Verena Kyselka, Nicola L., Latifa Laâbissi,
Leslie Labowitz, Suzanne Lacy,
Katalin Ladik, Sigalit Landau, Klara Lidén,
Kalup Linzy, Natalia LL, Léa Lublin,
Jumana Manna, Manon, MaraM,
María Evelia Marmolejo, Muda Mathis,
Dóra Maurer, Mónica Mayer, Ana Mendieta,
Marta Minujín, Fina Miralles, Molly and Me,
Linda Montano, Charlotte Moorman,
Teresa Murak, Sands Murray-Wassink,
Mwangi Hutter, Narcissister, Rabbya
Naseer & Humrat ul Ain, Senga Nengudi,
Les Nyakes, Lorraine O’Grady,
Hannah O’Shea, Itziar Okariz,
Paulina Ołowska & Lucy McKenzie,
Yoko Ono, ORLAN, Tanja Ostojić,
Funda Özgünaydın, Gina Pane,
Leticia Parente, Ewa Partum, Jillian Peña,
Performance Saga (Andrea Saemann & Katrin Grögel), Friederike Pezold,
Howardena Pindell, Adrian Piper,
Mariuccia Pisani, Polvo de Gallina Negra,
Pussy Riot, Yvonne Rainer,
Eglė Rekauskaitė, Jytte Rex, Àngels Ribé,
La Ribot, Ulrike Rosenbach, Martha Rosler,
Boryana Rossa, María Ruido,
Raeda Saadeh, Estibaliz Sábada,
Andrea Saemann, Zorka Ságlová,
Les Salonnieres, Christine Schlegel,
Cornelia Schleime, Carolee Schneemann,
Schwarze Schokolade, Stefanie Seibold,
Miriam Sharon, Bonnie Ora Sherk,
Barbara T. Smith, Cornelia Sollfrank,
Antonieta Sosa, Spiderwoman Theater,
Annie Sprinkle & Elizabeth M. Stevens,
Sandra Sterle, Gabriele Stötzer,
Annika Ström, Melati Suryodarmo,
Anna Szwajgier & Zorka Wollny,
Jinoos Taghizadeh, Milica Tomić,
Mare Tralla, Teresa Tyszkiwicz,
Mierle Laderman Ukeles, Valie Export
Society, Cecilia Vicuña, The Waitresses,
Faith Wilding, Hannah Wilke, Martha
Wilson, Julita Wójcik, Nil Yalter, Yeni & Nan
TELLING STORIES DIFFERENTLY
Strategies of Appropriating and Disseminating Stories of Feminist and Queer Performance

The text/feminism project has been inspired, first and foremost by the many artists who have explored the history of feminist and queer performance through re-enactments, re-performances,1 appropriations and archive and documentary projects, thus recreating this history—or telling it in new and different ways.

Projects like Yoko Ono, Faith Wilding and Sanja Iveković have enabled novel and distinct interpretations of their own (now iconographic) works by re-performing them (Yoko Ono’s Cut Piece, 1965/2003; Faith Wilding’s Waiting, 1972/Wait-With, 2007; and Sanja Iveković’s Triangle, 2005). Suzanne Lacy and Leslie Labowitz invited a group of younger artists to their archive, in order to reanimate it in form of an installation (The Performing Archive – Restricted Access, 2007). Other artists have created new installations based on comprehensive archive research (Stefanie Seibold’s READER-Wallpaper, 2006; Matt und Schlapp wie Schnee, 2011), or have published interviews with artists who they regarded as pioneers (Andrea Saemann and Kattrin Grögel’s Performance Saga: Überzeugungen mit Wegbereiterinnen der Performancedenkunst, 2011). This in turn became the basis for their performances (Andrea Saemann’s Saemann meets Schnee, 2004; Angel M-bone Performance and Ulrike Rosenbach, 2008).

Other artists did not conduct lengthy interviews or ask permission. Rather, they regarded performance history as belonging to the ‘creative commons’. The Estonian group of artists Valie Export Society (VES) thus re-performed Tapp und Tastkino (Tap and Touch Cinema), Homometer and other actions by VALIE EXPORT on the streets of Tallinn in 2000. The artist Cornelia Balában walked a male fellow artist on all fours on a leash through a Hamburg shopping mall (Mon ne va pas, 2006, inspired by another of VALIE EXPORT’s works) and re-performed Nana de St. Phalle’s Shooting Paintings (Trouble Shooting, 2008) in her series revisiting feminist art which she initiated in 2006. And Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen and Boryana Rossa sampled moments of Western performance and art history, appropriating these across borders of gender and ethnicity. Tania Bruguera, on the other hand, spent many years re-performing works by the late Ana Mendieta in Cuba in an attempt to artistically keep alive a fictive, potential dialogue that had been interrupted by Mendieta’s early death (Homenage a Ana Mendieta, 1985–1996). Other artists focus on subversive moments of feminist and queer (performance) history in a broader sense by referring to its gestures, which they repeat, re-mix and display in cinematic installations, thus creating a link between different times (Pauline Boudry and Renate Lorenz’s Charming for the Revolution, 2009; Salomania, 2009).

1 Seibold and Teresa Maria Díaz Neno, Matt und Schlapp wie Schnee, 2011, performance at the Fine Arts, Vienna, photograph Maria Ziegelbock, courtesy Stefanie Seibold and Teresa Maria
Much has been written on re-performances and the general relationship between performance and history from a theoretical perspective. These studies describe in detail how re-performances are neither nostalgic, retrospective phenomena, nor are they products of a lack of creative imagination in the here and now or self-referential art practices whose ultimate goal is to historicise. Quite the opposite; re-performance can be seen as a practice that critically investigates the conclusive historicisation and canonisation of radical and subversive art production. Even mimetic re-performances can never reproduce the context, actions, gestures and motivations of the artists and reactions of the audience 'correctly' and completely, they always generate difference. The act of re-performance could therefore rather be seen as a translation in the sense that Walter Benjamin intends, because it is always a new and different reaction to the heterogeneity and multifariousness of the 'original'. With this in mind, re-performances also act as interventions in a Western, linear and progress-oriented understanding of time and history. They organise a dialogue across time – they are simultaneously in the then and the now, in double time; they renew something that is not merely past, but that has also yet to materialise. The hypothesis I am presenting here is therefore that the many works created or shown in the context of react/feminism addressing the return of feminist and queer performance history in the broadest sense, also intervene in dominant and normative narratives of feminist history. They can be read as countering the disappearance of feminist artistic practices from collective memory and especially as a criticism of a specific form of historicising that frames these practices as irrefutably part of the past. They thus echo Clare Hemmings, who in her book Why Stories Matter. The Political Grammar of Feminist Theory demands a transformative narrative of feminist history, “to allow a different vision of a feminist past, present and future.”

Why Stories Matter

The goal of Hemmings’ analysis of dominant narratives of the development of (Western) feminist theory is to reveal their grammar and narrative structure. According to Hemmings, this narrative structure contributes to the understanding of feminism as something past, lost or overcome – in other words, as anachronistic. As a result, the narratives of feminist history are amenable (sometimes unintentionally) to mainstream gender discourses. For example, in the form of a postfeminism that more or less regards feminism as a historical necessity, but also as something which has been overcome and is thus anachronistic; or normative political discourses of development and migration that interpret gender equality as a standard achieved in the West to which cultures regarded as patriarchal and ‘backwards’ are expected to adjust.
Based on an analysis of the patterns, rhythms, repetitions, commonsense statements and omissions in dominant narratives of the development of feminist theory,\(^8\) Hemmings identifies three narratives that demonstrate different interpretations and affective evaluations of this history but are very similar in structure — in other words, in their "political grammar". All three operate with the division into decades and a selective citation practice that assigns certain theoretical schools and authors to specific decades and generations, while omitting other positions.\(^10\) All three are based on a generational discourse that ultimately represents content-related conflicts as a kind of family drama, a struggle between generations — in other words, psychoanalysing them — thereby stressing differences, instead of similarities, between constructed cohorts of feminists. This means that intergenerational relationships between women are seen as necessarily antagonistic, while a specific temporality of a (most often Western) subject is regarded as universal.\(^11\) In this process, authors and readers are positioned as contemporary, cutting edge, left behind or outdated.\(^12\) Finally, this selective citation practice and the generational discourse create a break and construct a development that leads away from 'real' feminism by way of an imported queer and poststructuralist theory that is seen as stemming from a different genealogy.\(^13\)

Hemmings' essential aim is not, however, to establish a different, more encompassing, or even a more correct history of feminist theory and practice, since this would necessarily, in turn, produce new omissions and leave the dominant discourse intact. Rather, her goal is to "tell stories differently". meaning to expose its formal structures while also intervening in it.\(^14\)

The numerous performance artists engaged in re-performance also do not tell completely different stories but rather tell stories differently. In the following, I will describe several of the performances that have been mentioned here in more detail.

Telling Stories Differently

In the exhibition *react.feminism* at Akademie der Künste in Berlin in 2009, Faith Wilding sits on a chair in front of a large screen. On the screen, a documentation of her influential performance *Waiting* from 1972 is shown.\(^15\) Like in the film, the large audience is standing and sitting in a half-circle around her, while she sits in the middle, talking. The audiences from 1972 and 2009 seem to form a full circle, watching and listening together.

After the video projection ends, Wilding puts on headphones, listening and speaking — now sitting in front of an empty, white screen. In the performance from 1972, Wilding is performing a self-written
monologue (a ritornello) presenting a passive, waiting woman caught in cyclical time, from birth to death. A woman who does not act but is only acted upon. In 2009, she recites a text in four chapters with many different voices: quotes, bits of conversation, songs, Beckett, Irigaray, her mother, Irina Aristarkhova and Gregg Bordowitz. The fifth chapter consists of a discussion with the audience. She asks them to what extent waiting – waiting as attending to, or giving attention to – can be productive. Raised and influenced by radical pacifists, she sees waiting as a form of resistance – resistance against production, consumerism, violence and acceleration. She also regards it as an open space between actions where something new can evolve. But most of all, waiting is a communal act of non-determination and thus of becoming.

She listens/speaks:

Irigaray: “I hear you, I see you, I perceive you, I listen to you. I watch you, I am moved by you, astonished by you”

Irigaray: “The community will be composed of relations-between, and not of one + one + one.”

Wait-with, an act of political love.
Wait-with, an action,
Wait-with, a meditation,
Wait-with, open space between actions,
Wait-with, a space of resistance,
in this room,
in this moment.
Wait-with as our work.

In this communal moment, Wilding re-articulates and renews a performance that has since become iconographic and ‘frozen’ in certain narratives of 1970s feminism, thereby highlighting new and different meanings. The dramatisation of female passivity and vulnerability is no longer in the foreground, replaced by passivity as a communal form of resistance, as an undefined space of in-between, of becoming. Through the mirror-image constellation, Wait-With also stresses the simultaneous presence of the then and now – of different places and assemblies, of young and older bodies. It thus emphasises the significance of a dialogue beyond the ostensible borders of clearly marked generations for a communal becoming.

We now turn to the Performance Saga Festival in Bern 2008. Sands Murray-Wassink is on all fours on a table, naked. He inserts a transparent speculum into his anus, then his partner Robin Wassink-Murray films him from behind while the image is projected on a screen. The scene is accompanied by soft music. He begins to read from a book. The text reflects the complexity of gay sexuality – the mix of a loss of control, devotion, shame and lust – and establishes a connection with feminist art and politics, to which he feels an allegiance. After this scene, he invites the audience to join in a conversation.
about what they saw and about relationships, intimacy, depression, failure and love. This scene from the performance *Town Hall Philosophical Living Color Drawing* (2008) evokes Carolee Schneemann's performance *Interior Scroll* (1975), during which she performed typical poses borrowed from nude studies on a table – kneeling, bending over and laying down – all the while quoting from her book *Cézanne, the Was a Great Painter*. She then pulls a roll of paper from her vagina and reads the text written on it, lamenting the oppression of the 'feminine' in art. On the other hand, Murray-Wassink's performance also reminds us of Annie Sprinkle's *Public Cervix Announcement* project in which Sprinkle invites the audience to inspect her vagina and cervix with a speculum and flashlight, then to discuss what they see afterwards. The act of reading, speaking, proclaiming and discussing is common to all three performances. Their titles refer already to oral speech or written texts: the tradition of the town hall debate in the USA, public announcements or scrolls. They especially refer to embodied acts of speaking in an affective situation that produces a surplus of corporeality. The speech of a sexual, possibly aroused, possibly hurting, embarrassed, smelly body is thus the focus of all three performances. As a result, Murray-Wassink brings together artistic acts in the here and now that have become iconographic and archonistic because they are considered to be part of a certain decade or tradition of feminism – the feminism of the 1970s, which is often seen as essentialist, or the pro-sex feminism of the 1980s. He connects these feminisms with a queer articulation of desire, thereby reinterpreting these acts and gestures as open and diverse – and, most of all, relatable.

In the opening scene of *Never Mind Pollock . . . Women on Painting* (2008/2009), a sequence of re-performances by Lilitheth Cuenca Rasmussen of actions by other female artists, Cuenca Rasmussen takes on the persona of Yayoi Kusama, blending with her environment in an apparently perfect mimicry. Wearing a polka dot costume that echoes the exact pattern of the surrounding walls and floors, she at first seems like a copy of a copy (a re-staging of an artist who, since the 1960s has staged herself in continually new variations as a mimetic copy). As Cuenca Rasmussen begins to paint her naked male performers with the same dots, as if trying to make them more like herself, and as they start to paint each other, she turns the process in on itself. The relationship between the original and copy, between the self and other seems to become more and more troubled. After a short, self-written rap about her position as a female artist, more re-performances follow. These blend into each other in a kind of sampling of short performance clips. The performances are not, however, reinstated as seminal, auratic art works through their historically 'correct' restaging, but rather as mutually infecting gestures, as part of a collective cultural memory, repurposed in ever new constellations and assemblages, questioned.
translated, modified, deconstructed and reconstructed – as "recycling and sampling remains".23 When Cuenca Rasmussen, after Janine Antoni in 
*Loving Care*, uses her body as a brush, painting the floor with her hair dipped in black paint and then, 
still dripping, invites the audience to cut away parts of 
her clothing, as in Yoko Ono’s *Cut Piece*, the 
works cannot be read as separate and autonomous 
actions. Traces (of paint) are transferred from one 
work to the other, from artist to artist and then to 
the viewer. Traces serve two functions; they can 
be read as a kind of recording (notation) of past 
gestures and actions but also operate as a guide to 
(or incitement for) future action. Cuenca Rasmussen 
thus highlights the references, repetitions and influ-
ences inherent to every artistic act as well as the 
heterogeneity and instability of each ‘original’. In 
addition she is stressing their potentiality, by which 
we might be encouraged to respond to, repeat, object to, deconstruct or reconstruct their gesture.

Thus, using a formulation by Elin Diamond, Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen’s work can be described as a “feminist mimesis” that is primarily concerned with production and transformation, rather than the reproduction of the status quo, an act of dissemination, not representation, “releasing the historical 
particularity and transgressive corporeality of the mimics, who, in mimesis, is always more and different 
than she seems.”24 Thus, the feminist history of performance is collectivised, released from linear 
time and subjected to a ‘transgressive embodiment’.

A similar form of (mimetic) appropriation and dissemination is a strategy that can also be found in 
Boryana Rossa’s work *The Vitruvian Body* (2009), a live performance that, like Cuenca Rasmussen’s 
*Never Mind Pollock*, was shown in the context of *react.feminism* in 2009. Similar to the Philippine-
Danish artist Cuenca Rasmussen, this appropriation takes place across cultural, gender and ethnic bor-
ders. In her work, Rossa refers to the teachings of the Roman architect Vitruvius concerning the ideal 
and universal proportions of humans as well as Leonardo da Vinci’s famous drawing, the *Vitruvian Man*. In her re-performance, Rossa contrasts her own body with this universal, harmonious body 
which is, of course, a very specific, white, male, historical body. Rossa stands naked with her arms 
and legs outstretched in a steel construction consisting of a circle and a square. Her hands and feet 
protrude through the circle in large round holes, encircled by much smaller holes. The metal construc-
tion is too small for her, she has to bend her head down a little and is not able to assume a comfortable, 
much less ‘harmonious’ pose. Oleg Mavrornatti – her artist partner in the duo Ultrafuturo – sews 
her hands and feet to the framework, while Rossa talks to the audience sitting around her on the 
floor. Rossa interweaves two different stories in her monologue. First, she reflects on the desire for an
ideal, standardised body that is present not only in art history, but also in today’s science and genetic engineering, and the marginalisation of those who do not comply with this norm. Second, she tells the story of (mostly) Western body and performance art and the myths surrounding the ‘heroic’ auto-aggressive actions often carried out by male performance artists. Finally, she invites the audience to approach her to observe precisely how she is being sewn to the metal frame, stitch by stitch. She invites them to photograph her and to post, use or work with these pictures – in short, to actively take part in the production and circulation of new images and myths. In this performance, Borjana Rossa appropriates the universalising and heroising gestures of art history, while at the same time subverting them, overtaking, recycling and sampling them while inviting the audience to become part of this collective process of reinterpreting history. Also, Rossa refuses to comply with a linear notion of history that locates radical body art in a certain era and geopolitical context and allocates it to certain actors with the result that she, as an Eastern European artist, is always made to appear ‘too late’ and anachronistic. In her version of ‘feminist mimesis’, which undermines the difference between original and copy, author and recipient, artist and audience, and places the main focus on dissemination, she thus refuses to comply with a Western chronology.

*Matt und Schlapp wie Schnee* (Soft and Worn Like Snow) is a long-term project developed by Stefanie Seibold together with Teresa Maria Diaz Nerio and the art historian Patricia Grzonka, which has been presented in various formats since 2009. This work explores the oeuvre and the reception history of Gina Pane, who is subjected to a critical re-reading based on extensive archive research, interviews, a critical reconstruction and deconstruction of gestures, sequences and performance objects from Pane’s performance *Discours mou et mat* (1975), as well as experimental installations.

*Matt und Schlapp wie Schnee* emphasises the complexity and diversity of Pane’s work, attempting to remove it from an over-deterministic interpretation that was also promoted by Pane herself as well as her partner and executor of her estate. This interpretation especially highlights Pane’s extreme use of her body and frequent acts of self-mutilation. Without completely negating the importance of this aspect in Pane’s work, Seibold and Diaz Nerio nevertheless express its “temporary rejection”. Their intention is thus to interrupt the dominant interpretation and make room for something different: the primary significance of the image and image production in Pane’s work, the complex pictorial narratives with references to the history of painting and to queer images, the important role of the most diverse symbolic objects and abstract gestures in her vocabulary of signs, the political references to the Vietnam War and to the general structures of violence this entails, and the omissions and
stereotypes incorporated in Pane’s imagery. An essential part of this research includes re-performances of *Discours mou et mat.* These are mostly not open to the public and primarily serve an embodied knowledge, functioning in turn as a basis for an alternative production of images. The focus here is on the critical intervention in the structure of the performance: Seibold and Díaz Nerio change its order and work with omissions; they change roles and wear costumes made by Díaz Nerio that refer to skin colour and an intersexual body, thus disturbing the unquestioned whiteness and (heteronormative) nakedness in Pane’s work; they explore what happens when they leave out the now iconographic scene in which Pane cuts her lips with a razorblade, when the naked, anonymous woman in the background all of a sudden becomes active, or when the nakedness is covered with a costume that is ambiguous in terms of skin colour and gender.

Photographs of this reconstruction, the actual costumes and re-created objects, equipment used in the image production (like lamps and cameras) as well as research findings and archive materials are assembled and collaged in different arrangements in a new and continuously changing Pane archive. Seibold and Díaz Nerio do not attempt to ‘correct’ history, but to reject the dominant narrative, while making room for moments of becoming.

**De-authorising, Reciting, Disrupting, Inhabiting, Shuttling Back and Forth**

Similar to the artists mentioned above, Clare Hemmings also tells stories differently in her book *Why Stories Matter*. She applies various methods that are indeed comparable (and related) to the strategies used in the re-performances discussed here. Her focus is on a specific practice of citation that she calls “de-authorisation” and a form of repetition that she calls “tactical recitation” or “feminist re-narration.”

‘De-authorisation’ is a method Hemmings uses to stress the collective character of theory, knowledge production and of historiography. The focus of her analysis is therefore not on the positions propagated by individual authors and their monographic works, but on (anonymised) publications in important feminist theory journals and thus on narratives that are institutionally and collectively produced. The authors of the citations are not disclosed and are thus de-authorised. It is not who said what, but the narrative structure, similarities, repetitions and omissions in the passages cited by Hemmings that are important here.

While it is Hemmings’ primary goal to use ‘de-authorisation’ as a tool to reveal the dominant discourse, she takes this a step further through her method of ‘tactical recitation’, thus intervening in the
She takes the omissions that are an essential element of the narratives – the "hauntings in the shadows of these narr- 
eties" – and attempts to re-integrate these into the stories in order to investigate what effect this might produce. Using these potent omissions as her starting point – the apparent absences, her emotional relationship to these as well as her frustration about distortions and ommissions – she begins to alter the citations. She "folds" and "forces" what is absent back into the discourse. It is the moment of disruption that is most important here, for she aims to break with seemingly linear accounts of history and, the sequence of generations, the order of decades and movements and the textually produced separation between poststructuralist and queer theory and feminism. She thus works to create a space of possibility that, at least temporarily, allows for other encounters and alliances instead of creating a new constituted history. She implies that this space of possibility could not only be a textual one, but also a physical space that is "inhabitable" – a space where we can meet, encounter and move. She therefore asks: "What kinds of historical and political possibilities does such a move allow us to imagine or temporarily inhabit?" She strives "to grasp the possibility of feminist spaces of friendship, desire, affiliation and productivity that produce variegated historical accounts whose subject of any age) shuttle back and forth between their own and other's memories, representations, and fantasies of past, present and future."

De-authorising, 'reciting', 'disrupting', 'inhabiting' and 'shuttling back and forth' – these methods and strategies may not be exactly the same as those used by the artists discussed here, but we can still find links and connections. Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen’s collages and assemblages from performance excerpts can, for example, also be interpreted as a form of 'de-authorisation' or as a form of critiquing and questioning authorship that emphasises the collective dimension of artistic production. It is not the individual author or her work that is the focus of her re-performances, but the polyphony of and the mutual references shared by feminist interventions in art history. The strategy of 'tactical recitation' – with its stress on omissions, shadows and other dimensions of the stories and histories in question – is also important in several of the re-performances described here. Boriana Rossa, as an Eastern European artist, thus 'folds' and 'forces' herself into certain narratives of Western art history, while Theresa María Díaz Nerio subverts the implicit whiteness and heteronormativity of feminist art production with her skin and sex/gender costumes. The method of disruption and interruption is applied explicitly by Stefanie Seibold and Theresa María Díaz Nerio when they 'temporarily reject' the dominant interpretation of the artist Gina Pane in their re-performances and installations, or when they disregard aspects of her work or change the order and roles in her performance. In a more general sense, however, other works described here could be understood as disruptions of a linear feminist art history that categorises artists and their work according to decades, generations.
and movements, thus chronologically ordering and fixating them accordingly. Sands Murray-Wassink and Faith Wilding in particular release the performances they adapt from a set chronology and from the pigeonholing that comes with it, thus allowing for other interpretations, encounters and political alliances.

Most importantly, however, the works described here create an embodied space of becoming and encountering – each in their own unique way. They allow participants to ‘inhabit’ (his- or her-) stories and to ‘shuttle back and forth’ between them. The artists embody and perform past voices and gestures as present, letting the past and present exist side by side, enabling us to experience the assembled bodies in their historicity, inviting us to perform communal gestures that redefine the relationship between the feminist past, present and future.

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1 The terms ‘re-enact’ and ‘re-perform’ are difficult to distinguish systematically, but they are often assigned different meanings. ‘Re-enactment’ is associated with a more mimetic repetition of performances or historical events, while ‘re-performance’ is understood to imply a re-interpretation, or a change in interpretation. For the sake of simplicity, the term ‘re-performance’ is used in this text, unless the artists themselves use the term ‘re-enactment’.


5 See: Schneider, Reminiscence.


8 Hemmings investigates a collection of several internationally influential, English-language feminist theory journals from 1998-2007. Her focus is on collectively and institutionally produced narratives. Therefore, authors are not cited, only sources – in other words, journal and publication year. For more on this, see: Hemmings, Why Stories Matter, pp. 16-20, 22.

9 These include progress, loss or return narratives. On the "loss narrative", see: Hemmings, Why Stories Matter, pp. 4, 58-93. Because of the fragmentation and diversification and the focus on queer theory on sexual identities, the political impulse of feminism has supposedly gone missing. For more on the "progress narrative", see: pp. 3-4, 31-57. Because of the interventions of 1980s lesbian and black feminism and the further development of these positions of identity politics leading up to 1990s queer theory, the problematic essentialism of 1970s feminism and the omissions that go hand in hand with it have supposedly been overcome. For more on the "return narrative", see: pp. 4-5, 95-127. Despite justified criticism of essentialism in the 1970s, the feminism influenced by poststructuralism leads to political impotence. Therefore, the focus on structural inequality and material bodies, which was predominant in the 1970s, should be taken up again.


15 In 2006 Wilding was invited by Connie Butler, the curator of the exhibition WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution at MOCA Los Angeles to re-perform Waiting. Since then, Wilding has performed Wait With three times, most recently in Berlin 2008.

16 For details on this performance and its context, see, for example: Faith Wilding, By Our Own Hands: The Woman Artist’s Movement in Southern California, 1970-1975, Santa Monica, 1977.
Knaup: Telling Stories Differently

1. The essay “Waiting. Wait With,” Unpublished manuscript, received from the artist, without place, without year, unpaginated.

2. The Performance Saga Festival is part of the above-mentioned project by Andrea Saemann and Katrin Görgel. Its goals are the transmission of performance history and to enable encounters between artists from different generations. See: www.performancesaga.ch, accessed January 2014.

3. The event is part of a performance that lasts about forty-five minutes; some aspects are not taken into account here.


5. He explicitly refers to these artists (and Beth Stevenson, Annie Sprinkle’s partner) who were also in the audience and commented on the performance in the discussion. See: Yoshi Kusama’s Polka Dot Happening, 1968.


7. Published song lyrics by Lilith Caenca Rasmussen: The Artist Song (2007), received from the artist.


11. The long-term project was born out of the research project Troubling Research: Performing Knowledge in the Arts, Centre der bildenden Künste Wien (Academy of Fine Arts Vienna), 2009–2011. The work was shown in the form of an exhibition and a live performance in the context of react. feminism #2 - a performing archive at Centro Cultural Montevideo in Viña-del- Mar, Chile, 2011.


14. The is one of the few performances that Panu did in front of a live audience and of which documentation exists.


18. Such essential omissions are the result of (among other things) the ways in which positions of black and white women, and white women, were named, left out or categorised. Thus, in the narratives analysed, these are either interpreted as catalysts for development that veers from the multiculturalism of the 1980s towards the queer present and are thus ‘frozen’ in the middle, or they are not cited at all. See: Hemmings, Why Stories Matter, pp. 8, 162-63. She thus reinserts Monique Wittig, the precursor of queer theory, into citations. See, for example, p. 160.

19. See, for example, Hemmings, Why Stories Matter, pp. 23, 158, 165.

20. For example, Hemmings writes about ‘disrupting’ and ‘breaking open’ respectively: Hemmings, Why Stories Matter, 161 and p. 181.


Antonieta Sosa, Conversación con baño de agua tibia, performance in collaboration with Helena Villanueva, presented at Galería de Arte Nacional Caracas, Venezuela, photographic documentation, photo digital by F. Villanueva, courtesy Antonieta Sosa.

Boryana Rossa, ZS-ZS, 2005, performance, photograph © and courtesy Boryana Rossa.

Birgit Jürgenssen, Ohne Titel (Selbst mit Schädel), 1972, 70 Polaroid, courtesy Estate Birgit Jürgenssen / VBK, Venice.

Letícia Pasante, Preparação I, 1975, video courtesy André Paes.

Helena Almeida, Ouve-me (Hear me), 1979, video courtesy Helena Almeida.