

Kristen Gallerneaux

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Structures of Anticipation

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STRUCTURES OF ANTICIPATION

Guest Editors: Yoke-Sum Wong, Karen Engle, Craig Campbell

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KRISTEN GALLERNEAUX

At the tail end of October, here I am, picking through the memories of the Structures of Anticipation workshop from May. Flipping back to a take a heartbeat on a moment through a five-month gap is not quite so odd a mental space as returning to a city I'd once lived in over a decade-and-a-half before. I haven't been back to Windsor much since I left in 2006, except for the occasional stop-through to visit friends made during radio DJ days at the university's campus station, CJAM.

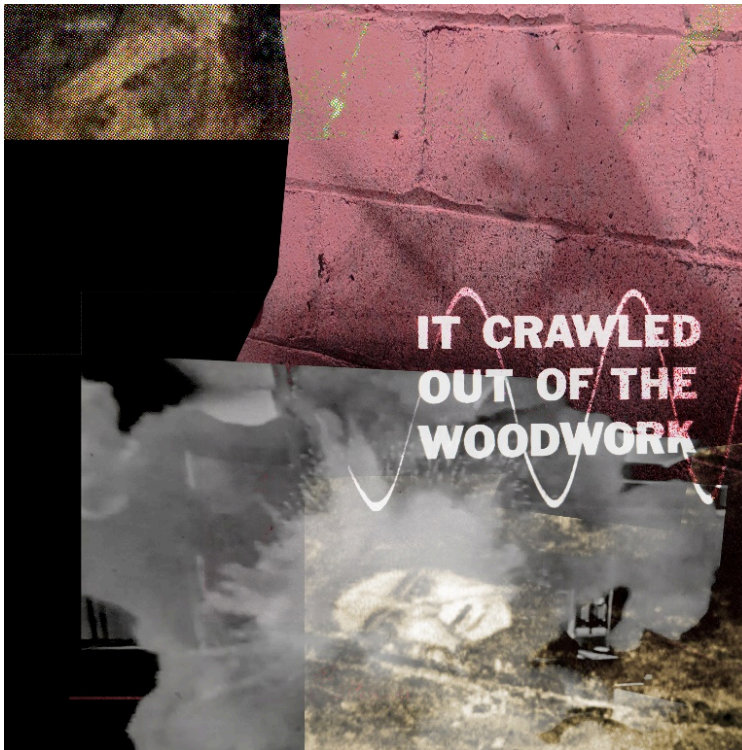
In the near-present, it is the jarring feeling of displacement that sticks the most. To be back in Windsor, self-propelled on foot (as I always am, as a non-driver), walking miles a day in slow time towards possible somethings to photograph in the distance. Places I was shocked to find still had a stake in the soil, things gone beyond recognition, a little more grime, and finding some of the city's mainstay businesses and bars wiped out by the recession. The grassy footprint where the house of a friend had been, which had burned a few years prior. Nostalgia can be such a grind—it isn't always warm and fuzzy. This vague melancholy wove its way into the work I produced during the workshop.

The memex might be a little faulty too, because I developed a tenacious early summer cold the night before I was set to travel to Windsor. I managed to keep a safe distance while scratchily introducing myself to other participants, paranoid I was going to break out in a coughing fit. At a gallery reading event, I acted as a proxy and foghorned my way through the essay of one of my writing mentors, Lesley Stern. The sound of my voice exaggerated inside of my own head

thanks to a burgeoning ear infection. It all seems appropriate, given the essay's focus on illness and whales.

Thinking back to the spring, I see myself as a vibrating embodiment of anticipatory energy. Life was weighted between exciting and seeming impossible. Never mind that summer cold my waking world had become profoundly fragmented in January when a horrendous cycle of insomnia latched its claws in, out of nowhere. Night after night, I was averaging three hours of sleep. I'd been fighting with health insurance for months to access testing and treatment. I didn't know it yet, but after winning the right to pay for some expensive tests, a specialist discovered that my pituitary gland had stopped producing the hormones I needed to sleep. On the other hand, I'd also just found out that I'd been selected for a life-changing Kresge Arts in Detroit Fellowship (which I couldn't share publicly yet).

The work that I produced during the Structures of Anticipation workshop became an exploratory way to combine the loose ideas I'd been floating around: the cultural history of fragments, stone folklore, and the lens of chronic insomnia. Visual fragments gathered from the city, sleepless film favorites, and historic hauntings were processed into collages. Outside of academia, I'd never had the chance to simply retreat—and *produce*. Of the five image and text pairings I created, this one seems appropriate because it is both hopeful, humorous and impatient. It captures the precipice point of discovery and diagnosis, calm and celebration.



Spain, 1971. The “Faces of Belmez” manifest in the Pereira family floor—undulating imprints of the dead. Wired at 4:12am, I’m (momentarily) disappointed an *Outer Limits* episode isn’t about sentient architecture, but an energy entity sparked to life inside a vacuum cleaner motor. Cloud-like, it roams, consuming lives.

Friday night in an empty hospital locker room waiting for the MRI tech. Someone has inflated an examination glove and left it on a chair. A puffy spectral hand, waving to the HVAC. While the machine clanks beats around my head, assembling clues, I fall asleep straining to memorize its magnetic patterns.