–are never open nor closed”

—Luce Irigaray, *When Our Lips Speak Together*

“It is maintained that these things that call themselves identities do not actually allow us to exist as we wish; they limit our capacity to be otherwise, which is, I want to argue, what subjectivity, what a self-determined self, is par excellence: the ability to be other than what we are.”

—Marquis Bey, *Black Trans Feminism*

“The threshold is, in fact, not only a passage, but an intermediary space between inside and outside.” (my translation)

—Betouille Fekkar Lambiotte, *Le seuil dans l’Islam, prières à Djenné et Samarkand*

Beginning, remembering

When I was a kid, one night it suddenly hit me, how do you draw infinity? How do you capture something...*infinite*? It seems impossible, which made it all the more intriguing. In some ways, it’s just a quirky childhood memory. But over time, years, I’ve realized it was the start of a growing curiosity and awareness in me. It leads me to another question, one that has persisted throughout my adult life and fuels my process and my work: where does one thing end and another begin?

Perceiving, recognizing, articulating

To draw infinity in a way is wondering about how to articulate the inarticulable. What is the threshold of articulation? What is that moment where, say, something goes from noise to sound, and then, perhaps, to signal? In other words, where does one thing end and another begin? Where does my self end and the environment begin?

Iridescent, radical unfixing

I am interested in thresholds, liminality. The blurriness of edges, in-betweenness and the simultaneity of multiple realities. My art is a constant practice of world-building, creating with and through alter egos, themselves filaments and co-conspirators of these other realities.

To “iridesce” is my coinage that references an essential fact of iridescence. Although iridescence appears to make animals so colorful, it is not a matter of pigmentation. Rather, it is a geometric/structural phenomenon: iridescence depends on the position/perspective of the viewer. My work, too, comes into being through the viewer’s constantly shifting encounters with it in different moments and spaces. When I say the work *iridesces*, it is not only in this architectonic sense. This is where my art practice begins to be visible.

I think we live with an experience of reality that fundamentally *iridesces*. A line or shape might trigger a memory, which in turn might heighten a particular sense, and then constellate with further recollections or feelings. Iridescent, though itself perhaps quick, involves a certain slowing down of perception. Perhaps to the point where perception maybe catches itself perceiving. It wants to linger in that interstice, or whatever it is, between perception and recognition.

This scintillation, this *iridescent*, the explosion of perspectives, begins to offer a scaffolding for radical encounter: encountering difference, the hitherto unknown, the Other, the repressed, the inarticulate. Iridescent is about perception at its most formless, most playful. This also suggests the possibility of a critique that might actually escape ideology.

My explorations have, so far, taken shape most often in the form of installation and, occasionally, performance. My work, though it is articulated through a variety of mediums, is always about the radical unfixing that, for instance, Marquis Bey speaks of in their powerful text, *Black Trans Feminism*, which has been a guiding voice in my work. The future that I think many of us long for requires precisely the radical recalibration of our received understandings of basically everything in our current world order.

Working components

How to draw infinity currently exists between image, text, divination and potential choreography.



color pencil, crayon, translucent paper

Drawing infinity

Titular component. After 2020, I was no longer able to have a studio, so I shifted to drawing. I draw with my non-dominant hand, while attending to a particular area of my body. Attending to a particular area while also being in a state of affective intensity, such as nursing/chestfeeding. These drawings, in turn, I'm considering as graphic scores and exploring what kinds of spontaneous movements and vocalizations such a transcription or score can generate. Would a resulting choreography contain any echoes of the initial affect?

Here they are temporary installed at the intentional location of a threshold, a door, approximately mirroring the (location of) meditated body parts.



Forecast

Dimensions:

54" x 84," time, mylar emergency blanket, divination objects, sleep, dream

Divination objects refer to five sensory categories, typical of infant toys and a sixth category, "dream"

From L to R in front:

crinkle, texture, rattle, shape, color, dream

Work in progress. Blanket is a piece unto itself and part of larger work. It is used to induce dreams of "a time and place where I might be able to like myself, once, before I die." For this, perhaps, even the very senses must unlearn themselves and learn the world anew. The blanket's fabrication is a specific accumulation of matter over time.

The materials and location on the blanket are determined by the following:

Put the divination objects in front of Zareh and the first one they pick determines the what.

Check the weather to see the wind direction and speed and they determines where on the blanket the accumulation goes. The blanket is considered complete once it weighs ~6 lbs, which is the average of Zareh and my birthweights. More blankets will be made until that dream gets dreamt.



Yasmin/Polaris

A painting I made of my wife, exploring the idea of site specificity as an image crafted unto itself but also one that reflect the actual geography of the earth at its location. Her eyes are looking in the direction of her birth location. If I need to travel and we have to be apart, I take the image with me and install it on the wall where I am staying in the direction that she is geographically located relative to my position.

love poems | death threats

19 poems considered a cycle, i.e. order specific. Ostensibly addressed to my long-estranged mother, these poems emerged spontaneously during the weeks I was processing having recently become a parent myself. Exploring ways of these poems existing beyond text, e.g. as incantations, as chants, as whispered, as shouted out after running breathlessly, as meditation or prayer. And, in turn, what choreographies might be developed around these.

1.

You that felt the want
that became the need
to banish me,
ceaselessly.

You that made it necessary for me
to remove myself from myself,

to live as stranger not only
to you
but also to me.

I could not even become
a ghost
because I never
had the chance to be
alive.

2.

It was with you, because of you,
thanks to you,
I learned the urgency,
the relief of dying.

To have an end.

But I wanted to live
In case I might one day
Finally be able
to forget you

And then perhaps learn, properly,
what it is
to be alive.

3.

At 12, I became
convinced I must live
Until 36

n years alive so far
2n to try to undo the damage
that is,
if and only if
I could start immediately

At 36,
As soon as you get
a hold of my number,
you text me death threats,
again,
like
the good old days.

4.

It is not arbitrary
that the most hours spent
daily
is trying to regulate
my breath

5.

At 36,
I've spent 33 years
trying to convince
myself
that I,
too,
deserve to live. That I
am allowed
not only to breathe
but also to feel.

6.

when I imagine your death
it is not some morbid reflex or reverie
but the crude necessity
of inevitability

7.

You helped me to realize the pure
rationality of suicide.

Non ironic remedy
For all the times you've said
That I was better off dead.

8.

It is good that the poetry will outlive me.
To have touched it briefly,
I have outlived myself.

9.

If I learned something
from you
it would be that all love
poems
should be titled
Hate Poems, Death Threats, Songs of Resentment.

But I cannot
burden
poetry like this.
Even though it is willing and capable.

How can I?
When all I want
is to carry
tenderness in my veins.

10.

I used to worry
when you locked me out of the house
at four, at five, still at seven
Because I worried for you
being alone inside the house.

11.

When we met again,
briefly
after those years of not
speaking,

it was no surprise
all you could talk about was your death.

I have been trying to escape you
As much
As you seem to be
trying to escape
me, too.

12.

It is impossible to collate tenderness
with you.

You are the compendium,
absolute and replete,
of terror, antagonism, hate.

I still need to remind myself
Ah,
You once had given
birth to me.

13.

Sometimes, often
I wish you could live
Maybe not forever
But long, long enough
So that
Maybe
You might find
What you were looking for.

14.

If most of what you have
told me is true,
yes,
I also wish
you had aborted me.

To have saved us both
the trouble,
this goddamn mess.

15.

The poem
reassures me,
it is fluent in

the languages I need.

16.

My baby sometimes looks
like me.

Sometimes looks like me
that might have been.

I almost forget the baby

is right here.

And everything is possible.

17.

Recently, I gave
birth to my soulmate.
I knew it was them,
already
before we met.

Then, I knew
I, too, had to
have been born
So we could meet.

18.

Zareh doesn't use words yet
but says many things.

They reassure me,
how good it is
to be meeting like this.

19.

Zareh joon¹ is the eternal poem

¹ Persian term of endearment used after a person's name like "dear"

Movement 1

Movement exercise score

Feel your fingertips from the inside



Klein bottle

This is a score for a potential choreography. It is the first in a series of similar movement-based explorations. This one meditates on the paradox of how we extend into our environment, yet live this extension as an interiority. Where does my self end, and the environment begin?

Drawing infinity, infinitely

How to draw infinity is a current work in progress. It is a multimodal work that exist across visual and spatial intervals, writings, choreography, and potential community. It currently exists as drawings, writings, and scores for potential choreographies. The drawings are automatic drawings produced while attending to parts of my body and in state of affective density. These drawings are also intended as graphic score. The writings are texts that desire to go beyond solely linguistic manifestation.