

WRITING FROM THE _____

Clareese Hill & Elly Clarke

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ABSTRACT

This is a collaborative trans-atlantic meandering around our respective research fields, interjected with archival traces of our performances. Alongside us are The GUIDE, and #Sergina. The GUIDE is a survival praxis of how the Black identity performs in anticipation of being trapped in the gaze of being processed as other; a pedagogical deployment of research and critical theory from Black studies, Post-Colonial studies, and Black Feminist studies. #Sergina is a multi-bodied multi-locational drag queen who sings songs about love, lust, and loneliness in the digital age, alone and with others, performing on readymade platforms of Google Hangout, Skype, Zoom, Instagram and so on. What follows is a trans -racial -temporal -geographical edit of our side by side evaluation of where we are - or not.

We are calling this our Mixtape/ Shuffle Play.

CONTACT Elly Clarke  ellyclarke.com/@serg1na

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WRITING FROM THE _____ .



WHAT CONTEXT are we LIVING IN TODAY?

Form description

⋮

This is an unfinished dragg/gy field manual [of and for] reworlding / coping with the world/s we inhabit - i.e. surviving and survival in a context of: (please select all that apply)

- Option 1
- screens and screening/s,
- histories,
- emotions,
- narratives,
- memories,
- sharing,
- posing
- waiting, hoping, dreading,
- the drag (performance/s) of life/s
- Other...

[1]

Without having any answers or definite methodology for others to follow, we write with desire to feel

MIXTAPE / SHUFFLE PLAY

This is a collaborative trans-atlantic meandering around our respective research fields, interjected with archival traces of our performances. Alongside us are The GUIDE, and #Sergina. The GUIDE is a survival praxis of how the Black identity performs in anticipation of being trapped in the gaze of being processed as other; a pedagogical deployment of research and critical theory from Black studies, Post-Colonial studies, and Black Feminist studies. #Sergina is a multi-bodied multi-locational drag queen who sings songs about love, lust and loneliness in the digital age, alone and with others, performing on readymade platforms of Google Hangout, Skype, Zoom, Instagram and so on. What follows is a trans -racial -temporal -geographical edit of our side by side evaluation of where we are - or not.

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The GUIDE's physical appearance shifts and seeks to disrupt the technology she is commanding. I am a self-sculpted c-celeb, waiting for my social media presence to take off. This disruption happens when the non-reflective skin meets the 3D scanner and she is not seen, illegibility, intelligibility is perverted into a problem. In my spare time I write songs about having my phone in my wallet, waiting to download and that kind of thing. She (re)writes the technological apparatus she uses in her practice; the technology becomes a conduit for contemporary social abolitionist ideals through the exploration of unrefined reproduction. Played (out) on different bodies, I appear in one place or many at once. She is rejecting the indoctrination of auto-instituting by scrambling her legibility, intentionally making herself incomplete. Filters are fabulous.

What is it to have no signal?
Only when you have no signal do people get worried
I couldn't get hold of you
Where are you
Are you ok?
[2]

We invite you to join in

Re:imagining
Re:thinking
Re:believing
Re:calibrating
Re:fantasising
Re:cognising
Re:situating

Where is our body/s whilst we are doing this?

What if **becomes a spanner in the works to the**
re:

imagining
thinking
believing
calibrating
fantasising
cognising
situating

What if we give into *feeling?*

be guided back to our feet by our alter egos
and each other's

where we are now IS NOT SUSTAINABLE.

We can see no place that feels sustainable for us.

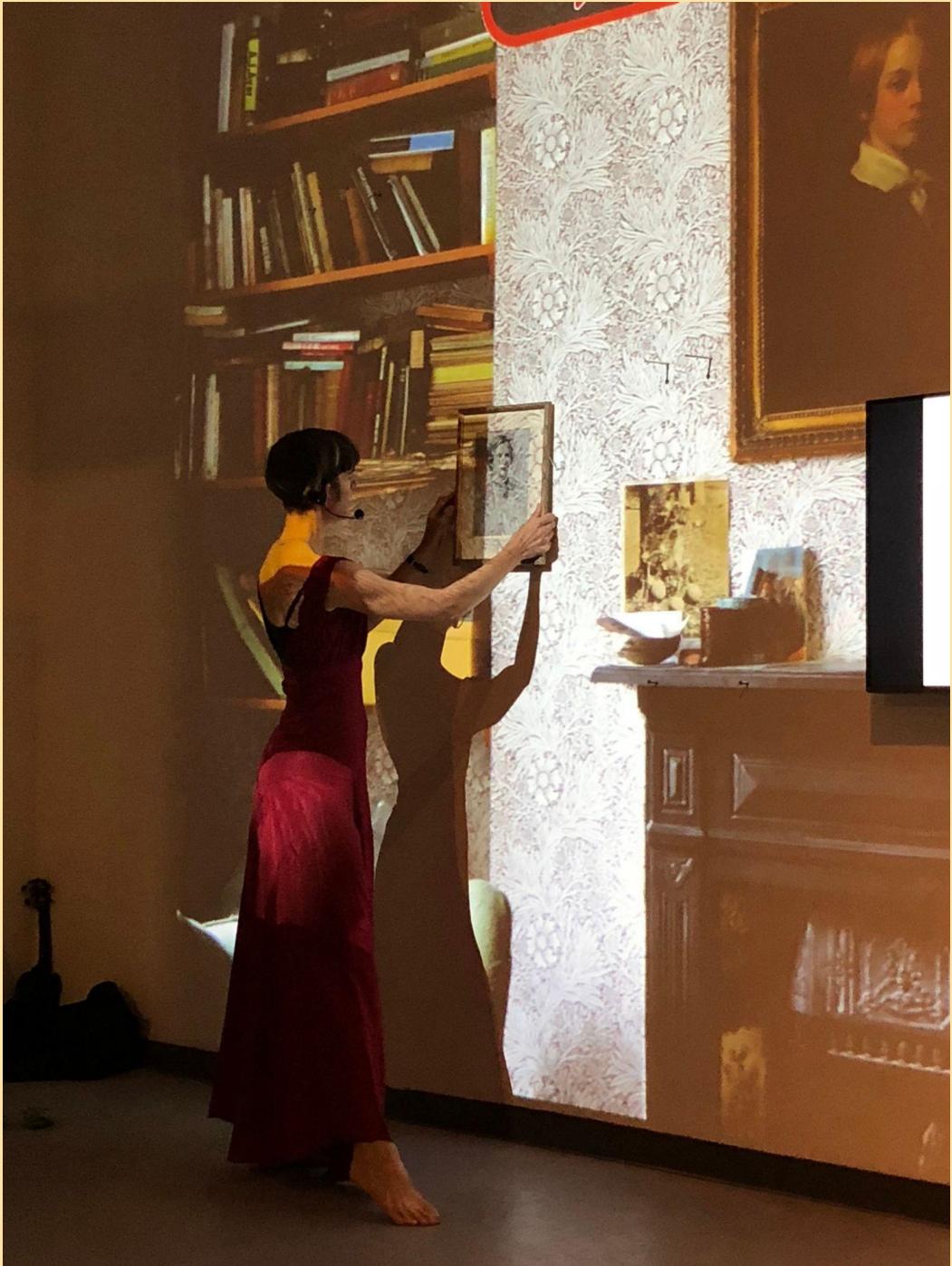
As artists
As researchers
As embodied humans
As academics.

The drag can be heavy

No matter
No matter where
No matter where we
No matter where we can

No matter where we can imagine
No matter where we can imagine ourselves
No matter where we can imagine ourselves to being

from where we are now
physically and



[3]

If you don't accept that you feel
How can you build any thing
How can you talk about needing something different?

What happens if we drop
the professional profile?

What if my late night / early
evening message to you
were in this .

I have read them and you have

The reader of this text has not
(yet)

But it was present

In the way we met

The mood of the mode of our
meetings

Our conversation

...

That day
we had shared before we wrote

How we
both
were

*How are you?
How are you feeling right now?
Can we be good to each other?
How can we make each other feel good?*
[4]

What if we can admit that things are hard
in a paper that will last longer than our mood
we hope.

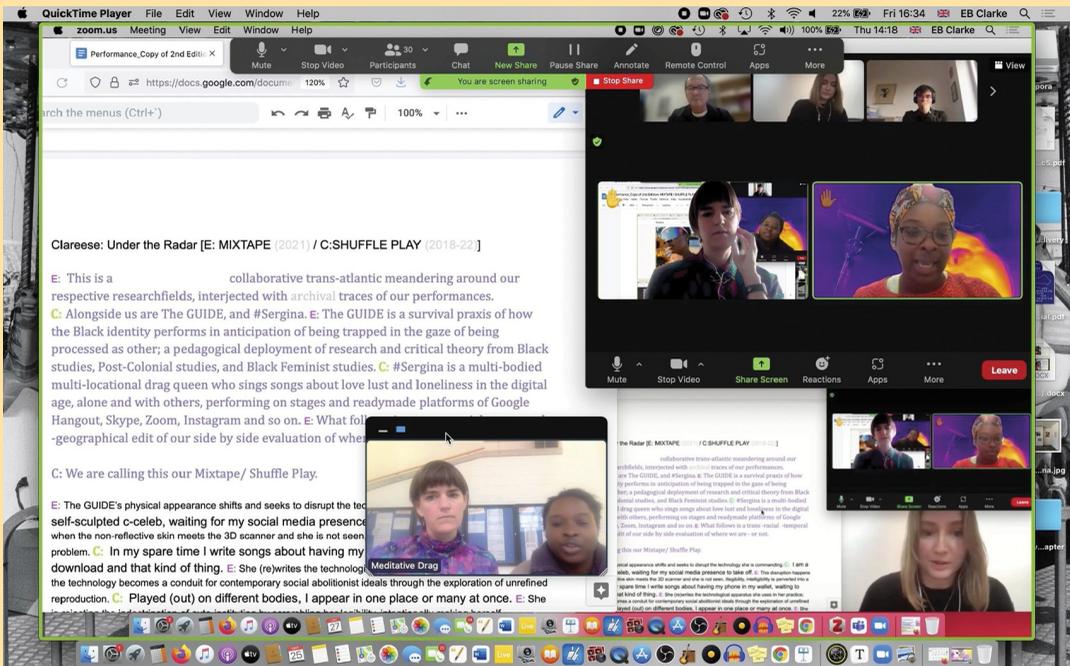
What is our survival
How do we keep
How do we keep going?

How do we protect ourselves from the injuries our lifestyles seduce us into sustaining?

HOW CAN WE STAY NEXT TO EACH OTHER SO LONG? [5]

What form will we need to assume to fit in / slip away / pass through undetected
To have our thoughts to ourselves
Our emotions space to play out [again]

Rather than being played on.
Creativity for expansion
for survival.



[6]

WHAT WAS SHE DOING
WHEN SHE WASN'T ONLINE?

Reach out
Reach out to touch
Touch base
re_connections

To stand up for ourselves
To assume a vertiginous state:

[7]



[8]

I have been thinking a lot about what it means to survive. Over the last 4 years that has been my research, obsession, and necessary conundrum to strategize. I work through this research question with my collaborator / alter ego, She is an amalgamation of posthuman questions, theory, and

assemblage, never knowing which one of us will emerge,

The lines are blurred in

entering a utopic slice of the methodology of practising survival. We are a We, We are a We that needs each other. Survival Praxis strategies.

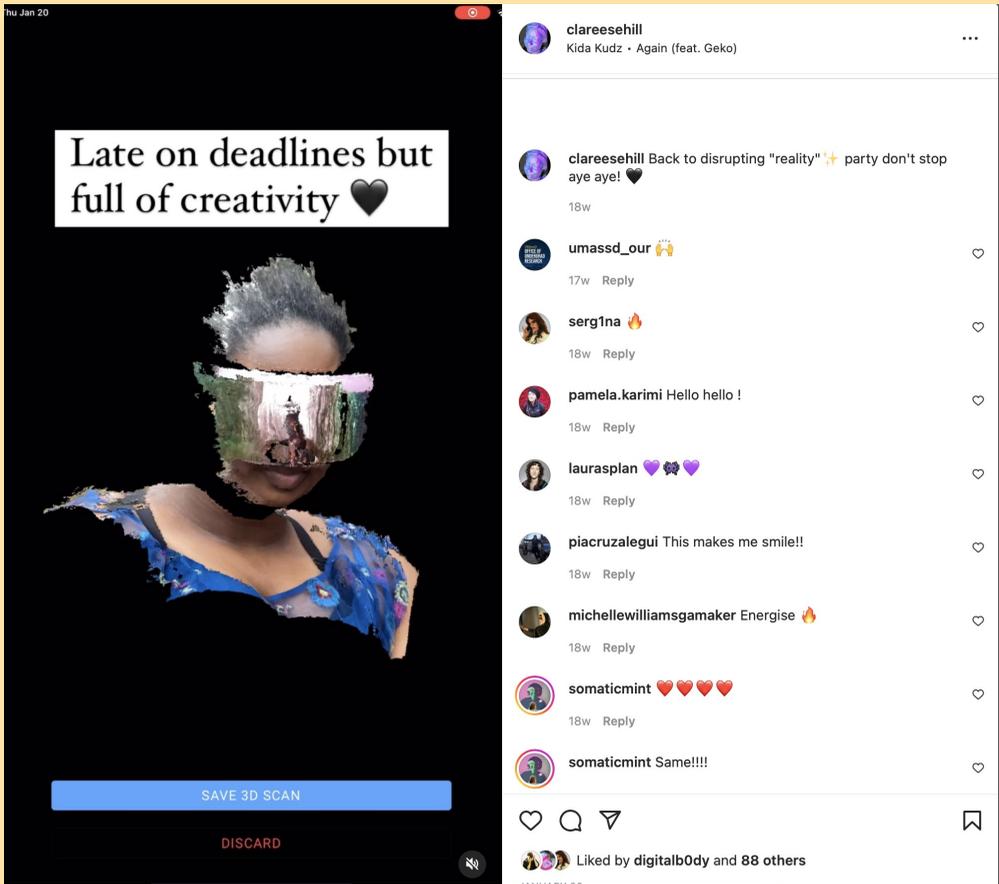
This is provisional praxis of learning, unlearning, and relearning to survive, not only in our organic matter but with Our whole ecology to attempt better stewardship at the edge of the Anthropocene. we (Us and you) are clearly falling off the (Us and you)

collapse and collapse again

non-consensual failures. Landscapes, people, the ozone layer, the atmosphere, extinct animals, climate change refugees, and microplastics

(waiting while they are thinking, calculating, processing).

[9]



[10]

She teaches me to meditate...
We meditate together...
and YOU can meditate with us.

[11]

~~40th April 2022~~

when you work in lots of different jobs you have to be lots of different characters. when I work/ed in i am one person. when i i am another. when i found myself presenting about new

I see myself from the outside, wondering how i got there. the trick in these cases is to keep one's self together. to not get lost in the dispersal. the centrifugal force [12] of pressures and desires and desires of others and their various requirements and expectations pulling you in many different directions at once. how to be me? what is me? who is me? how can i (still) be me in all these different situations / social/ political/ geographical/ linguistic contexts & registers?

but perhaps these characters are helpful in helping to keep one's (plural) self together. [13]

The desire for degradation
Degradation as a saving grace.

Dis/grace.

How do you want me?
Where do you want me?
What is your preferred form/at?

[14]

Decentralised Footnotes / Bibliography / References / Fangirl moments

1. Context questionnaire: <https://forms.gle/1joxpbE4E6ggmLc3A>
2. Clareese Hill & Elly Clarke, 2021, Mixtape / Shuffle play, Open Call
3. [A Class\(y\) Lecture by Elly Clarke, 2018.](#)
4. Extract from #Sergina's Wellbeing Questionnaire. 2019-22
5. #Sergina, 2016, I want to see you from a different perspective
6. Screenshot 2022-03-25 at 17:25 taken whilst performing *Meditative Drag/gy Sales Pitch* at ERG in Brussels as part of the Transmediale PhD Research Workshop
7. Clareese Hill extract from jettisoned PhD chapter
8. #Sergina at Yo! Sissy, Berlin, 29th July 2017. Photo by Stephanie Ballantine.
9. Inspired by Sylvia Wynter ETHNO, OR SOCIOPOETICS? Alcheringa Ethnopoetics: a First International Symposium, 1976
10. The GUIDE Screenshot 2022-06-01 at 14:36
11. Inspired by Clareese Hill PhD research
12. After Phaniel Antwi's lecture *Anticolonial Dreaming: The Elemental Poetics in Dub*, at Transmediale 2022
13. 'Adopting an alter ego can help reduce anxiety'. - Facts, Instagram post, April 10th 2022, https://www.instagram.com/p/Ccg29aiO_gL/
14. Elly Clarke & Clareese Hill, 2021, Mixtape / Shuffle play, Open Call

Notes on contributors

Elly Clarke is an artist and PhD candidate in Art at Goldsmiths, interested in the performance and burden ('the drag') of the physical body in a digitally mediated world. She explores this through video, photography, music, writing & community-based projects - and #Sergina, a border-straddling, multi-bodied drag queen who, across one body and several, sings and performs online and offline about love, lust and loneliness in the mesh of hyper-dis/connection. More recently #Sergina has been gathering people's 'data discharge' through performances and questionnaires and blowing up screengrabs from VJ performance rehearsals, and printing them on fabric to be used as a portable virtual/real Zoom backdrops.

Meanwhile #Sergina (plural) has performed in art, queer club and theatre spaces in the UK, Europe and the USA - including The Lowry Centre; Marlborough Theatre, Brighton; Kulturni Centar GRAD, Belgrade; Shout Festival, Birmingham; Secret Project Robot, Brooklyn; The Island, Bristol, Silver Futures, Berlin; ONCA Gallery in Brighton, The Knot Project Space in Ottawa, Canada and Spill Festival in Ipswich. Many performances are participatory and take place on and across digital platforms of the everyday.

ellyclarke.com/@serg1na

Clareese Hill is a practice-based researcher. She explores the validity of the word "identity" through her perspective as an Afro-Caribbean American woman and her societal role projected on her to perform as a Black feminist academic. She has given performance lectures at Royal College of Art, Goldsmiths, University of London, University of Sussex, CUNY Graduate Center, The Chicago Art Department, and Smack Mellon in Brooklyn. In May 2020, she co-organized Occupying the In-Between, a day-long interactive art research platform that questioned the validity of knowledge production and the body disseminating the research. She has exhibited her research internationally in Chicago, New York, California, London, Europe, and cyberspace. Clareese was a 2020 Rapid Response for a Better Digital Future fellow (Phase One). Clareese's essay "A Survival Praxis Through Hood Feminism, Negritude, and Poetics" was published in the *Architecture and Culture Journal* by Taylor and Francis Press. She also wrote, "If the Earth Spoke to You As A Black Woman" published in *Antennae, the Journal of Nature and Culture*. Clareese holds an MFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) and a practice-based research PhD from Goldsmiths, University of London.