

How to rewire a tangled mind

An analysis of dramaturgical strategies used to approach the theme of sexual trauma in *Cock, Cock.. Who's There?* by Samira Elagoz



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Abstract

The past year has been highly influenced by the confessions made in the context of #MeToo, and the opening up on sexual abuse. This thesis embeds this theme in the performing arts. It focuses on *Cock, Cock.. Who's There?* by Samira Elagoz as its main case study in analysing the dramaturgical strategies used in this specific performance to approach the theme of sexual trauma.

Firstly, the performance is contextualized within the paradigm of 'theatre of the real', a concept by Carol Martin, embracing all forms of performance that somehow include reality or make use of events from the real world. The contexts discussed are for example documentary theatre, autobiographical theatre and Self-Revelatory Performance, all non-fictional forms, some with their roots in feminism and therapy. This context is taken along in the further analyzation of the dramaturgical strategies. In the following chapters, *Cock, Cock.. Who's There?* is analyzed from different perspectives, to finally come to a conclusion on which strategies Elagoz used to approach the theme of sexual trauma, and why. The chosen perspectives are the narrative and form of narration, intermediality and the use of media, and rhythms and structures related to experiencing trauma, translated to the performing arts.

Concluding, the main dramaturgical strategies used by Samira Elagoz can be identified. *Cock, Cock.. Who's There?* is an autologue, an autobiographical solo which (consciously or unconsciously) makes use of intermediality, the screen and its performative self-reflexivity, the (fe)male gaze and rhythms and structures characterizing trauma-symptoms. These all function as elements of her research on the traumatic events she suffered. Elagoz used this performance as a laboratory, and through thorough research, regain power and control over the situation, and rewiring her mind, body and soul.

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Introduction

In many minds, 2017 will remain the year in which speaking up about sexual misbehaviour dominated the headlines. 'Me Too', a phrase and movement developed by Tarana Burke in 2006¹, experienced a major revival in mid-October, when well known American actress Alyssa Milano through a Twitter-post suggested: "If all the women who have been sexually harassed or assaulted wrote 'Me Too.' as a status, we might give people a sense of the magnitude of the problem".² This action arose in response to the then recent allegations against Hollywood tycoon Harvey Weinstein as being guilty of multiple cases of sexual harassment.³ Within a few hours, the internet flooded with messages of women and men once exposed to sexual misconduct. Remarkably, a lot of these incidents took place in the cultural sphere (film, fashion, theatre), but also in sports, the workspace and other private circumstances. It unraveled a still ongoing revolution of breaking the taboo around this subject.

Ahead of this movement was filmmaker and choreographer Samira Elagoz. This young Finnish-Egyptian SNDO⁴-graduate has been researching sexual assault and gender roles ever since she was molested herself, four years ago. As a means of what she calls 'exposure therapy'⁵, she started meeting men she addressed through social networks such as Craigslist and Tinder, first only online, then also in real life. Armed with her camera (permitted by the men concerned), she travelled the world and filmed a great variety of first encounters with men. As a product of all these recordings, in 2016 the documentary *Craigslist Allstars* premiered at IDFA. That same year, *Cock, Cock.. Who's There?* became her (multiple) prize winning graduation performance. "A hyperpersonal quest, as layered as it is universal"⁶, "An unconventional way of processing trauma"⁷, "This

¹ Abby Ohlheiser, "The woman behind 'Me Too' knew the power of the phrase when she created it - 10 years ago," *Washington Post*, October 19, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-intersect/wp/2017/10/19/the-woman-behind-me-too-knew-the-power-of-the-phrase-when-she-created-it-10-years-ago/?utm_term=.7000fac6a149.

² Alyssa Milano (@Alyssa_Milano), "Me too. Suggested by a friend: "If you've been sexually harassed or assaulted, write 'me too' as a reply to this tweet."," Twitter, October 15, 2017, https://twitter.com/alyssa_milano/status/919659438700670976.

³ Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey, "Harvey Weinstein paid off sexual harassment accusers for decades," *New York Times*, October 5, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/05/us/harvey-weinstein-harassment-allegations.html>.

⁴ This abbreviation stands for School for New Dance Development, a department of the Academy of Theatre and Dance in Amsterdam.

⁵ Moos van den Broek, "De camera is mijn partner in crime - Interview Samira Elagoz," *Theatermaker*, October, 2017, <https://www.theaterkrant.nl/tm-artikel/camera-is-partner-crime-interview-samira-elagoz/>.

⁶ Moos van den Broek, "Visuele lecture performance legt vrouwen trauma bloot," *Theaterkrant*, March 9, 2017, <https://www.theaterkrant.nl/recensie/cock-cock-whos-there/samira-elagoz/>.

⁷ Sander Hiskemuller, "Een verkrachting verwerken op de Bühne, maar niet vanuit een slachtofferrol," *Trouw*, May 19, 2017, <https://www.trouw.nl/home/een-verkrachting-verwerken-op-de-buhne-maar-niet-vanuit-een-slachtofferrol~ad42cd9f/>.

performance about intimacy and violence is rough yet elegant”⁸, *Cock, Cock.. Who’s There?* created quite a (positive) stir amongst the critics too.

The concept of the performance is quite sober. Elagoz sits in the right front corner of the stage, in the most simple chair. In the back, a large screen is situated. Her informative, almost unemotional first-person monologue tells the story of her youth, her way with men and her sexual trauma, as where the screen shows (occasionally quite explicit) outtakes of *Craigslist Allstars* and very open interviews with friends and family about the sexual abuse.

Without a doubt, this performance itself was the first trigger for this research. I attended *Cock, Cock.. Who’s There?*⁹ on the 26th of October 2017. Walking out of the theatre, I was blown away by the subject and mostly by the way Elagoz treated it: provocative, strong, yet simple and creative. But above all, the social relevance of this performance is undeniable. Ahead of its time, the performance opened up the discussion about sexual abuse, even before the #MeToo-movement was put in motion. As mentioned before, this movement started taking shape very quickly and spread all over the world. The sudden openness about the delicate subject of sexual abuse and trauma can be seen as a (still ongoing) revolution in culture and emancipation, resulting in actions from redundancies to changes in legislation. *CCWT* was suddenly in the middle of this important social change, which has magnified the acute relevance of the performance. In performance studies, there are publications concerning the link between performance and trauma in general, but the specific discussion of performance and sexual trauma is not a very common phenomenon, even after ‘#MeToo’, which surprised me in my research. In particular performance analysis in this field is quite scarce. Here, I found my niche.

The purpose of this research is to capture and analyse the way Elagoz used specific strategies and made particular choices in approaching the theme of sexual trauma. The main question in this research will therefore be: *Which dramaturgical choices are made to approach the theme of sexual trauma in Cock, Cock.. Who’s There? by Samira Elagoz?* The dramaturgical choices made in this performance that this thesis will be focused on most, are the chosen narrative and the perspective from which this narrative is being presented, the usage of media and the main rhythms and structures (related to trauma theory). This results in four subquestions, which I will elucidate in the following alinea.

⁸ Maxime Smit, “Voorstelling Cock Cock, Who’s There? nu extra relevant #metoo,” *Parool*, October 24, 2017, <https://www.parool.nl/kunst-en-media/voorstelling-cock-cock-who-s-there-nu-extra-relevant-metoo~a4523244/>.

⁹ From now on also referred to as *CCWT*.

I will very concisely go over the structure and the content of the chapters, and introduce the subquestions. After a detailed introduction on the performance, in the first chapter I will endeavour placing *Cock, Cock.. Who's There?* in the context of the performing arts, especially the context connected to trauma. The subquestion is formulated as followed: *What is the history of the relationship between the performing arts and (sexual) trauma and how can CCWT be positioned within this context?* I will meander through multiple fields of performing arts to see where CCWT can be placed, without restraining the piece to just one 'genre'. In this chapter, the link between trauma and performance will be thoroughly researched.

In the second chapter, I will reflect on the meaning of the performance being a solo, a monologue, in first-person narrative. How is the *self* presented and what does that mean in the context of the performance? The subquestion that will be leading here is: *What does the chosen form of narrative and narration signify in this case of performing sexual trauma?*

In chapter three, I will focus on the question: *What is the role of media and its performativity in this case of performing sexual trauma?* In three steps I will treat the subjects of multi- vs. intermediality, the performativity of the screen and the (fe)male gaze, and the relation between these concepts and the issue of sexual trauma.

In the fourth chapter, a deeper connection is made to trauma theory, the subquestion being: *Which structures and rhythms of trauma-symptoms can be detected in this case of performing sexual trauma?* More emphasis will be placed on a concept introduced in the first chapter; the concept of *trauma-tragedy*, by theatre scholar Paul Duggan. In his research, he distinguishes several rhythms and structures that are used to present trauma in performance in ways that reflect the structure of trauma itself. In this final chapter, I will focus on two of the structures Duggan points out, those being *repetition* and *mimetic shimmering*, to see how these relate to and come back in CCWT. Finally I will also introduce the concept of *rewiring*, which will play an important part in the conclusion.

Method(ology) and theoretical framework

First and foremost, in this thesis, I will execute a performance analysis of *Cock, Cock.. Who's There?* by Samira Elagoz. This analysis is focused on indicating and providing insight into multiple dramaturgical strategies used in this performance. To detect and interpret these strategies, I will consult several theoretical concepts that will function as the core of my research. These concepts

together will form the analytical framework of this thesis. In the following paragraphs, I will introduce these core concepts.

An important title in my bibliography, that I will elaborate on in chapter 1, is *theatre of the real* by Carol Martin. “Th[e] overlap and interplay between ‘theatre’ and ‘reality,’ the blurred boundary between the stage and the ‘real’ world”¹⁰ is what Martin discusses in this book. The title is also the name of the discourse she herewith develops. The idiom of the theatre of the real covers a broad variety of theatrical forms that somehow include reality or make use of events from the real world. This can be done through ‘recycling’ reality, using materials like interviews, non-fictional film images or events happened in the (social) media. This reality can either be personal, social, political or historical. The historical correctness of this represented reality is not essential, as the makers reinterpret the events and represent them in their own way: they do not show *the* truth, but *a* truth. Examples of this are documentary theatre, theatre of witness, re-enactments and autobiographical theatre¹¹, all in some way applicable to *Cock, Cock.. Who’s There?*. I see this discourse as the overarching context in which to place the performance, the other ‘genres’ discussed are all in one way or the other part of this discourse.

Also, the concept of *autobiography* is of great importance. I will use a basic definition of the term by literary scholar Philippe Lejeune. In his *On Autobiography*, he describes autobiography as “a retrospective prose narrative produced by a real person concerning his own existence, focusing on his individual life, in particular on the development of his personality”.¹² This source is, though very helpful, based on linguistics and on literature. Therefore, additionally, one of my main sources in autobiography in performance will be *Autobiography and Performance: Performing Selves*, by Deirdre Heddon.¹³ Using a lot of case studies, she gives a clear overview of what autobiographical performance can be, and the history of it, mostly focussed on the origin of it being in the second feminist wave.

Next to the concept of autobiography and autobiographical performance, an important concept will be that of *trauma*. The term ‘trauma’ comes from the Greek word *traūma*, which means wound, or penetration, as in stabbing. This penetration can range from minor to lethal, but it always leaves a

¹⁰ Carol Martin, *Theatre of the Real* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 4.

¹¹ *Ibidem*.

¹² Philippe Lejeune, *On Autobiography*, trans. Katherine Leary (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 4.

¹³ Deirdre Heddon, *Autobiography and Performance: Performing Selves* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

scar and a vulnerability.¹⁴ This definition implies the injury to be dominantly physical, but of course, in most cases, it leaves its psychological mark too. In traumatology, trauma (the cause) and stress (the response) are distinguished. In this thesis, this last category is more relevant, though I will not very much use the term stress, to prevent confusion, this term being used in such a broad way in the present-day. The term *trauma-symptom* will be one of the replacing expressions.

Of course also the concept of trauma is extremely broad. In this research, the specific kind of trauma applicable is that of sexual trauma. The *Encyclopedia of Trauma* states being the victim of sexual assault has large implications to self-perception. The sense of self is affected, which often goes hand in hand with self-blame, guilt and self-doubt. This feature of trauma often contributes to feelings of worthlessness, depression, and decreased self-esteem.¹⁵ This brings up two concepts that are important to address when handling the combination of trauma and performance, the *self* and the feeling of *agency*. The self can be described as “a person’s essential being”¹⁶, that is damaged when a person is (sexually) violated. A person’s agency, the capacity of human beings to function in a socialization in freedom (in action) and free will¹⁷, being the *self*, herewith also damages. In personal narrative and autobiographical performance lies a tool to reclaim this agency and ‘heal’ the self. A very simple example of this is therapy, a more extreme form would be the very performance of CCWT.

It is obvious that because of the connection between personal narrative and the regaining of agency, an important concept will be the *narrative*. It is a very evident choice that the performance is a monologue, in first-person narrative. This most of all relates to the concepts discussed in the previous alinea. The author who will be my main source of information in this is Clare Wallace, and in particular the bundle of essays she edited: *Monologues: Theatre, Performance, Subjectivity*.¹⁸

Besides the autobiographical monologue live on stage, quite a large component of the performance takes place on the large screen situated behind Elagoz. This screen, the details were mentioned before, carries very important information and additions to the live performance. This means *intermediality* is also an important concept in this thesis. In researching this, my main source of

¹⁴ Here I quote psychiatrist Dr. Paul Valent in: Charles R. Figley (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Trauma: An interdisciplinary guide* (Los Angeles: SAGA Publishing, 2012), xxiv.

¹⁵ Charles R. Figley (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Trauma: An interdisciplinary guide* (Los Angeles: SAGA Publishing, 2012), 610.

¹⁶ “Self,” *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, accessed 2 April 2018, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/self>.

¹⁷ Chris Barker, *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice* (London: SAGE Publication Ltd, 2005), 236.

¹⁸ Clare Wallace (ed.), *Monologues: Theatre, Performance, Subjectivity* (Prague: Litteraria Pragensia, 2006).

information will be *Mapping Intermediality in Performance*, a bundle of essays and other forms of writing, edited by Sarah Bay-Cheng, Chiel Kattenbelt, Andy Lavender and Robin Nelson.

To take a sideroad in discussing the concept of intermediality: in *Visuality in the Theatre: The Locus of Looking*, Maaïke Bleeker quotes Kaja Silverman, proposing to imagine the screen “as the repertoire of representations by means of which our culture figures all of those many varieties of ‘difference’ through which social identity is inscribed”.¹⁹ In *Male Subjectivity at the Margins*, Silverman herself refers to Jacques Lacan when she talks about the ‘screen’. He distinguishes the ‘image’ and the ‘screen’, the screen being the group of images through which identity is constituted. So in fact, the screen at issue is not an actual screen, but the “locus of mediation”.²⁰ The process whereby the subject becomes a picture, involves three terms: subject, screen²¹ and gaze.²²

This last term will also be touched upon in this research, because it comes back in so many ways in this performance. The *gaze*, a well known topic in theatre as well as film studies (also applicable in this research), can be described as something that impresses itself upon us through the sensation each of us at times has of being held within the field of vision, of being given over to specularity.²³ Types of gaze are for example the male gaze, mostly used in the context of film, how the camera mediates in the appearance of female bodies, and how this construction invites particular ways of looking at them, to satisfy what is called ‘the male gaze’.²⁴ This can be for example a ‘voyeuristic’ way of looking at women (the rebel woman as temptress) or a ‘fetishist’ way (the docile and redeeming woman).²⁵ Elagoz uses this ‘male gaze’ in her research.²⁶ Consciously she places herself as the subject of the gaze, with her camera as her ‘weapon’ to answer it, and especially as an instrument to capture and analyse. “I wanted to create a situation in which I could research violence and intimacy, as in a laboratory. Through this, hopefully the audience doesn’t identify with me as a maker, but with the subject of the performance”.²⁷

¹⁹ Maaïke Bleeker, *Visuality in the Theatre: The Locus of Looking* (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 2008), 129.

²⁰ Kaja Silverman, *Male Subjectivity at the Margins* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 149.

²¹ I suggest to use the term ‘screen’ as Lacan prescribed, as a performative object, and to also take the term ‘screen’ literally, in analysing the actual content of what is shown on the screen and the consequences of that.

²² Kaja Silverman, *Male Subjectivity at the Margins* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 148.

²³ Kaja Silverman, *The Threshold of the Visible World* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 167.

²⁴ Maaïke Bleeker, *Visuality in the Theatre: The Locus of Looking* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 133.

²⁵ Roberta Sassatelli, “Interview with Laura Mulvey: Gender, Gaze and Technology in Film Culture,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 28, no. 5 (2011): 124.

²⁶ The way Elagoz often refers to her performance. This will thoroughly come back in this thesis.

²⁷ Moos van den Broek, “De camera is mijn partner in crime - Interview Samira Elagoz,” *Theatermaker*, October, 2017, <https://www.theaterkrant.nl/tm-artikel/camera-is-partner-crime-interview-samira-elagoz/>.

Finally, an important concept - already shortly introduced - will be that of *trauma-tragedy*, developed by Patrick Duggan as subject of his PhD dissertation to become a doctor in Performance Studies. The term functions as a tool for analysis, and describes a way of performance-making that can make trauma tangible, through the kinesthetic relationship between spectator and performer. Duggan describes different rhythms involved in this way of making theatre, all based on structures attached to trauma itself. I will focus on two of them, *repetition* and *paradox* (together with the concept of *mimetic shimmering*), because they are all in some way connected to *CCWT*, and they offer an interesting opportunity to look at the performance from a trauma theory-point of view.

When the most important dramaturgical strategies are detected and explained with the help of the foregoing concepts, in the conclusion of this thesis I will focus on how these are interrelated, how they affect each other and to which result this finally leads.

Besides the theories, concepts and literature I just addressed, the most important source of information will be *Cock, Cock.. Who's There?*, being the main case study in this thesis. I will be working from a registration of the performance. This has been collected through direct contact with Elagoz. Through conversations with the maker herself, more insights in the why's and how's of the performance and the film were offered. But more so, I will be working from earlier interviews with her in, amongst others, *Theatermaker*, *Volkskrant* and *Trouw*.

I have collected all the sources either as a tangible book, journal or online as part of services such as ProQuest - Ebook Central or EBSCOhost. I gathered them mostly through using the online catalogue of Utrecht University and WorldCat. Also, I used Google Scholar and Google Books. Interviews, reviews and other media-related publications I mostly obtained through using the sources website and Blendle.

***Cock, Cock.. Who's There?* - the performance in black and white**

To be able to fully engage with the research, an insight in the actual staged content of the performance is helpful. This is why, before starting the analysis, there will now follow a detailed description of *CCWT*.²⁸ The style in writing will differ from the rest of this thesis, which is a deliberate choice: this is not a theoretical research, but a literal and - very important - personal record of the performance.

A woman called Violence Suck-O-Matic had a magnetic suction. There was only a single image boiling in Violence's skull. But what else would have been there. When all this had been burned. And even this image was brown from the edges. Violence believes that her cunt was a cave to be signed by white paints. And that after many years these cave paintings would be then analyzed by some grumpy academics. Violence was an amazing dig site for the cunt-archeologists. She only had to say the words "Gimme Shelter", and they would, if she gave first.

With these words, *Cock, Cock.. Who's There?* commences. The words - showed on a large screen in the back of the stage - are followed by 2:46 minutes of deformed moving images of a dancing, scantily dressed, unrecognizable Samira Elagoz - the protagonist, director, writer, filmmaker and -editor. The deformation of the image creates shapes similar to that of the vulva. The images are accompanied by 'You don't own me', sung by Lesley Gore in 1964, but slowed down to such extent the voice and music are almost unrecognizably low in tone. The images are coloured pink and purple, colours that represent eroticism and seduction.²⁹

After four minutes, the stage is lighted (in a very basic way), and we - the audience - see Elagoz sitting on a chair on the right front side of the stage, informally dressed, in a seemingly thoughtless posture. She points out this performance isn't really about 'the event' itself, but about the actions she took after it. She then welcomes us on the anniversary of her rape. It has now been three years, and she is ready for it. She 'invited' some closed ones, as you do with celebrations.

What follows is a sequence of short film clips of Elagoz's friends and family, either made by themselves or by her. Most of them describe their thoughts on and processing of the sexual abuse

²⁸ All the words and events described in this report, are based on the video registration of *Cock, Cock.. Who's There?* by Samira Elagoz. Theater Bellevue, Amsterdam, October 26, 2017. Online registration: <https://vimeo.com/215134443>.

²⁹ Eva Heller, *Psychologie de la couleur – effets et symboliques* (Paris: Pyramid, 2009), 179-184.

Elagoz suffered. The reactions vary from “I haven’t been thinking about it, honestly”, “I guess you took it seriously after all” and “I somewhere felt you decided it”, to “Think about the contrast, [...] it can be almost as damaging to be rejected and not wanted at all”. Elagoz’s mother speaks about giving her daughter sexual education, her grandmother about experiencing the same form of abuse, and the differences in generations in coping with this. A large break in this series of conversations, is the clip of her father. Elagoz never told her father about the abuse. Instead of talking about this, she asked him to recite an Arabic poem (“he teaches Arabic poetry as a coping mechanism for torture victims”), whilst she is filming. It is in almost harrowing contrast to the other fragments, his ignorance makes him very vulnerable and weak.

Nonchalantly situated in her chair, Elagoz recalls: “Ever since I was a young girl, I got a lot of attention”. She reminisces the moment when she realized that “with a few facial twitches, I look like I can take it hard”. What follows are pictures of Elagoz through the years, mostly selfies, and all sexually loaded (from provocative to bare naked), accompanied by a song about “Sam, the smart-ass massacre, who can take anything you tell ‘m to do”.

Back to the live stage, Elagoz tells that she became much more aware of her provocative way of behaving after the rape. Sex after the rape was “weird”, but intimacy was constantly on her mind. She became more and more curious “how I experience men, experiencing me”. She asked herself how she could research men’s reactions to her presence, without feeling at risk. Dating she found too much of a gamble, because: “There is no greater threat to women than men”. She started projects to explore the way she interacts with men in a performative way. This research started online, through Chatroulette. Pictures are shown of men’s first reaction on Elagoz’s scantily dressed body. Later, on a dating website, she asked for reaction videos, and shows those she received. Then the advertisement on Craigslist comes across³⁰, on which her documentary *Craigslist Allstars* was based and a lot of the ‘research material’ and film material for this performance came from. The concept is very clear - she films first encounters with men. The men knew they would be filmed.

Showed footage of encounters, which follows this introduction, is clustered in categories. The first collection of encounters is dedicated to the men who felt the urge to show Elagoz their skills. They almost all come across as pitiful and therefore somehow a bit vulnerable, just like her father before. We see a muscled fire juggler who isn’t able to extinguish the fire. We see a man who tells a story about an apparently very unique and expensive piece of art, which he actually does not know

³⁰ Which reads something similar to: "READ ME! Looking for strangers! - Hey I'm a 24-year-old girl making a short documentary film and i'm looking for strangers! The concept is that I meet you at your home and film how we get to know each other."

anything about, his speech is completely empty. We see a very intoxicated man trying to sing a song, and a simply peculiar man performing multiple types of 'comic' acts.

Then, it's the turn of "the dominant ones". Elagoz states she felt particularly drawn to this group of men. She refers to them as "men who exhibit some form of sexual intelligence". The men who 'star' in this collection of encounters are indeed dominant and prevalent. To give some examples of quotes: "I get quite sadistic sometimes [...] I like the excitement that I see in someones eyes when I'm into that forceful, powerful 'I will take you and I will eat you and I will consume you'" and: "What do you think of me now? "[...] I think you're interesting" "It's too bad that you're not a little bit more afraid." "Have you tried to make me afraid?" "Should I? I can do this easily".

Live again, Elagoz tells about not wanting to have a boyfriend after the rape (not in the last place because this deed was performed by her then boyfriend). But during the filming of the first encounters, a romantic relationship did develop (and lasts until this day). We see Elagoz preparing and on her way to the meeting with the stranger who later becomes her boyfriend, and the encounter itself, full of dancing, dressing up and intimacy. The images of the encounter are not only different from the other showed encounters in the entire atmosphere and actions, but also in editing. The fragments are following each other quite fast, and there is no talking involved, only upbeat music, contrasting the other fragments.

After this, Elagoz recapitulates on her 'first encounters project'. She has been all over the world and met a lot of different individuals. "I got to play around with expectations, but always had a sense of control". The project gave her a lot more than she expected on forehand. "And it's strange to think of the rape as a catalyst for all that. It is not something people like to hear. Rape is a loaded word. [...] While I am ready to share my story, people aren't always ready to hear it". Then, after a second of seeming hesitation, she tells about a second rape happening. Until this moment, we - again, the audience (some members excluded of course) - had no idea of this. It is a very loaded moment. She says she has had great difficulties telling this to others, because the reactions on the first event were already so strong. "It is almost embarrassing to admit." Again, the perpetrator was not a stranger, but a friend. This time, she immediately lodged a complaint to the local police station (in Tokyo, Japan).

The way this declaration was designed, is described by Elagoz as humiliating. The scene is reenacted, which is quite a big 'cut' in the performance, because now, two actors are on stage with Elagoz. At the police station, Elagoz had to report the event as detailed as could be. Another person would then

demonstrate every step with a doll representing Elagoz, and this is being captured in photos. One could say this piece of the performance is actually a reenactment of a reenactment. After the reenactment, we see footage of Elagoz in her hotel room, after the declaration, 24 hours after the abuse. She is very emotional, tired and aggressive towards the abuser. Then, we see her after three days, visibly relieved, the abuser is arrested and there has been found prove, so he has a good chance to end up in jail.

Live again, after cleaning the stage, Elagoz tells about the days after this event. She was in New York and very busy, and wondered, "Should I feel more affected?". But instead, she felt more motivated. The same thing happened as last time: she was craving for intimacy, and wondered how she could integrate this into her project. She decided to now go for the concept of a first kiss, innocent but intimate. This time, she chose for Tinder as her medium, asking the men: "How would you give a healing experience to a girl who has just had a bad one".

We see footage of Elagoz encountering and kissing different men, some awkwardly, some passionately, some very intimate and kind. The music for this part is 'Sweet Love for Planet Earth', by Fuck Buttons. After this, more fragments follow of the friends and family introduced in the beginning of the performance. It's a kind of continuation on what they have been saying in the beginning of the performance. Even the father is still reading his poem, now we see, in the midst of a giant mess which appears to be his living room. It is a disturbing, piteous sight. The fragments end with Elagoz, her mother and her grandmother. For the first time, we really see Elagoz break down, and cry in the arms of her mother. Grandma awkwardly sits aside, reassuring the poodle.

Elagoz rounds up. She doesn't have any conclusion or advice. "It happened, it might happen again, and this is how I dealt with it. [...] It is some kind of closure, that I'm sharing with you. And for now, I've gotten it all out. Well... Almost." Then, when we see multiple fragments of Elagoz spitting out what looks like semen, edited on the soundtrack of Lars von Trier's 'Antichrist'. This is a film concerning a woman who, after a horrific event, shows sexually violent and sadomasochistic behaviour.

Far away from here, there was a kingdom ruled by a king. There was also a woman, but some things are not meant to be told. The legend says that the destruction happened just before the final rising. And once again, one world disappeared from under the sun.

After these words, showed on the screen, *Cock, Cock.. Who's There?* ends with a last glance of the main characters, as a kind of credit roll, and, again, a waterfall of provoking selfies of Elagoz.

Chapter 1

Contextualising *Cock, Cock.. Who's There?*

When it comes to the placement of *Cock, Cock.. Who's There?* within the field of performance, a sense of hybridity is necessary. With only focussing on one specific genre or portal, a lot of elements and details can be overlooked. The performance can therefore not be captured in just one 'box'. Critics and scholars have designated the piece as documentary, confessional and autobiographical, of course all related, though divided by slight differences. Also, the performance is often referred to as an "unconventional way of processing trauma"³¹, which Elagoz herself likes to formulate as "exposure therapy".³² Both imply a kind of therapeutic value of the performance. The purpose of this chapter is to give *CCWT* a place within the field of the performing arts, to contextualize the performance and its content, and therewith indicate a framework for further analysis of the performance.

1.1 Theatre of the real

"Th[e] overlap and interplay between 'theatre' and 'reality,' the blurred boundary between the stage and the 'real' world"³³ is what Carol Martin discusses in her book *Theatre of the Real*. This title is also the name of the discourse she herewith develops. I would like to take this discourse as basic context for *CCWT*, because it touches upon almost every element Elagoz has integrated into her performance. But to further elaborate on this, a thorough description of this term is necessary.

The idiom of 'theatre of the real' covers a broad variety of theatrical forms that somehow include reality or make use of events from the real world. This can be done through 'recycling' reality, using materials like interviews, non-fictional film images or events happened in the (social) media. This reality can either be personal, social, political or historical. The historical correctness of this represented reality is not essential, as the makers reinterpret the events and represent them in their own way: they do not show *the* truth, but *a* truth. Examples of forms that can be described as 'theatre of the real' are documentary theatre, theatre of witness, reenactments, and autobiographical theatre.³⁴

³¹ A description of Elagoz' work often described to Elagoz herself, to which she actually objects: "We zien vrouwen nog altijd als onderdanig en passief," *de Standaard*, last modified March 5, 2018, http://www.standaard.be/cnt/dmf20180304_03390336.

³² Alejandra Espinosa, "'Cock, cock.. who's there': Samira Elagoz confronts the trauma of #metoo," *Glamcult*, last modified October 25, 2017, <https://glamcult.com/cock-cock-whos-there/>.

³³ Carol Martin, *Theatre of the Real* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 4.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, 5.

Interesting to see is how Martin discusses the origin of theatre of the real in the context of the upcoming of internet and social media, which also play a very big part in *CCWT*.

*Theatre of the real is born from a sea change in archiving brought on by digitization and the Internet. With the unprecedented growth of virtual entertainment and personal communication technology, our ubiquitous cultural experience of the real results from both live and virtual performances of the self and others in a variety of media. Facebook, YouTube, and reality TV serve as personal performance vehicles.*³⁵

Through digital and social media, Elagoz creates virtual versions of herself, through which she arranges the meetings, which function as a common thread throughout the performance.

In writing about theatre of the real, it is impossible not to mention the ambiguity surrounding this 'real'. In this segment of the paragraph, I will shortly emphasize the poststructuralist view on authenticity. It contains a shift in our perceptions of the real and how we deal with it, which relates to different engagements with fiction and fabrication.³⁶ I will first focus on autobiographical performance, because this is a suitable and concrete form within the discourse of theatre of the real.

In *Dictionary of the Theatre*, Patrice Pavis, besides defining it, problematizes autobiographical performance. He states applying Philippe Lejeune's definition of the autobiographical to theatre would be impossible, because "theatre is a present fiction taken on by imaginary characters other than the author, who have other concerns than simply telling their lives".³⁷ This is somewhat differently formulated in *The Routledge Dictionary of Performance and Contemporary Theatre*. Here is said that in autobiographical theatre, performers claim to be themselves, and to have exchanged the representation for the presentation of self. But, according to Pavis, as soon as this performance is repeated, the performer as only him or herself becomes an actor again, because in repetition hides remembrance. "There is a difference between the self that has experienced something and the self that related this past experience. (...) we are already in fiction, in autofiction".³⁸

This is a statement very similar to that of historian and literary scholar Paul John Eakin in *Fictions in Autobiography*. He states that although it might make us a bit uneasy, in autobiography (here in

³⁵ Carol Martin, *Theatre of the Real* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 5.

³⁶ Andy Lavender, *Performance in the Twenty-First Century: Theatres of Engagement* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 10.

³⁷ Patrice Pavis, *Dictionary of the Theatre: Terms, Concepts, and Analysis* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press Incorporated, 1998), 31.

³⁸ Patrice Pavis, *Routledge Dictionary of Performance and Contemporary Theatre* (Oxford: Routledge, 2016), 22.

linguistics) there is always the presence of fiction. “We want autobiography to be true, we expect it to be true more or less, and most of us are content to leave untested the validity of its claim to a basis in a verifiable fact”.³⁹ The reason for this always existing presence of fiction in autobiography is, according to Eakin, the fact that “autobiographical truth is not a fixed but an evolving content in an intricate process of self-discovery and self-creation”.⁴⁰ The events described in an autobiographical performance can not be other than shaped by memory and thus be (partly) fictional.

By the turn of the century, the avant-garde emphasis on the real body had been reconfigured, for the most part, into a poststructuralist emphasis on the constructed and authored body, whose hold on the real may be more tenuous than previously assumed.⁴¹ The body that is mentioned here, can be replaced by ‘self’, the self that cannot claim to always be real or truthful, especially not in the field of performance, marked by repetition. “We need to remember that the representation of self (in performance particularly) is a re-presentation, and often a strategic one”.⁴²

I think in *CCWT*, especially these last words are very important, considering the re-presentation of the self is very consciously constructed by Elagoz. This is why I think this side note-paragraph is essential in contextualizing this performance and placing it within the field of the performing arts. Elagoz puts it into words herself in the following manner: “When the material is placed on an editing table it already starts to lose its truthfulness. At the editing table the true story becomes something I can mould, and I think that was one of the more important parts for me, or perhaps one of the most relieving parts”.⁴³

1.2 Documentary theatre

Besides being trained as choreographer and dancer, and being an all-round performer, Elagoz is also dedicated to creating film. Her first short film *Four Kings* (2014), in which she individually meets four strangers she came in contact with after placing an ad on Craigslist⁴⁴, was a run-up to the widely praised and controversial *Craigslist Allstars*. In this documentary, Elagoz uses the same way and

³⁹ Paul John Eakin, *Fictions in Autobiography: Studies in the Art of Self-Invention* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 9.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, 3.

⁴¹ Liz Tomlin, *Acts and apparitions: Discourses on the real in performance practice and theory 1990–2010* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 80.

⁴² Deirdre Heddon, *Autobiography and Performance: Performing Selves* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 27-28.

⁴³ Penny Raferty, “Truth // Remembering Rape as Practice: An Interview with Samira Elagoz,” *Berlin Art Link*, January 8, 2018, <http://www.berlinartlink.com/2018/01/08/truth-remembering-rape-as-practice-an-interview-with-samira-elagoz/>.

⁴⁴ An online American network for free advertisements and forums on various topics.

concept to arrange one-on-one first encounters with a wide variety of men around the globe, and explores how the camera influences intimacy between two strangers.⁴⁵ Elagoz claims the meetings to be absolutely unscripted and real.

Recordings made in the process of filming this prize winning documentary are, as mentioned, presented throughout the entire duration of *CCWT*. Together with this, Elagoz also made use of interviews with friends and family, mostly in film-form, and video messages made by close acquaintances. The ads, emails and replies surrounding the encounters are also integrated in the performance.

The usage of these 'documents' - authentic recordings, pictures, spoken words - make that one could say *CCWT* is part of the discourse of documentary performance, which, following one of the most used (and discussed) definitions by Peter Weiss: "(...) makes use of authentic documentary material which it diffuses from the stage, without altering the contents, but in structuring the form".⁴⁶ In a special edition of *The Drama Review* on documentary theatre, Carol Martin stresses the importance of technology in contemporary documentary performance. It enables replication, and transmits knowledge.

*While documentary theatre remains in the realm of handcraft—people assemble to create it, meet to write it, gather to see it—it is a form of theatre in which technology is a primary factor in the transmission of knowledge. Here the technological postmodern meets oral-theatre culture. The most advanced means of replication and simulation are used to capture and reproduce “what really happened” for presentation in the live space of the theatre. Technology is often the initial generating component of the tripartite structure of contemporary documentary theatre: technology, text, and body.*⁴⁷

This comes forward in *CCWT* in many ways, given for example that it is clearly intermedial, and that the overall storyline of the encounters couldn't be made possible in the same way without the use of technology.⁴⁸ But the performance still fits - as Martin nicely puts it - within the "realm of handcraft", in terms of for example the process of creation, the physical gathering and the storytelling, all processes that (within this performance) require bodily action.

⁴⁵ "Craigslis Allstars," Film, Samira Elagoz, accessed March 19, 2018, <http://www.samiraelagoz.com/craigslis-allstars/>.

⁴⁶ Thomas Irmer, "A Search for New Realities: Documentary Theatre in Germany," *The Drama Review* 50, no. 3 (Fall 2006): 18.

⁴⁷ Carol Martin, "Bodies of Evidence," *The Drama Review* 50, no. 3 (Fall 2006): 9.

⁴⁸ On which I will come back in chapter 3.

1.3 Confessional performance and autobiography

Next to the use of documentary material, the particular combination of form and content in *CCWT* is very important in contextualizing and placing this performance within the field of performing arts. The first words that come to my mind are confession and feminism, and not in the least part because of the connection between these two.

Where once confession was inextricably linked to religion, and used as a formal admission of one's sins with repentance and desire of absolution, especially privately to a priest as a religious duty⁴⁹, it can also be used as a way to disclose personal, mostly intimate revelations. Elagoz entrusts her audience with very personal facts and stories. In detail she describes how the sexual abuse made her feel, and how she dealt with processing this. She shows very intimate footage of her loved ones, the men she met, and herself.

Confession can be seen as an autobiographical performative act, both focussed on a real life story, in which the one narrating it is also the one who experienced it. In theatre, the increase of the popularity of confessional and autobiographical performance occurred around the 1970's.⁵⁰ It was around then consciousness raising events were a common practice. The autobiographical was a sufficient form because of its personal and political potential. It was thankfully 'used' by oppressed groups and minorities, of which the women's rights movement was a large part.

*Located within and arising out of the second-wave feminist movement, autobiographical performance was regarded by women as a means to reveal otherwise invisible lives, to resist marginalisation and objectification and to become, instead, speaking subjects with self-agency; performance, then, as a way to bring into being a self.*⁵¹

Deirdre Heddon, as cited here, uses the term 'political potential', because of the fact the subjects addressed in these performances, the everyday live of women for example, were not subjects that were normally talked about in a political way, let alone in art. The entry of the explicitly personal into the aesthetic should in itself be considered a political gesture.⁵² Consciousness raising in the second

⁴⁹ "Confession", *Oxford Dictionary*, accessed 17 March 2018, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/confession>.

⁵⁰ Deirdre Heddon, *Autobiography and Performance: Performing Selves* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 3.

⁵¹ *Ibidem*.

⁵² *Ibidem*, 21.

wave of feminism, for example in the way of making the personal public in performances like this, changed a lot for women in a personal and political way.

In specifically searching for a definition of 'autobiography', for me, the clearest attempt to come to a basic, general definition of the term - even though it is somewhat time-worn - comes from Philippe Lejeune. In his *On Autobiography* (in translation of Katherine Leary), he describes autobiography as "a retrospective (...) narrative produced by a real person concerning his own existence, focusing on his individual life, in particular on the development of his personality". He then gives four different categories that are inherent to this definition: the form of language, the subject that's treated (individual life, story of a personality), the situation of the author: the author (whose name refers to a real person) and the narrator are identical, and the position of the narrator (the narrator and the principal character are identical).⁵³ In this instance we could say *CCWT* is a monologue in first person⁵⁴, concerning a true life story focussed on a case of sexual abuse, written, narrated and experienced by the principal character.

1.4 Autobiographical performance vs. therapeutic performance

Deirdre Heddon speaks in her book *Autobiography and Performance* not only about the link between feminism and autobiography (as mentioned before), she also treats the subject of psychoanalysis and trauma in relation to autobiography, or what she calls here, testimony. "The primary effect of trauma is understood to be a 'wound' to the sense of self".⁵⁵ When having endured a traumatic event, as for example the sexual abuse Elagoz has suffered, subjectivity is often demolished. In other words, the subject experiences feelings of powerlessness, insecurity or the lack of agency. It is the recovery of this subjectivity, the self, that enables recovery of the traumatic event. "In psychoanalytic therapy, this recovery is linked to speaking about the traumatic experience, an impossible task in fact, because trauma is precisely an event that cannot be made sense of"⁵⁶, and therefore, the work of psychoanalysis is to enable comprehension by narrativization. The event will be reconstructed and transmitted. "Words provide a 'therapeutic balm' as the 'unconscious language of repetition' (...) is rather 'replaced by a conscious language that can be repeated in structured settings'. In this sense, narrative memory is a performative act that enables the recreation of a 'self'".⁵⁷

⁵³ Philippe Lejeune, *On Autobiography* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 4-5.

⁵⁴ More about this in Chapter 2.

⁵⁵ Deirdre Heddon, *Autobiography and Performance: Performing Selves* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 55.

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*, 56.

In 'traditional' psychotherapy, this narrativization of traumatic experiences takes place between a client and a therapist. The reason for this is the need for a witness to make this approach work. This witness is of course also present when it comes to performances of this testimony in a theatrical setting: the audience. Theatrical testimonies - autobiographical performances - have therapeutic benefits for the performer, and besides that also create a sense of intersubjective relationship with the witness, the audience, which extends the performance beyond the performer.⁵⁸ This very much relates to *CCWT*, because Elagoz addresses everything she says on stage directly to the audience, with which she invites the audience to take of the role of involved listener.

Autobiographical performance is related to a standardized way of psychotherapy: dramatherapy. Dramatherapy comes in many different forms, and I would like to go into this a bit more, just to stress the relationship between autobiographical performance and processing trauma, which is obviously present in the performance in question.

1.5 Dramatherapy and Self-Revelatory Performance

There is quite some discussion about the origins of dramatherapy. A lot of sources point to psychodrama as being the fundament of dramatherapy. Although the term of psychodrama was already established in 1921 by J.L. Moreno, it can better be seen as a method amongst methods, under the overarching term of dramatherapy.

The first use of the two terms together actually was in 1917 already, in *Principles of Drama-Therapy*, published in New York by Stephen F. Austin. Austin explains how theatre can be used to ease depressed feelings and suggests ways to scientifically create structures of a play that may aim towards this.⁵⁹ Dramatherapy is now, as stated earlier, fully acknowledged as a psychotherapeutic practice. It is defined as a method of psychotherapy which uses the dramatic process to help people during times of stress, emotional upheaval or disability.

*In dramatherapy, the employment of drama and theatre as a medium for change during the course of illness, crisis or uncertainty, or to facilitate personal growth is intentional, and is the essence of the approach. This intention differentiates it from other dramatic activity.*⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Deirdre Heddon, *Autobiography and Performance: Performing Selves* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 59.

⁵⁹ Clive Holmwood, *Drama Education and Dramatherapy: Exploring the space between disciplines* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 30.

⁶⁰ Dorothy Langley, *An introduction to Dramatherapy* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2006), 1.

The term 'intentional' comes back in a lot of attempts to define dramatherapy. *The British Association of Dramatherapists* offers the following definition: "(...) the intentional use of healing aspects of drama and theatre as the therapeutic process. It is a method of working and playing that uses action methods to facilitate creativity, imagination, learning, insight and growth".⁶¹ US dramatherapist Renée Emunah parallels aspects of this:

*Drama therapy is the intentional and systematic use of drama/theatre processes to achieve psychological growth and change. The tools are derived from theatre, the goals are rooted in psychotherapy. Although drama therapy can be practised within the theoretical framework of almost any existing school of psychotherapy, it also has its own unique heritage; its conceptual roots can be traced to various multidisciplinary sources, the most obvious of which is theatre.*⁶²

So shortly, dramatherapy is involvement in drama with a healing intention. Dramatherapy facilitates change through dramatic processes. It uses the potential of drama to reflect and transform life experiences to enable clients to express and work through problems they are encountering or to maintain a client's well-being and health.⁶³

Dorothy Langley states in *An Introduction to Dramatherapy* that dramatherapy explicitly focuses on the dramatic process as being helpful in processing traumatic experiences or mental problems of other sort, and that the final enactment and the standard of the performance is of much less importance.⁶⁴ This is not the case in every method within this kind of therapy.

An example of this is the method of Autobiographical Therapeutical Performance (ATP). Dramatherapist and scholar Susana Pendzik defines ATP as a form of dramatherapy that involves the development of a performance based on personal material, presented in front an audience, and conceived with a therapeutic aim.⁶⁵ So here, the focus actually is on the final performance (in other

⁶¹ British Association of Dramatherapists, *Curriculum Guidance for the pre-registration, education and training of Dramatherapists*, 2011, 4.

⁶² Renée Emunah, *Acting for Real: Drama Therapy Process, Technique, and Performance* (New York: Brunner-Routledge, 1994), 3.

⁶³ Phil Jones, *Drama as Therapy: Theory, practice and research* (London: Routledge, 2007), 8.

⁶⁴ Dorothy Langley, *An introduction to Dramatherapy* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2006), 1.

⁶⁵ Susana Pendzik. *The poiesis and praxis of autobiographical therapeutic theatre*, keynote speech, 13th Summer Academy of the German Association of Theatre-Therapy (DGFT), Remscheid, Germany, 2013, https://www.academia.edu/12635258/The_Poiesis_and_Praxis_of_Autobiographical_Therapeutic_Theatre.

words, it doesn't stay in the 'classroom'), although the 'quality' of the performance is not yet of the greatest importance.

The method of dramatherapy in which the attention is on the quality of the final outcome of the theatrical performance, created by the autobiographical stories of the practitioners, is that of the Self-Revelatory Performance, often abbreviated to Self-Rev, developed by Renée Emunah. She defines it as follows:

*Self-Revelatory Performance is a form of drama therapy and theatre in which a performer creates an original theatrical piece out of the raw material of current life issues.*⁶⁶

In so far, nothing new, really. But here, the focus lies on the processing of the mental issues as much as it lies on the question how to communicate this to the audience. The processing is consciously called 'working through', in a means of diving into the autobiographical material, untangling the issues and making an effort to better comprehend it. Emunah calls this psychological self-examination. The characteristic of Self-Rev that really makes it stand out, is that the issues are not only worked through, but the piece is worked on, until it achieves a theatrical quality worthy of presentation before an audience.⁶⁷

In her essay on Self-Revelatory Performance, Emunah gives a list of essential characteristics of this kind of therapy and performance. Among those are "involves working with personal material, which is currently 'live'", and "communicates with an audience, and reaches for universality of human experience/emotions". This latter feature I would like to link to the approach of Deirdre Heddon I treated earlier, where she points out the regaining of subjectivity through autobiographical performance, and the development of intersubjective feelings within the audience by sharing those experiences or stories.

There are however important differences between Self-Rev and non-therapeutic autobiographical theatre. In Self-Rev there is an unambiguous attempt at 'working through' the presented material. Autobiographical theatre on the other hand, involves dramatic storytelling or dramatization of personal life material, but without a conscious aim of healing or transforming this material.⁶⁸ Of course autobiographical performance has the ability to heal, but it is not the most important goal.

⁶⁶ Renée Emunah, "Self-revelatory performance: A form of drama therapy and theatre", *Drama Therapy Review* 1, no. 1 (January 2015): 71.

⁶⁷ *Ibidem*, 79.

⁶⁸ *Ibidem*, 72.

And, in Self-Rev, the performer focuses on current issues or dilemmas, whereas autobiographical theatre often revolves around stories or experiences from the past. Self-Rev issues may well stem from the past, and pertain to ongoing life themes, but the focus is on how these issues impact the performer's present life.⁶⁹ Although *CCWT* according to me more leans towards non-therapeutic autobiographical performance (because creating the performance was the most important goal, not the healing that's involved), it also very much relates to Self-Rev, because it focuses on Elagoz' current life issues and dilemmas. She really 'worked through' the presented material, as an aesthetic part of the performance itself, and as research - this took her four years. It also reaches for universality of the audience's experience and emotions, and did in the end contribute to the healing process.

1.6 Trauma-tragedy

This chapter will be concluded with introducing a last form of theatre of the real, a form that is highly applicable to the topic of *CCWT*. In discussing this sensitive matter and how it is approached in *CCWT*, the concept of trauma-tragedy, by Patrick Duggan, offers multiple analytical tools and insights. Dr. Duggan - now senior lecturer in Theatre and Performance and director of the Institution of Performance and Urban Living at the University of Surrey - promoted in 2012 with his thesis *Trauma-Tragedy: Symptoms of Contemporary Performance*. This publication will also be leading in the fourth and final chapter of this thesis.

The concept of *trauma-tragedy*, the main term coined by Duggan, is a valuable new theory in the field of performance and trauma. The concept withholds not specifically a genre, but functions more as a means of a tool of analysis, mainly analysing the performativity of trauma in a 'traumatised world', a world increasingly absorbed into and exposed to trauma⁷⁰, in numerous ways and on numerous levels.⁷¹

Duggan presents two ways of understanding the concept of trauma-tragedy. On the one hand, "trauma-tragedy can be thought of as a model of contemporary performance as cultural symptom of a decathected, individualized and flattened Western society at the start of the twenty-first century".

⁷² He cites Bernard Stiegler in explaining this characterization of modern society, who argues that we

⁶⁹ Ibidem.

⁷⁰ This can very much be related to the movement of #MeToo.

⁷¹ Patrick Duggan, *Trauma-tragedy: Symptoms of contemporary performance* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), 2.

⁷² Ibidem, 174.

live in a consumer society, in which individualisation is flattened, which entails a “de-catheted gap”⁷³ between event, the spreading and receiving of its existence, and the actual experience of the event. This for a great part has to do with living in a world where media predominate society, now even more than in the times Duggan focuses on, considering the unprecedented uprising of social media. Trauma-tragedy opens up a schism in this media-saturated world, and evokes a sense of presence, of being there, experiencing. “This (...) offers or stimulates a catheted response to the world around us which is not possible in other forms of art”.⁷⁴ In *CCWT*, media and actual presence are very much intertwined, opening up this schism, whilst also making use of both sides of the medal. On the other hand, trauma-tragedy can be seen as a tool, to be able to actually address the distance between experience and presence in our society and use it to attend to trauma in renewed ways. Trauma can be made tangible, or ‘real’, for the audience through the kinesthetic connection existing between spectator and performer.

Duggan tends to focus specifically on ‘experiential’ performance, a term used by Sarah Kane to describe her work. This same Kane has quite a large role in this publication, as Duggan treats thoroughly not only *Blasted*, but also *4.48 Psychosis* and *Cleansed*. These pieces have in common the explicit and concessionless words and actions of violence, sex and pain. Another key performance in the research is *Untitled (Syncope)* by Kira O’Reilly, in which she inflicts wounds on herself, naked, in attendance of the audience. But the concept of trauma-tragedy does not just imply the absolute presence of extreme images, pain or violence. It does however present trauma in ways that reflect the structures of trauma itself. “It is a mode of performance that attends to trauma through one or several of its key rhythms, for example: cyclical/repetitious, paradoxical, dichotomous, polysemic, uncomfortable, visceral, emotional, kinaesthetic, uncanny, ‘real’”.⁷⁵

In chapter 4 I will focus on two of these structures, which I find most applicable to *CCWT*, and use them as an analytical guide to research how these structures of trauma are present in the performance and what their effects are.

1.7 Conclusion

To set a steady ground for further research, in this chapter the theatrical context of *CCWT* was discussed, aiming to answer the following subquestion: *What is the history of the relationship between the performing arts and (sexual) trauma and how can CCWT be positioned within this*

⁷³ Ibidem, 175.

⁷⁴ Ibidem, 173.

⁷⁵ Ibidem, 174.

context? Concluding, the performance can be considered a performance within the legacy of Carol Martin's 'theatre of the real', participating in traditions of documentary theatre, confessional and autobiographical theatre, Self-Revelatory Performance and trauma-tragedy. Most of these discussed contexts relate to each other closely, in the close relationship to trauma and therapy, in the sense of being originated in the earlier feminist movements, in making the personal public, and some in the tradition of being a monologue. I will use these contexts as a hybrid analytical framework, that I will consult in analysing the following themes of narrative, intermediality and structures and rhythms.

Chapter 2

Speaking about narrative...

Now we discussed the framework of performing arts surrounding *Cock, Cock.. Who's There?*, it is time to start analysing the dramaturgical strategies Elagoz used to approach the theme of (sexual) trauma. The first subject to analyse is the narrative. Which forms are chosen, why, and what are the consequences of this?

2.1 Autobiographical monologue - The Self (and the Other)

'Mónos' (μόνος) and 'lógos' (λόγος) - alone and speech - together form 'monologue': a speech of extended length and internal coherence, delivered by a single speaker.⁷⁶ According to this very concise definition, there would be no doubt in qualifying *Cock, Cock.. Who's There?* as such a form of speech. However, Clare Wallace - drama scholar and editor of *Monologues: Theatre, Performance, Subjectivity* - states in her introduction to this chunky collection of essays that "the question of how to define monologue in anything more than the most basic of ways opens the usual Pandora's Box of problems attendant on generic criticism and also brings into view a number of contradictions"⁷⁷, such as the position of the speaker and the listener, which for example characterizes the difference between a soliloquy and a monologue. So before jumping to conclusions, let's dive deeper into the multifaceted concept of the monologue.

Monologue dramas and performances have rarely followed the conventions of realism and naturalism, the perfect illusion of reality. In such types of performance, the monologue was mostly only accepted when warranted by circumstances as dreams, or lyrical outbursts.⁷⁸ Hans-Thies Lehmann quotes Gilles Deleuze in comparing a monologue in classical drama with a cinematic close-up. The gaze of the spectator experiences an *espace quelconque*, an *any-space*. The close-up ruptures the realistic impression of a space continuum.⁷⁹ Of course, in contemporary theatre, it is not an exception to break the fourth wall and reveal the artificiality of the theatre. In the case of *Cock, Cock.. Who's There?*, it is neither a disruption of realism, nor a way to estrange the audience,

⁷⁶ "Monologue," in *The Oxford Companion to Theatre and Performance*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199574193.001.0001/acref-9780199574193-e-2688>.

⁷⁷ Clare Wallace, "Monologue Theatre, Solo Performance and Self as Spectacle," in *Monologues: Theatre, Performance, Subjectivity*, ed. Clare Wallace (Prague: Litteraria Pragensia, 2006), 3.

⁷⁸ Patrice Pavis, *Dictionary of the Theatre: Terms, Concepts, and Analysis* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press Incorporated, 1998), 218.

⁷⁹ Hans-Thies Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre*, trans. Karen Jürs-Munby (London: Routledge, 2006), 127.

but the telling of a true autobiographical story by one person, solo, with the audience as direct consignees.

Catherine McLean-Hopkins coins the term *autologue*⁸⁰: the exposure of the interior, personal world of a performer to an audience in the form of a monologue, "a self-narrated performance of the self - a performance practice that both *cites* the self as remembered iterations [...] and *sites* the self with the theatrical frameworks of space, time and presence".⁸¹ This term describes the genre of *CCWT*'s narrative in the most complete manner, because Elagoz does 'cite' herself, by dedicating her monologue to nothing but her own experiences and memories. At the same time, she 'sites' herself, by uncovering⁸² her own life story, live, on a stage, directly addressing a number of observers.

This *self* is one of the most important concepts when grasping the narrative of *CCWT*. The self can be described as a person's essential being that distinguishes them from others, especially considered as the object of introspection or reflexive action⁸³, or the union of elements (such as body, emotions, thoughts, and sensations) that constitute the individuality and identity of a person.⁸⁴

In solo autobiographical performance, the subject of the performance and the performing subject are the same. To realise such a performance, the *self* has to be in dialogue with the *self*.⁸⁵ In this process, the self divides in two 'I's, the self that is performing (the siting self) and the self that is performed (the citing self). The latter is the self as a performative construct, with that very performativity revealed in autobiographical performances that perform the self. This is the performance of performativity.⁸⁶ Next to this, there is of course also the self who lives beyond the performance, who is not actually to be witnessed on stage. To make this clearer; in *CCWT*, Samira Elagoz consists of at least three 'selves': Elagoz as a living, thinking, feeling creature on stage, Elagoz as a personality in her (first-person) narrative and Elagoz backstage or in the car back home.

Then, something that has to be made clear: the self is inseparable from others. The self is never a self-sufficient construct, since the self is always already a relation.⁸⁷ As John-Paul Eakin wrote: "Our

⁸⁰ Catherine McLean-Hopkins, "Performing Autologues: Citing/Siting the Self in Autobiographic Performance," in *Monologues: Theatre, Performance, Subjectivity*, ed. Clare Wallace (Prague: Litteraria Pragensia, 2006), ?.

⁸¹ *Ibidem*.

⁸² In the film images sometimes even literally, but on this I will come back later.

⁸³ "Self," *Oxford Dictionary*, accessed 2 April 2018, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/self>.

⁸⁴ "Self," *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, accessed 2 April 2018, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/self>.

⁸⁵ Deirdre Heddon, "Beyond the self: Autobiography as dialogue," in *Monologues: Theatre, Performance, Subjectivity*, ed. Clare Wallace (Prague: Litteraria Pragensia, 2006), ?.

⁸⁶ Deirdre Heddon, "Performing the Self" *M/C: A Journal of Media and Culture* 5, no. 5 (2002) <http://www.media-culture.org.au/mc/0210/Heddon.html>.

⁸⁷ Deirdre Heddon, "Beyond the self: Autobiography as dialogue," in *Monologues: Theatre, Performance, Subjectivity*, ed. Clare Wallace (Prague: Litteraria Pragensia, 2006), 163.

lives never stand free of the lives of others".⁸⁸ It is also almost not possible to tell a life story without the involvement of others.

Although *CCWT* is a highly autobiographical performance, focussed on the experiences of the narrator, who in her turn narrates this life story in first-person, we may not forget there are also other voices involved in the performance. Others appear in a literal way, for example in the video images, on which I will further elaborate in chapter 3. In these images, friends and family have their say on Elagoz' situation and the traumatic events. They are being interviewed by Elagoz, or they created a video themselves. Next to them, of course there are the men involved in the outtakes of Elagoz' documentary *Craigslist Allstars*. They form a large and important part of the performance, both considering the volume of the timeframe that is reserved for them, and the content of their actions and sayings, which are of great importance for the subject-matter of the performance and Elagoz' 'research'. This fact shows the self is not only constructed by the self, but also by others.

Next to this, there is a small reenactment scene in the performance, involving two actors. The scene resembles Elagoz filing the police report of the second rape, at a police station in Japan. It is actually a meta-reenactment: they act out the procedure of the declaration, a component of which was a compulsory reenactment of the rape with a lifesize doll. The two police officers were represented by two Asian-featured actors, who had been on the first row all the time. This sudden reenactment was of large impact on the clear system of alternation of video and monologue. The monologue-form, combined with the video, is a very clear and powerful choice. The reenactment and the sudden presence of two actors next to our protagonist was quite a harsh interruption of this 'system'.

2.2 Constitutive processes of autobiographical subjectivity

To further analyse the function of the autobiographical, first-person narrative in *CCWT*, in this paragraph I will research how the subjectivity of the main character in this genre and this performance is formed. For this, I will use a framework developed by linguists and experts in Women's Studies Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson. In their book *Reading Autobiography*, Smith and Watson theorise the genre of life narrative,⁸⁹ or autobiography. They distil five components - 'constitutive processes'⁹⁰ - that together shape autobiographical subjectivity, the construct of

⁸⁸ Paul John Eakin, *How Our Lives Become Stories: Making Selves* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999) 159.

⁸⁹ Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson (ed.), *Interfaces: Women, Autobiography, Image, Performance* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 9.

⁹⁰ Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson (ed.), *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 15.

selfhood: memory (the psychic), experience (the temporal), identity (the spatial), embodiment (the material), and agency (the transformative).⁹¹

Autobiographical performance or life narration will always be based on memories, fragments of experience, an interpretation of the past, it is never a replica of the event itself.⁹² The re-interpretation of actions and events is what characterizes the component of *memory* in life narrative. It echoes the earlier mentioned statement of Eakin, on how inevitable it is to detect fiction in autobiography. Literary scholar (inter alia) Mieke Bal even states: “With a “first-person” narrative, the hero cannot be identified with the narrator, because the moment of writing down one’s adventures is never the moment of experiencing them”.⁹³ Elagoz plays actively with this fact. “When the material is placed on an editing table it already starts to lose its truthfulness”⁹⁴, she stated in an interview, and this is exactly what also happens to memory and so to life narrative. “[...] one could say through cinematic means life can be edited into a new reality”.⁹⁵ For Elagoz, so she states, this actually was a relieving experience, to be able to mould the traumatic events. She used fiction as an important tool in the process of creating the piece and therefore in some way coping with the memory of the assaults.

Secondly, the practice of *experience* makes a subject and an identity out of a person. Experience makes that one gets to know oneself as a subject existing through these experiences attached to social statuses and identities.⁹⁶ As historian Joan W. Scott puts it: “It is not individuals who have experience, but subjects who are constituted through experience”.⁹⁷ It doesn’t really need an explanation that *CCWT* is in its totality build on the experiences of the narrator/protagonist, which have had a great impact on her identity.

Identity can be seen as the positioning of subjects, and can be put into words through many different categories, such as gender, ethnicity, sexuality, nationality, ideology, etcetera. As these characteristics and the social organizations and symbolic interactions are always in flux, identity is

⁹¹ Ibidem, 49.

⁹² Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson (ed.), *Interfaces: Women, Autobiography, Image, Performance* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 9.

⁹³ Mieke Bal, *A Mieke Bal Reader* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 5.

⁹⁴ Penny Raferty, “Truth // Remembering Rape as Practice: An Interview with Samira Elagoz,” *Berlin Art Link*, January 8, 2018, <http://www.berlinartlink.com/2018/01/08/truth-remembering-rape-as-practice-an-interview-with-samira-elagoz/>.

⁹⁵ Ibidem.

⁹⁶ Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson (ed.), *Interfaces: Women, Autobiography, Image, Performance* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 10.

⁹⁷ Joan W. Scott, “Experience”, in *Women, Autobiography, Theory: A Reader*, ed. S. Smith and J. Watson (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1998), 60.

something temporary, unfixed.⁹⁸ For example - related to memory and experience - Elagoz's identity underwent changes after going through the traumatic events she addresses. It has been proven that trauma changes the way one thinks and acts on a deep neurological level, this counts for most (if not all) people who suffered a traumatic experience.⁹⁹ I will come back to this matter in paragraph 4.4.

Then, all autobiographical narrators are *embodied* subjects. The material body is a site of autobiographical knowledge, and the apparatus that creates memory.¹⁰⁰ In *Interfaces: Women, Autobiography, Image, Performance*, Smith and Watson give four types of embodiments that are all present in subjects that narrate their lives: the body as neurochemical system, the anatomical body, the imaginary anatomy (social beliefs about the body) and the sociopolitical body, a set of cultural attitudes and codes attached to the public meanings of bodies that underwrites relationships of power.¹⁰¹ Especially this latter type is interesting in relation to *CCWT*, because it's this concept of power that was violated by the assaults, and that is precisely the main theme of the narrative. At the same time, the performance for Elagoz is also the regainment of this power over the body, which makes the physical presence of the anatomical body which was the object of violation extra charged and important.

Finally, there is the concept of *agency*, here control over self-representation, more broader the capacity of subjects to act independently and make their own choices.¹⁰² Autobiography can be seen as a narrative of agency. I will come back to this, and on how this relates to *CCWT*, in the following paragraph.

2.3 Agency and personal narrative

Personal narrative is omnipresent. It is an elemental, ubiquitous and consequential part of our lives.¹⁰³ We tell stories - from unremarkable to unbelievable ones - and share experiences from our lives with the people surrounding us, the whole day through. Personal narrative is what makes a person feel agency, through which one can express one's identity.

⁹⁸ Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson (ed.), *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 33.

⁹⁹ Bessel van der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score: Mind, Brain and Body in the Transformation of Trauma* (New York: Viking Penguin, 2014), 3.

¹⁰⁰ Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson (ed.), *Interfaces: Women, Autobiography, Image, Performance* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 10.

¹⁰¹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰² Chris Barker, *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice* (London: SAGE Publications, 2000), 448.

¹⁰³ Kristin Langellier and Eric Peterson, "Shifting Contexts in Personal Narrative Performance", in *The SAGE Handbook of Performance Studies*, ed. D. Soyini Madison and J. Hamera (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2006), 151.

*By staging the personal narrative, claiming one's life in public, the performer claims that his or her life is worthy of attention. This makes autobiographical performance both an ideal genre for redistributing power and a locus for continued struggles with the inequitable distribution of power. In other words, the performer makes space for a voice formerly excluded.*¹⁰⁴

A good example of this is the earlier mentioned movement that occurred around the 1970's, of women's rights movements and consciousness raising events, that reached for personal narrative as a tool to (re)claim agency, identity and empowerment as a woman. It also corresponds with aspects of Self-Rev performance as a means to process traumatic events. The process of narrativization enables a sense of subjective agency, inserting it retrospectively to the event where that very agency was destroyed.¹⁰⁵ Clearly, this relates to *CCWT*: the performance arose out of a personal need for regaining agency.

2.4 Conclusion

CCWT can be characterized as monologue, more specific as autologue: the exposure of the interior, personal world of a performer to an audience in the form of a monologue. In solo autobiographical performance, the subject of the performance and the performing subject are the same. To realise such a performance, the *self* has to be in dialogue with the *self*. This autobiographical subjectivity is constructed by memory, experience, identity, embodiment and agency. This last component is of most value to answer the subquestion of this chapter: *What does the chosen form of narrative and narration signify in this case of performing sexual trauma?* Performing personal narrative, as is the case here, can be used as a tool to reclaim agency, identity and empowerment, which it strongly does in *CCWT*.

¹⁰⁴ Lynn Miller and Jacqueline Taylor, "The Constructed Self: Strategic and Aesthetic Choices in Autobiographical Performance", in *The SAGE Handbook of Performance Studies*, ed. D. Soyini Madison and J. Hamera (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2006), 178.

¹⁰⁵ Kelly Oliver, *Witnessing: Beyond Recognition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 93.

Chapter 3

Intermedial interplay

Up until now, in this thesis, *Cock, Cock.. Who's There?* is analyzed as being an autobiographical performance with a slight therapeutical function, an mono- or (more precise) autologue and a personal narrative uttered by a solo performer. Not explicitly mentioned though, is that almost fifty percent of the performance occurs on the large screen situated behind Elagoz, in the form of film fragments. The content of these fragments - as mentioned earlier throughout this thesis - varies between interviews with or messages by Elagoz's fellows about the abuse, to the images of Elagoz visiting and sometimes being intimate with mostly unknown men.

Part of these last mentioned images derive from recordings made in the context of Elagoz's documentary film *Craigslist Allstars*. Elagoz does stress though, that this documentary and the performance are absolutely separate creations.¹⁰⁶ In the documentary, the sexual abuse was totally absent, where for the performance, it was the starting point. For her, this make the two creations two completely different experiences, and I agree. This is why I will focus on the images shown in *CCWT*, and leave *Craigslist Allstars* aside.

Not only the content of the screenings will be treated in this chapter, even more important is the role of these screenings within the performance. In this chapter, I will focus on the basic notion of intermediality in the performance, the performativity of the screen, and on the way of perceiving - with as main concept the *gaze* - focussing mostly on the role of gender in this.

3.1 Multi- or intermedial?

*Intermediality refers to the interconnectedness of modern media of communication. As means of expression and exchange, the different media depend on and refer to each other, both explicitly and implicitly; they interact as elements of particular communicative strategies [...].*¹⁰⁷

In *CCWT*, the interaction between the live and the mediated is one of the most important distinctives. The two elements are deeply intertwined, the live performance in providing explanation and clarification, and the mediated, pre-recorded in providing exemplification and visualization (and

¹⁰⁶ Samira Elagoz, personal conversation, May 1, 2018.

¹⁰⁷ Klaus Bruhn Jensen, *The International Encyclopedia of Communication Theory and Philosophy*, 4th ed., s.v. "Intermediality" (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2016), 972.

sometimes vice versa). One could say this performance is a multimedial performance, on which I agree. Multimediality refers to the occurrence where there are multiple media present in one and the same object.¹⁰⁸ To identify this performance as being intermedial is just one step further into the interconnectedness of the media, as intermediality refers to the correlation of media in the sense of mutual influence.¹⁰⁹ Theatre scholars Freda Chapple and Chiel Kattenbelt's thesis is that the intermedial is a space where the boundaries soften, in-between and within a mixing of spaces, media, and realities. They locate intermediality at a meeting point in-between the performers, the observers, and the confluence of the media involved in a performance. "Intermediality is a powerful and potentially radical force which operates in-between performer and audience, in-between theatre, performance and other media, and in-between realities - with theatre providing a staging space for the performance of intermediality".¹¹⁰

This mode of in-betweenness is a recurring concept in publications on intermedial performance. Professor in Theatre Studies Kati Röttger tries to grasp this concept in using the meta-picture of a vortex, stating that the in-between is a never fixed force powering a circular movement of transmission that takes place in intermedial performance.¹¹¹ The final outcome she defends is that a theatrical performance in itself is an intermedial process, an interplay of media, instead of a hypermedium (which lacks this in-between).

In this latter statement, the definition of media is very broad, varying from text to performer to props (very bluntly exemplified). Does the use of pre-recorded film projected on a screen (combined with live performance) by itself and by definition makes a performance intermedial? *CCWT* could be well identified as a multimedia performance, where multiple media occur in one and the same object.¹¹² Of course, the borders between multimediality and intermediality are fluid. The difference hides in the interaction and -relation between the media.

I consider *CCWT* a multimedial and an intermedial performance. Although the aesthetic interaction between live and mediated media is not necessarily very dynamic, the live and the mediated would

¹⁰⁸ Chiel Kattenbelt, "Intermediality in Theatre and Performance: Definitions, Perceptions and Medial Relationships," *Culture, Language and Representation VI* (2008): 20.

¹⁰⁹ Ibidem, 20-21.

¹¹⁰ Freda Chapple and Chiel Kattenbelt, "Key Issues in Intermediality in theatre and performance," in *Intermediality in Theatre and Performance*, ed. Freda Chapple and Chiel Kattenbelt (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006), 12.

¹¹¹ Kati Röttger, "The mystery of the in-between: A methodological approach to "Intermedial Performance Analysis", 2010, <http://www.uva.nl/binaries/content/documents/personalpages/r/o/k.e.rottger/nl/tabblad-vier/tabblad-vier/cpitem%5B2%5D/asset?1360854346985>.

¹¹² Chiel Kattenbelt, "Intermediality in Theatre and Performance: Definitions, Perceptions and Medial Relationships," *Culture, Language and Representation VI* (2008): 22.

be incomplete without each other. It is not only the combining of various media, but messages that they bring that are intrinsically linked and that complement each other, above all in the sense of making the invisible visible, which is of great impact on Elagoz's story and the perception of it by the audience. She does not only tell about certain events, persons or encounters, but it is actually shown to the audience, which deepens the experience and the understanding that comes with this.

3.2 The locus of mediation

In this paragraph I will focus on the screen, being an important part of the performance, a medium that clarifies and illustrates what is been said on stage, and a medium that tells stories of its own.

In *Visuality in the Theatre: The Locus of Looking*, Maaïke Bleeker quotes Kaja Silverman, proposing to imagine the 'screen' "as the repertoire of representations by means of which our culture figures all of those many varieties of 'difference' through which social identity is inscribed".¹¹³ In *Male Subjectivity at the Margins*, Silverman herself refers to Jacques Lacan when she talks about the screen. He distinguishes the 'image' and the 'screen', the screen being the group of images through which identity is constituted. So in fact, the screen at issue is not an actual screen, but the "locus of mediation".¹¹⁴ The process whereby the subject becomes a picture, involves three terms: subject, screen and gaze.¹¹⁵ These terms will all come by in one way or the other in the next two paragraphs.

As mentioned before, the actual, tangible screen¹¹⁶ is situated behind Elagoz. Aesthetically, there isn't anything extraordinary about the screen itself. It is not formed in any artistic way, it is a screen as there are many of them in the world. The staging of the screen on the other hand is interesting to analyse. With staging, I'm referring to the placing of someone or something (in this case, both) in front of an observer, or a number of those. Staging oneself in front of an audience creates a performative situation.¹¹⁷ Another characteristic of a performative situation, is that, because of this process of staging and constituting itself, it refers to and reflects on itself by definition. In other words, it is self-referential, and self-reflexive. This naturally then also counts for staging a screen.

¹¹³ Maaïke Bleeker, *Visuality in the Theatre: The Locus of Looking* (Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke, 2008), 129.

¹¹⁴ Kaja Silverman, *Male Subjectivity at the Margins* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 149.

¹¹⁵ *Ibidem*, 148.

¹¹⁶ In the case of the specific performance I saw and the registration from which I work, it was a large screen, about 2,5 by 2 meters. In a personal conversation with Elagoz, she said the size of the screen was very dependent on the venue.

¹¹⁷ Chiel Kattenbelt, "Intermediality in Performance and as a mode of Performativity," in *Mapping Intermediality in Performance*, ed. Sarah Bay-Cheng, Chiel Kattenbelt, Andy Lavender, and Robin Nelson (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), 30.

The performativity of this is formed by the visible construction of the media, and the distancing this brings with, which promotes self-reflexivity.¹¹⁸

Interesting about *CCWT*, is that the medium is more attached to the words Elagoz speaks, in the sense of illustrating or elaborating on her realtime stories, than to Elagoz herself as a performer. Elagoz doesn't touch the screen, mention the screen or (visibly) operate the screen. Moreover, when the screen lights up to show footage, Elagoz mostly turns her back to the audience to look at it, on which moments she becomes a spectator as well. This makes the construction and working of the media very visible, which supports the self-referentiality and the self-reflexivity. I think this is very much in line with the subject and the footage being shown. Besides it being related to media and the working of it, it makes the screen a logical place to present the Elagoz' research. It also creates a kind of distance - given Elagoz did not face the audience in these scenes - in which it was possible to reflect on the footage and the relation of that with that what was being said, live, by Elagoz.

3.3 (Fe)male gaze and the positioning of gender

Not explicitly mentioned in this thesis is the concept of gender relations, though this is a component within the subject matter. To analyze gender in the light of this chapter, I will now examine the connection between film and gender. I will do this by looking into the concept of the *(fe)male gaze*.

The concept of gaze itself can be described as "look steadily and intently, especially in admiration, surprise, or thought"¹¹⁹, or "look long and hard in wonder or surprise"¹²⁰. It thus can be described as a way of looking and perceiving, analyzed by dozens of philosophers (and other scholars) like Foucault (gaze as giver of meaning to an artwork), Sartre (awareness of the other and the self) and Lacan (the first sense of identification in the mirror stage).

The concept of the *male gaze* was first coined by feminist film theorist Laura Mulvey, in her essay *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* (1975). The term herewith originated in cinematic theory, but can also be applied to the studies of for example other (visual) arts, literature, media, communication and culture. In her essay, Mulvey describes how she feels women are being

¹¹⁸ Liesbeth Groot-Nibbelink and Sigrid Merx, "Intermediality in Performance and as a mode of Performativity," in *Mapping Intermediality in Performance*, ed. Sarah Bay-Cheng, Chiel Kattenbelt, Andy Lavender, and Robin Nelson (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), 225.

¹¹⁹ "Gaze," *Oxford Dictionary*, accessed 11 May 2018, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/gaze>.

¹²⁰ "Gaze," *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, accessed 11 May 2018, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/gaze>.

portrayed in (traditional narrative) cinema, only to pleasure male viewers. She uses a psychoanalytic background to support her point of view, like Freud's thoughts on scopophilic instinct (pleasure in looking at another person as an erotic object) and, in contradistinction, ego libido (forming identification processes).¹²¹ She intrinsically links this position of the women in film (the 'to-be-looked-at-ness') to patriarchal ideology.

*The actual image of woman as (passive) raw material for the (active) gaze of man takes the argument a step further into the content and structure of representation, adding a further layer of ideological significance demanded by the patriarchal order in its favourite cinematic form - illusionistic narrative film.*¹²²

Mulvey then states there are three different looks associated with cinema: that of the camera that records, that of the audience that perceives the final product, and that of the characters within the screened illusion.¹²³ Every look is either 'produced' for or by a male look, a male gaze, with the woman as (eroticized) viewing object. As this article was one the first of its kind in cinematic theory, it was widely discussed. In 1981, Mulvey followed with another essay, standing by her opinion, but expanding her field, to also the female spectator, for example.¹²⁴

Out of Mulvey's concept arose a contrasting theoretical term, that of the *female gaze*. This actually contains the same principal, and also works with the three different viewpoints, but then focussed on females, for example strong female main characters, a narrative from a female viewpoint and female spectators.

To move a bit more to the topic of this chapter, cinematographer Zoë Dirse discusses the concept of the female gaze from the viewing point of documentary film. Dirse herself is a camera operator at non-fictional productions, mostly concerning situations around the Middle East. She experienced that, because of her gender, the women were not feeling threatened by her presence and pursuits, but instead were almost oblivious of the fact they were 'to-be-looked-at', and therefore purely themselves.¹²⁵ This where the men were extra curious and defensive, until they even became violent, threatening and trying to overpower Dirse.

¹²¹ Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen* 16, no. 3 (October 1975), 17.

¹²² *Ibidem*.

¹²³ *Ibidem*.

¹²⁴ Laura Mulvey, "Afterthoughts on 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema' inspired by King Vidor's *Duel in the Sun* (1946)," *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media* 15/17 (Summer 1981): 12-15.

¹²⁵ Zoë Dirse, "Gender in Cinematography: Female Gaze (Eye) Behind the Camera," *Journal of Research in Gender Studies* 3, no. 1 (January 2013): 24.

In the light of these findings, I would like to analyze the existence of the (fe)male gaze in the film images in *CCWT*. Like Zoë Dirse, Elagoz is the one behind the camera. A difference is that, in most cases, the filmed 'objects' are male. Except for, and that is interesting: herself. By filming not only the men, but also herself and their reaction to her presence, she shows another dimension of the gaze: the audience watches not only the men, but also the men's gaze, focussed on her. We see them trying to impress her by showing certain skills, trying to inform or control her, their faces when confronted with her scarcely clothed body. In itself an intriguing sight, the men do not seem bothered by the camera and react mostly primarily on her presence. Another interesting side to this, is that the audience is constantly confronted with Elagoz acting extremely feminine, an object of scopophilic desire, 'to-be-looked-at'. Examples of this are the provoking, Freudian dance images that open the performance, the numerous sexually loaded selfies that are shown and the scenes of Elagoz expectorating male fluid of fertilization. At first, minutes after seeing *CCWT* for the first time, one could be almost a bit offended by the contrast of the starting point of the performance and the sometimes extremely sexualized and patriarchal role-affirmative behaviour.

After thoroughly engaging with the performance, one could come to see this more as a daring, provocative way of researching gender relations, productively serving one of Elagoz' research questions: "What does me being a woman provoke in men?". The structure of her multiple encounters and the character of her approach clearly expose the influential power of the presence of a female figure and this being a returning psychological pattern. Next to this, she shows: the woman is also a sexual being, and has the absolute right to enjoy this and practise it in any way she wants, even is she is harshly bothered in this process.

3.4 Conclusion

CCWT is a multi-, but foremost intermedial performance, because the interrelation between live and mediated is an essential part of it. One could not exist without the other. The screen itself is not very unusual, it is the visible construction of the media that makes it performative and this promotes self-reflexivity. This self-reflexivity comes to the foreground the most when considering how Elagoz actually used the shown content as a way of research, on the traumatic events, but in general more on, for example, gender relations: showing another dimension of the (fe)male gaze. This answers the subquestion of this chapter: *What is the role of media and its performativity in this case of performing sexual trauma?* The intermediality in this performance and the performativity of the presented media create self-reflexivity, which makes this performance a suitable place for Elagoz to show the outcome of her research.

Chapter 4

Structures and rhythms

In this chapter, the concept of *trauma-tragedy* - developed by dr. Patrick Duggan and mentioned in chapter 1 - will be further examined. The focus of this chapter will foremost be on structures and rhythms connected to trauma, or more precise, to trauma-symptoms. The aim of this chapter is, by means of diving deeper into trauma theory, to make a fundamental connection between the very concepts of the trauma-event, trauma-symptoms and *Cock, Cock.. Who's There?*, by analyzing structures and rhythms related to trauma, and tracing these back to the performance.

4.1 Trauma's performativity

In the introduction above, two relatively new concepts are mentioned: *trauma-event* and *trauma-symptoms*. Duggan differentiates two 'stages' in experiencing (psychological) trauma. The experience of the *trauma-event*, the actual moment the trauma was inflicted, is not fully registered by the brain. This is because the senses are automatically numbed, where the body is only concentrated on dealing with the situation. The *trauma-symptoms*, constructed in the post-hoc reliving of the trauma-event, are the "disruptive returns" of this event, which for example withhold repetitive nightmares.¹²⁶

These trauma-symptoms can be seen as performative, Duggan suggests. He even alleges "(...) modern trauma theory is littered with narratives and examples which might legitimately be thought of as performative or theatrical".¹²⁷ This performativity can be thought of in two senses. First, trauma can be seen to perform itself, in being a traumatic performative disruption of time. The second element was coined by Dominic LaCapra, suggesting that survivor-sufferers 'act out' to 'work through', whether this is done consciously (see chapter 1 about dramatherapy and Self-Revelatory Performance) or through for example compulsive repetition of actions, words and situations from traumatic occurrences.¹²⁸

In his conclusion, Duggan defines trauma-tragedy¹²⁹ as "a mode of performance which attends to trauma through one or many of its key terms"¹³⁰: rhythms or structures that characterize the

¹²⁶ Patrick Duggan, *Trauma-tragedy: Symptoms of contemporary performance* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), 23 - 24.

¹²⁷ Ibidem, 4.

¹²⁸ Ibidem, 5.

¹²⁹ The analytical tool and genre already described in chapter 1.6.

¹³⁰ Ibidem, 174.

performative trauma-symptoms. The terms he mentions are “cyclical/repetitious, paradoxical, dichotomous, polysemic, uncomfortable, visceral, emotional, kinaesthetic, uncanny, ‘real’”.¹³¹ Some of these structures are recurrent in the discussion on performing trauma, further research points out.

Another PhD thesis, *Traumaturgy* - this time by psychologist dr. Sandra Philip - indicates repetition, confrontation, memory relapse, and narrative reconstruction as the main elements of trauma, represented in the dramatic arts.¹³² And in *Staging Trauma: Bodies in Shadow*, by dr. Miriam Haughton, staging trauma “confronts intense personal experience dominated by post-traumatic structures”.¹³³ The structures Haughton emphasizes are, amongst others, contradiction, disrupted linearity and compulsive repetition.¹³⁴ As pointed out earlier in this thesis, this list of attributes is arguably applicable, though in varying degrees, to the wider performative politics of staging and liveness, and in high degree to *CCWT*.

In the following two paragraphs, two of the mentioned elemental structures and rhythms of trauma will be discussed more thoroughly and in the light of *CCWT*.

4.2 Repetition

*In its most general definition, trauma describes an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena.*¹³⁵

This basic definition of trauma - by linguist and trauma-specialist Cathy Caruth - suggests that in the core meaning of the term lies repetition. The origin of this finding lies in Sigmund Freud’s trauma theory, and the concept of *repetition compulsion*. This concept withholds not only the re-living of the traumatic event in the form of for example hallucinations, but it also includes a quite common phenomenon in which the person who suffers trauma tends to repeat behaviour or actions related

¹³¹ Ibidem.

¹³² Sandra Philip, *Traumaturgy: a dramaturgical methodology for the [re] processing of traumatic memory through the performance of autobiographical trauma narratives* (PhD Diss., Edge Hill University, 2015), 57, www.repository.edgehill.ac.uk/7779/2/Philip%20Sandra%20-%20Thesis%20-%20Final%20-%202016.05.16.pdf.

¹³³ Miriam Haughton, *Staging Trauma: Bodies in Shadow* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2018), 3.

¹³⁴ Ibidem.

¹³⁵ Cathy Caruth, “Unclaimed Experience: Trauma and the Possibility of History,” *Yale French Studies*, no. 79 (1991): 181.

to that event. Psychoanalyst Paul L. Russel describes repetition compulsion as “the repetition of that which, so far as we know, we would far rather not repeat”.¹³⁶

Both the concept of hallucinations and dreams, and retelling and rehearsing the traumatic event are mimetic iterations. “This is mimesis as mechanism for survival in the world; a productive mimesis that is ultimately concerned with power over an ‘other’, be that other an object, person, animal or, in the case of traumatic symptom, hallucination and nightmare”.¹³⁷ I will elaborate more on the relation between mimesis and trauma-symptoms in the next paragraph.

I can not help to notice the parallel between the phenomenon of (trauma-related) repetition, and, to begin with, the concept of a theatrical performance itself. Despite there being many ‘one-time only’ performances, the majority of the performances have a repetitional character. Of course, every theatrical event is unique because of multiple factors (I will not elaborate on this now), but the main content of a theatrical performance is repeated. Elagoz performed *CCWT* dozens of times, repeating the framework (the structure of alternating film and the timing of it), the scripted text, the re-enactment (a literal repetition itself), over and over again.

Next to this basic fact, repetition is also something clearly coming back in the substantive content of *CCWT*, especially the cinematic content. Every ‘experiment’, as you could call the several attempts of meeting men, is repeated multiple times. Elagoz for example doesn’t meet one man through the medium of Craigslist, but a lot. The experiment is repeated and repeated, which uncovers interesting patterns (and differences) in behaviour, but also creates more and more risk of the traumatic event also repeating itself, which eventually happens. But the repetition goes on.

4.3 Paradox: *mimetic shimmering*

Another characteristic of trauma-symptoms that Duggan thoroughly describes, is the paradoxical tension it includes. In the third chapter of his thesis, he brings to light the “possibility that live performance can put the spectator into an experience of trauma’s central paradox”.¹³⁸ This central paradox Duggan points out to, can be described as the need to forget and look away, in relation to the (sometimes uncontrollable) need to repeat and work through.

¹³⁶ Paul L. Russel, “Trauma, Repetition, and Affect,” *Contemporary Psychoanalysis* 42, no. 4 (October 2013): 605.

¹³⁷ Patrick Duggan, *Trauma-tragedy: Symptoms of contemporary performance* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), 60.

¹³⁸ *Ibidem*, 9.

Trauma-symptoms and the working through a traumatic event (speaking about it, for example) can all be seen as mimetic iterations of the trauma-event.¹³⁹ These are not by definition exact representations of reality, but more representing the personal experience of the one who suffered the trauma.¹⁴⁰ This lack of reality, or better put, the fading boundary between reality and fiction, is what characterises *mimetic shimmering*.

(Mimetic shimmering) places the audience into an experience of trauma's central paradox, and through this performance can be seen to act as a site of and for the rehearsal of trauma. The performative punctum is the catalyst to opening the shimmering between reality and representation that causes the audience to stumble in their reading of the performance, which can in turn be associated with a represented experience of trauma's central paradox.

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The performative punctum Duggan mentions in this quote as being the catalyst of mimetic shimmering, is based on Roland Barthes' concept of *punctum*; an element from a scene (in this theory specifically from a photograph) that rises above the other elements, "(...) that shoot out of it like an arrow, and pierces me. (...) A photograph's punctum is that accident which pricks me (but also bruises me, is poignant to me)".¹⁴²

Reminiscing on what this punctum could be in *CCWT*, multiple moments in the performance come to mind.¹⁴³ These moments vary from Elagoz confessing on the second rape and film images of her breaking emotionally in surrounding of her mother and grandmother, to images of her posing in an extremely sexual manner or spitting out what looks like male semen. These performative puncta are contrasting, in the message they send out, and in the question of reality and representation. They produce "an 'undecidability'¹⁴⁴ which is experienced viscerally and painfully but paradoxically also with excitement and curiosity, causing a tension between the desire to look away and a desire to

¹³⁹ Ibidem, 58.

¹⁴⁰ This also very much relates to the statements on reality versus fiction by for example Patrice Pavis, John Paul Eakin and Carol Martin ("represented reality is not *the* truth, but *a* truth"), all treated in chapter 1.

¹⁴¹ Patrick Duggan, *Trauma-tragedy: Symptoms of contemporary performance* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), 9.

¹⁴² Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1981), 26 - 27.

¹⁴³ Mind that this is a very personal opinion, different for every person.

¹⁴⁴ A concept derived from Lehmann's 'undecidability', focused again on the fading borders between reality and fiction.

experience it”.¹⁴⁵ Exactly this feeling can be associated with trauma’s central paradox, as defined in the beginning of this paragraph.

4.4 Rewiring

The structure of trauma used as a dramaturgical strategy - or maybe more accurate: as motivational urge - behind *CCWT* (shortly) treated in this paragraph, is not based on the strategies proposed by Duggan. This time, I was inspired by the words of Elagoz’ teachers in the jury report they wrote celebrating her gain of the André Veltkamp Grant.

*Renowned trauma expert Bessel van der Kolk wrote ‘The Body Keeps the Score’, in which he transforms our understanding of traumatic stress, revealing how it literally rearranges the brain’s wiring—specifically areas dedicated to pleasure, engagement, control, and trust. (...) The jury was reminded of Van der Kolks theories: Elagoz’ work can be seen as dealing with her trauma in a bodily way. Choreographing and filming meetings with strangers seem to be used to rewire her affected soul.*¹⁴⁶

Indeed, dr. Van der Kolk focuses in his book *The Body Keeps the Score: Mind, Brain and Body in the Transformation of Trauma* on how the brain changes after experiencing a traumatic event. It changes in three ways: the threat perception system is enhanced, the ability to distinguish between relevant and irrelevant is damaged and the self-sensing part of the brain gets blunted.¹⁴⁷ These changes all occur on an intrinsic bodily level. By for example neurofeedback, EMDR (Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing), but also by practising yoga and - very important - theatre, the changed and tangled mind can be literally rewired, and the subject can regain control.¹⁴⁸ I think this is exactly what happens in *CCWT*, and I will come back to this in the conclusion of this thesis.

4.5 Conclusion

Duggan describes trauma in two stages: the trauma-event and the trauma-symptoms. The trauma-event is mostly not literally remembered, but only comes back in the trauma-symptoms:

¹⁴⁵ Patrick Duggan, *Trauma-tragedy: Symptoms of contemporary performance* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), 74.

¹⁴⁶ Jury report André Veltkamp Grant,

https://www.atd.ahk.nl/media/the/docs/divers/Jury_report_Andr%C3%A9_Veltkamp_Grant_2016.pdf.

¹⁴⁷ “Three ways trauma can change the brain,” NICABM, YouTube, last modified October 24, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LKWUmwxi1ZI&t=38s>.

¹⁴⁸ Bessel van der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score: Mind, Brain and Body in the Transformation of Trauma* (New York: Viking Penguin, 2014), 4.

performative disruptions of time, characterized by - amongst other rhythms and structures - repetitiveness and mimetic shimmering. This answers the subquestion of this chapter: *Which structures and rhythms of trauma-symptoms can be detected in this case of performing sexual trauma?* These two characteristics, repetition and mimetic shimmering, can be traced back to *CCWT*. Repetition is very present in the structure of *CCWT*, in the multiple meetings with men for example, and ultimately in the very concept of the theatrical performance. Mimetic shimmering occurs in the faded borders between reality and fiction, and between the urge of looking away and curiosity and excitement, which places the audience into the experience of trauma's central paradox. In the last part of this chapter, the concept of rewiring is treated, which will come back in the overall conclusion that follows now.

Conclusion

Samira Elagoz was ahead of the #MeToo-era that we live in now, in addressing openly on being the survivor of sexual trauma. In her prize-winning graduation performance *Cock, Cock.. Who's There?* she researches and evaluates the reasons, circumstances and consequences surrounding the traumatic events she suffered. The performance was praised and received with great respect by professionals and press. Also for me personally, it was a resonating experience, and I became interested what choices Elagoz did make to approach and deal with this complex theme. This led to the following main question of this thesis: *Which dramaturgical strategies are used to approach the theme of sexual trauma in Cock, Cock.. Who's There? by Samira Elagoz?*

In the first chapter, the focus was mainly on the contextualisation of the performance. Within the chosen paradigm of Carol Martin's 'theatre of the real', *CCWT* seems to be a hybrid performance participating in traditions of for example documentary theatre, autobiographical theatre, and Self-Revelatory Performance. In the following chapters, *CCWT* was analysed from different focal points: the narrative, intermediality and the represented structures and rhythms of trauma.

The narrative was approached from the narrator's perspective, and the perspective of that what was narrated. The conclusion was that *CCWT* is an *autologue*: the exposure of the interior, personal world of a performer to an audience in the form of a monologue. This form of performance can be traced back to for example the second wave of feminism and Self-Revelatory Performance: the *autobiographical solo* is a tool often used to reclaim agency, which very much relates to the subject of *CCWT*. Then, *intermediality* is an essential aspect of this performance: the live and the mediated could not exist without each other. The performativity of the screen makes that it promotes *self-reflexivity*, which makes it a suitable place for Elagoz to show the outcome of her 'research', showing the other dimension of the *(fe)male gaze* for example. And finally, *CCWT* shows at least two of the structures and rhythms that dr. Patrick Duggan indicates as trauma-symptoms: *repetition* and the experience of trauma's central paradox, of which the last goes hand in hand with the concept of *mimetic shimmering*. Repetition is very present in the structure of *CCWT* and ultimately in the very concept of the theatrical performance. The paradox lies in the mimetic shimmering, the fading border between reality and fiction, and between looking away and the desire to see, which puts the audience into the experience of trauma's central paradox.

An important superordinate conclusion, and the reason *Cock, Cock.. Who's There?* stands out from other forms of trauma-performance: Elagoz used this performance as a kind of laboratory in

researching violence and intimacy. The fact that she thoroughly researches the subject of her abuse instead of only 'acting out' and 'working through', is what makes this performance unique in its sort. The choices made to achieve this, are the most important dramaturgical strategies that were detected (already mentioned more extensively in the previous paragraph) and thus form the answer to the main question: *Cock, Cock.. Who's There?* is an autologue, an autobiographical solo which (consciously or unconsciously) makes use of intermediality, the screen and its performative self-reflexivity, the (fe)male gaze and rhythms and structures characterizing trauma-symptoms.

The term that can accurately function as a bridge, connecting all strategies and forms together, is that of *rewiring*, the concept developed by psychiatrist Bessel van der Kolk, shortly highlighted in paragraph 4.4. The urge to rewire is the overarching motivation behind all choices made in this performance. Experiencing trauma, literally changes the way the brain is wired and therewith reacts. Only by repetition, building strength and courage, using the imagination, and very important, through sharing, the wires can be more or less untangled, and I think this is exactly what happens in *CCWT*.

The main interaction it comes down to in this dramaturgical analysis is that between three elements, the meaningful relationship between composition (staging), context and spectator. I propose for further analysis, to focus more on the spectator. In this thesis, I did touch upon this element a bit, but I think it is very interesting to elaborate on this more in further research. Also the theoretical framework in this thesis was quite broad. This was a deliberate choice, because I wanted to shed a light on numerous strategies, which all needed their own explanation. This did have as a consequence that the discussed subjects for the reader might have gone past too cursory. For a next time, it could be interesting to turn it around. To focus in the theoretical framework more on one strategy, and maybe on more than one performance. Another suggestion for further research is to focus more on power relations and taking back control, instead of mainly on the trauma itself. A helpful theoretical framework for this would be to approach the performance through the Foucauldian lens of construction of power relations, to focus more on how this control is constructed and exercised.

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