

Tendings and Eco-poetic Disability Culture: Bodymindspirits of the Future

Workshop Leader(s): Petra Kuppers and Stephanie Heit

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This workshop offers an artful space for engagement and resource-sharing, bringing contemporary art-based approaches to bear on sitedness, on our bodies' interaction with the built environment, on being in space with others, on being interdependent and in caring relations with the world.

Wheelchair user Petra Kuppers and mental health system survivor Stephanie Heit will lead disability culture exercises from the Tendings curriculum, developed with a wide range of other allies in travels across the US and beyond. Tendings are everyday collaborative ecopoetic practices that combine experiential anatomy, disability culture, eco-specific investigations, somatic exercises, and writing. We will go on a disability culture exploration of Davis's campus, drifting indoors and out, explore the walls, floors, doors, air, scents, textures and pathways that surround and support us. Let's insert ourselves, our differences, our breath. This practice nourishes activist interdependent energies and pools resources for community building and stewardship of self and the environment.

Tendings' inspirations include speculative fiction collections like Walidah Imarisha and adrienne maree brown's *Octavia's Brood* and Djibril al-Ayad and Kathryn Allan's *Accessing the Future*, as well the strategies of Sara Ahmed's *Killjoy Survival Kit* and adrienne maree brown's *Emergent Strategy*. Petra will share a glimpse from *Ice Bar*, her 2018 speculative short story collection, as a starting point for embodied exercises that will allow us to find interdependent spatial travels. All are welcome, finding disability and other access for all is part of the creative process (and if you already know of accommodations you need, please contact us in advance).

Structure for 4-hour workshop:

Set up

3 different drifting exercises/performance-scores, each with free-writes afterwards.

The workshop will end in a sharing circle.

Qualifications to lead:

Both artists have had long histories of leading workshops internationally, and have led multiple Tendings events in the past two years, including as a masterclass weekend for Movement Research in NYC.

Bibliography:

Sara Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life*. (Durham: Duke UP, 2017)

Djibril al-Ayad and Kathryn Allan (eds). *Accessing the Future: A Disability-Themed Anthology of Speculative Fiction*. (Futurefire.net, July 2015)

adrienne maree brown: *Emergent Strategy*. (Chico: AK Press, 2017)

Walidah Imarisha and adrienne maree brown (eds): *Octavia's Brood: Science Fiction Stories from Social Justice Movements* (Chico: AK Press, 2015)

Petra Kuppers: *Ice Bar*. New York (Spuyten Duyvil, 2018)

Bios:

Petra Kuppers is a disability culture activist, a community performance artist, and a Professor at the University of Michigan. She leads The Olimpias, an international performance research collective. Her *Disability Culture and Community Performance: Find a Strange and Twisted Shape* (2011) explores The Olimpias' arts-based research methods. Her *Theatre & Disability* (2017) offers a snapshot of the field, and *Studying Disability Arts and Culture: An Introduction* (2014) offers practical exercises for classrooms and studios. Her previous books engaged community performance, medical performances, and somatics, and her current research focuses on speculative modes in eco-performance and creative writing.

Stephanie Heit is a poet, dancer, and teacher of somatic writing, Contemplative Dance Practice, and Kundalini Yoga. She is bipolar and a member of the Olimpias, an international disability performance collective. Her poetry collection, *The Color She Gave Gravity* (The Operating System 2017), explores the seams of language, movement and mental health difference. In her forthcoming chapbook, *Water Margins* (ReStory Nation 2019), water is at stake amidst climate change. She received a MFA in Writing and Poetics from Naropa University, and her work most recently appeared in *Anomaly*, *Bombay Gin*, *Midwestern Gothic*, *Clade Song*, *Lime Hawk*, *About Place*, *Dunes Review*, *Typo* and *Disability Studies Quarterly*.