**Liveness: Neoanimism, Performance, Late Capitalism**

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*AS SYLLABUS MAY BE UPDATED PERIODICALLY: SEE NEOANIMISMS.BLOGSPOT.COM*

**Syllabus**

**Monday 9/8 Introduction**

Using  *The Bacchae* as entryway, we will begin with discussion of what liveness and the live has meant in theatre and performance studies and look at examples of "reanimants" in theatre, literature, and film. We will be exploring states of (re)animacy that might be termed possession, regeneration, and suspension. Throughout we will be asking "what's affect got to do with it" and thinking about animacy in relationship to biopower, necropolitics, and (late late) capitalism. Texts in the new materialism will be explored for their neo-vitalism, and questions of duration will enter into our discussion. To explore duration, we will think about performance in terms of gesture (both moving and still), asking what becomes of time in the neoliberal Performocracy (to coin an unfortunate word in the wake of Theatocracy).

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**Monday 9/15  -- (Re)animants 1:** *Dionysus:  "The god you call dead is Dionysus"*

\*Nicholas Ridout "After Athens" in  *Passionate Amateurs,* 5-32 (online)

\*Euripides, *The Bacchae*

*\**Mary Keller, *The Hammer and the Flute: Women, Power, Spirit Possession,* 1-101

\*Hardt and Negri, *The Labor of Dionysus,* Preface, pgs 14-15 (online)

\*W. J. T. Mitchell, selection from *What Do Objects Want*, 145-199 (you will need to have Michael Fried's infamous essay "[Art and Objecthood](http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic641765.files/3%20-%20Fried%20--%20Art%20and%20Objecthood.pdf)" to understand this essay, so please read or reread).

Recommended along with Mitchell, "[Image-Animism](http://imagesrevues.revues.org/2874#bodyftn13)" by Karl Sierek

Recommended along with Keller, Aihwa Ong "The Production of Possession: Spirits and the Multinational Corporation in Malaysia."  *American Ethnologist,* 15:1, 1988: 28-42. And, again, Sylvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch.*

Also:  root around in this  [page on possession/property](http://neoanimisms.blogspot.com/p/text-on-posession-property.html)

Recommend along with Ridout:  Jean-Christophe Agnew, *Worlds Apart: The Market and the Theater in Anglo-American Thought, 1550-1750 I, pages 1-56.*And Sylvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch.*

You might also be interested to look at [DePalma's film of Schecher's *Dionysus in '69*](http://hidvl.nyu.edu/video/000031372_enhanced.html)(1968) on which James Franco, a Gucci sunglasses model and performance art pal to Marina Abramovic, based his laughably bad 2013 film for Gucci, [*Dionysus*](https://www.blogger.com/%3C/span%3E%3Ci%3E%20%3C/i%3E%20%3Cspan%20style%3D%22font-family%3A%20%26quot%3BTimes%20New%20Roman%26quot%3B%3B%20mso-fareast-font-family%3A%20%26quot%3BTimes%20New%20Roman%26quot%3B%3B%22%3E%3Cscript%20src%3D%22http%3A//player.ooyala.com/player.js?video_pcode=JqcWY6ikg5nwtXilzVurvI-vU6Ik&amp;height=420&amp;width=640&amp;deepLinkEmbedCode=94dndqZDrvSDTbxZgBZO6D6ZoLp9cAde&amp;embedCode=94dndqZDrvSDTbxZgBZO6D6ZoLp9cAde%22%3E%3C/script%3E)*.* What's interesting here may tracking the "god."  But perhaps the better question is what kind of performance theory might account for the 2500+ year old tracks, and what relationship to the exchange required for the sale and subsequent "possession" of Gucci sunglasses? Plato's cave shadows? Aristotle's mimesis? Phelan's disappearance? Roach's surrogation? Munoz's ephemera as evidence?

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**Monday  9/22** –    **Disciplinary back-story: Live Art**

Classic performance studies texts on the live/dead or live/recorded divide:

\*Philip Auslander *Liveness* pp. 10-60 in 1st edition, or 10-72 in second edition.

\*Peggy Phelan, "[The Ontology of Performance](https://wiki.brown.edu/confluence/download/attachments/75699262/Phelan-Unmarked-Excerpt.pdf)" from *The Politics of Performance*. 1993: 146-166

\*Jose Munoz, “[Ephemera as Evidence](http://www.ligi.ubc.ca/sites/liu/files/Publications/MunozEphemera.pdf)” *Women and Performance* 8:2, 1996

\*Jose Munoz, "Gesture, Ephemera, and Queer Feeling" in [Cruising Utopia](http://josiah.brown.edu/record%3Db5798244~S7), 65-81.

Also peruse website and materials from the Live Art Development Agency: <http://www.thisisliveart.co.uk/> : what is "live" in live art?

*For the 2nd half of class we will do the following:  select and agree to present on one of the readings from* [*this list*](http://neoanimisms.blogspot.com/p/texts-for-presentation-on-liveness.html)*. Be prepared to present on “what is liveness" in the text you select though we may not get to everyone we will see how many we can cover in discussion. Some texts are more obvious than others and not all are in theatre but try and extract from each how the term “live” or “liveness” or “liveliness” is meant to signify in a very brief presentation: boil it down to a nutshell if you can, a marker for a future reader.  For example, does "presence" sometimes indicate liveness, and if so, what is meant by presence in the text, etc. If "liveness" does not figure at all, that too would be an interesting aspect to investigate as regards the performance theory generated by the text. If liveness is amplified in the text, what is at stake in the amplification?*

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**Monday 9/29. Reanimants 2. Frankensteins and Biopower, Zombies and Necropolitics**

\*Mel Chen, *Animacies*1-85 (recommended: 127-88),  189-237.

\*Melinda Cooper, sel. from *Life as Surplus*. Introduction (3-14), Chap. 4 and 5 (103-151).

\*Sarah Juliet Lauro and Karen Embry, “[A Zombie Manifesto](http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ucsd/Zombies/A%20Zombie%20Manifesto.pdf): The Nonhuman Condition in the Era of Advanced Capitalism.” *boundary 2* vol. 35:1 (2008).

Watch the 1910 "first" Frankenstein film (on blogabus).

Watch the links on the syllablog for zombie in the mix. What's dance got to do with it? There's also a 2012 [Walking Dead promo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gb3I4R58oZ0). What's cinema/theatre got to do with it?

Recommended: Selection from Elizabeth Young, *Black Frankenstein*, pages 19-26.

Recommended:Tavia Nyong’o “ [The Scene of Occupation](https://www.dropbox.com/s/xsr905qi8uzmzv6/TDR_2012.pdf).” *TDR* 56:4, 136-149.

Also recommended for those missing a discussion of vampires: Ann S. Anagnost, "Strange Circulations" in *Beyond Biopolitics: Essays on the Governance of Life and Death,* Duke, 2011:213-237.

If you haven't already read it, you may be interested to read (recommended) Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein: A Modern Prometheus.* Also if any of you saw Episode 3 of *Penny Dreadful* (Showtime), well -- fun. But there's more than can be accounted for in the afterlives of the novel. The amazingly bad Branagh *Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein* and the recent *I, Frankenstein* should be available to stream through OCRA, and more if I can link them. They're not required but for your viewing, um, pleasure. Also see [this page](http://neoanimisms.blogspot.com/p/blog-page_16.html) for other clips, including the "live" theatre redo, *Mel Brooks's Young Frankenstein: The Musical*.  Also on the afterlives of Frankenstein:  Academic writing on the monster is monstrously prodigious as are literary, visual, and performance-based spinoffs. In fact, Frankenstein has become a verb (for example, see this interview by new materialist [artist Nathaniel Stern](http://www.wortfm.org/return-of-the-frankensteined-scanners/), (collaborator with Erin Manning), who has "frankensteined" a scanner to make posthuman eco-ethical art). Overall regarding Frankenstein we might ask: what kind of performative (or theatrical?) "surplus" is suggested by such prodigious reanimacy whereby the most "unnatural" *and "*romantic" monster serves the ecological turn?

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**Monday 10/6:  Nature, Gesture, Liveness: Erin Manning Visit**

\*Alfred North Whitehead,  "Nature Lifeless" and "Nature Alive," books VII and VIII from [*Modes of Thought*](http://www.brocku.ca/MeadProject/Whitehead/Whitehead_1938/1938_toc.html)

*\**Erin Manning, *Always More than One*(1-40) and *Politics of Touch* (110-133).

Manning lead class and then deliver a grad colloquium lecture at 5:30. All should attend.

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**Monday 10/13. Fall Weekend (no class).**

 There is no class, but there are readings -- key texts in the New Materialism

\*Jane Bennet,*Vibrant Matter*

\*Graham Harvey, *Animism,*xi-38.

\*Timothy Merton, *The Ecological Thought*, Introduction, 1-19

Recommended: not required for class, but for Judith Butler's Henkle lecture on the 14th: Butler's *Antigone's Claim* as well as Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political.* Also, for Noland reading later in the semester, Butler's early "[Performative Acts and Gender Constitution](http://www.egs.edu/faculty/judith-butler/articles/performative-acts-and-gender-constitution/)" from *Performing Feminisms*, Sue-Ellen Case, ed., 1991. May as well (re)read it before Butler's visit.)

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**Monday 10/20  – "Old" Vitalisms**

Coleman Nye to lead discussion on this day (RS is away giving a set of talks).

\*Donna Jones, *The Racial Discourses of Life Philosophy: Negritude, Vitalism, and Modernity.* Entire book, but focusing on 1-26; 57-128*.*

Recommended on "old" Animism: Emile Durkheim,  [*Elementary Forms of Religious Life*](https://ia700308.us.archive.org/12/items/elementaryformso00durkrich/elementaryformso00durkrich_bw.pdf) (esp. intro thru 51, 64-69, 87, 121-193, 216-34).

Recommended on "old" Materialism: Karl Marx, *"*The Fetishism of Commodities" *Capital*, vol. 1. 163-77 and 247-257. And from *Grundrisse*, 297-326 and 712, and from *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, "*Estranged Labor," 69-84.

Also on "old" materialism: Sylvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch*.

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**Monday** **10/27 -- More Key Texts in "New" Materialism**

\*Coole and Frost, *New Materialism,* selections (I may cut this down):

"Introduction" by Coole and Frost; "Non-Dialectical Materialism" by Pheng Cheah, "The Elusive Material: What the Dog Doesn't Understand" by Rey Chow; "The Materialism of Historical Materialism" by Jason Edwards.

\*Barad, Karen. “Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How MatterComes to Matter,” *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 28, 3. 2003: 801–31.

Watch *Voyage to Italy* in total. What would a "new materialist" reading of that film be?

Recommended: Bruno Latour, selections from *Reassembling the Social,* on object agency: 70-82 and 232-46. Recommended: Pheng Cheah, "Mattering" in *Diacritics* 1996, vol 26, no. 1.

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**Monday 11/3  -- Critiques of the New Materialism**

\*Ahmed, Sara. “Imaginary Prohibitions: Some Preliminary Remarks on the Founding Gestures of the ‘New Materialism,’” *European Journal of Women’s Studies* 15.1. 2008. 23–39.

\*Puar, Jasbir, “I’d Rather Be A Cyborg Than a Goddess: Becoming-Intersectional in Assemblage Theory,” *PhiloSOPHIA: A Journal of Continental Feminism* 2, 1. 2012: 49-66.

\*Rosenberg, Jordana, “[The Molecularization of Sexuality](http://muse.jhu.edu.revproxy.brown.edu/journals/theory_and_event/v017/17.2.rosenberg.html): On Some Primitivisms of the Present,” *Theory & Event* 17:2, 2014.

\*Watch Werner Herzog, *Cave of Forgotten Dreams* (OCRA)

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**Monday 11/10: Agency and Embodiment 1.** --gesture and the gift

In some ways leaving the critiques of New Materialism on the table, I want to continue thinking about *gesture*, *duration,* and *agency.* Mauss will set up Noland but also provide a text on "old" animisms. Read it before Noland if you have time.

Recommended:  Mauss, *The Gift*

\*Carrie Noland, *Agency and Embodiment,* 1-92

\*Franko, "Given Movement: Dance and the Event" in *Of the Presence of the Body,* Andre LePecki, ed. pp. 114-123

\*Amit S. Rai, "Here We Accrete Durations: Toward a Practice of Intervals in the Perceptual Mode of Power." in *Beyond Biopolitics: Essays on the Governance of Life and Death" 307-331.*

\*May Joseph on gesture "Fascia and the Grimace of Catastrophe" also in *Beyond Biopolitics.*

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**Monday 11/17 *Agency and Embodiment 2.*** -- the paleolithic encounter (Carrie Noland to class)

\*Noland *Agency and Embodiment,* 93-169

\* Althusser, "[Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/althusser/1970/ideology.htm)" (please think concretely about the hail)

\* Althusser, "The Underground Current of the Materialism of the Encounter" in *Philosophy of the Encounter*, 163-207.

\*Jennifer Fisher, "Tangible Acts: Touch Performances" in *The Senses in Performance*, ed. Sally Banes and Andre Lepecki, 2007: pp. 166-178.

Noland lecture at 5:30, required attendance after class.

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**Monday 11/24 Wrapping back around to 'Maenadic' Questions**

\* Sylvia Federici *Caliban and the Witch.*

OR:We may collectively decide what to bring back to the table from the huge volume of reading we've already completed. Or other reading TBA.

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**Monday 12/ 1—(Rebecca in Paris and Berlin) No Class, work on final papers.  Papers due on the first day after the close of reading week.**