

# Costume scenographics

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For:

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[--- pg 203 ---] What do costumes do? I ask this question with two positions in mind. First, I am interested in how costumes produce a sense of atmosphere, occasion, or event. Second, I propose that costuming as a socio-material technology orientates feelings of world. The first position is more straightforward than the second, but, as I will argue, are inextricably connected. My inspiration for this discussion proceeds from my experiences as part of the Costume Agency workshops in August 2021 at the Oslo National Academy of the Arts (KHiO). My encounters with performances by costume artists such as Sally E Dean, Snezana Pesic, Lotta Barlach, Berit Haltvik and Jenny Hilmo Teig are formative to what follows. Indeed, I have written this chapter as a thought experiment in reply to what their costumes did; how they affected, orientated, and acted upon/with me. I was struck by how these costume performances felt, over-and-above what they 'looked like'. Accordingly, I now seek to rethink the established orthodoxies of costume – as simply visually codified, 'symbolic dress' – to argue costume as a technology. I propose that the techniques and cultural frames of costume change, transform, or irritate felt relationships between humans, nonhumans, and everything in-between. In an era of climate crisis as well as the cultural instability of social categories (whether gender, race, sexuality etc.), my aim for this thought experiment to unpack the underwritten felt place orientating traits of costume. I name these 'costume scenographics'.

[--- pg 204 ---] 'Scenographics' is a framework I have previously adopted to investigate the collection of place orientating traits produced by staged material cultures (see Hann 2019). From visual merchandising to gardening, theatre to installation art, I argue that these material cultures produce distinctive feelings of world that place individuals emotionally as well as symbolically. Yet, scenographic practices have long been culturally dismissed due to their connections to theatricality. Labelled as 'pretend' material practices, scenographic techniques such as a stage set or interior design have historically been labelled as decorative or merely background. Whether a themed restaurant or a scale model Doll's House, I argue that these crafted places are 'charged' with potential (for action, rest, contemplation). It is the charging, activation, or orientation to which I assign scenographics. Importantly, scenographics are always plural; they are co-produced through a network or web of intersecting emotions, memories, materials, and technologies. Likewise, I argue that there are no stages without scenographics. Stages, as the par excellence of a 'charged space', are produced through the scenographic traits such as directed lighting, raised staged, soundscapes, chalk lines on the ground, or simply by gestural movement that marks an area as 'otherwise'. These scenographic interventions irritate the normative flows of space/place. If scenographics are the traits and techniques through which places are charged with occasion, then costumes undoubtedly perform this same operation. Costumes charge a place with feeling.

In terms of a definition, I approach 'costume' as a liminal practice of appearing otherwise. Admittedly, this will read for many as an 'expanded' notion of costume. I approach appearance more generally as a complex socio-material act. Costume, if nothing else, is an agent in irritating the standard model of appearance as stable, dependable, and consistent. The irritant of costume is that it reminds how all appearance is crafted, designed and 'put on'. As Joanne Entwistle (2000: 11) states, we all attend to our appearance each day through the act of dressing. An act that is a dense mix of learnt social codes, economics, marketing, and preference. Costuming complicates

appearance by showing how appearance is changeable, unstable, and culturally processual. Indeed, I argue that by understanding costume as a technology of appearance this helps identify its uniqueness against concepts of 'fashion' and 'dress'. Following scholars such as Roland Barthes (1967), fashion is a cultural system that continually fashions (makes, renders) appearance as a commodity, as well as a symbolic gesture, to communicate status, wealth, likes and dislikes. Fashion is the system through which appearance is read. Dress, as Entwistle argues, is an ongoing 'situated bodily practice' (Entwistle 2000: 239) and dressing amounts to the processes of attending to our bodies to 'fit in' or 'stand out' in society. Costume, however, has many definitions depending on disciplinary standpoints. I adopt a version of Richard Schechner's (2013: 28) model of aesthetic performances as 'showing doing' to position costume as 'showing dressing'. This model differentiates everyday body fashioning (dressing) from the extra-daily event of costume (showing dressing). In this regard, I argue that acts of costuming are methods for investigating bodies caught in the act of appearance (of showing dressing).

Costume as showing dressing betrays my own interest in unlearning how bodies are put together and the work monolithic concepts such as 'the body' do in flattening complexity. The use of the definitive speaks to philosophical systems that seek to universalise and disaggregate bodily differences as a variable, rather than an ontological lens from which to understand experience. I argue that 'the body' is always a coalition of many bodies – bodies within bodies. Posthumanist approaches to 'the human' speak to a similar provocation, as Rosi Braidotti proposes 'the central challenge that the posthuman convergence throws open is how to reposition the human after Humanism and anthropocentrism' (Braidotti 2019: 11). One approach I have offered to navigate this tension is the provocation of 'body-assemblages'. This position leans heavily on post-Deleuzian approaches to assemblage theory, which Manuel DeLanda describes as 'conceiving of the components of an assemblage as themselves assemblages [or] the idea that the environment of an

assemblage is itself an assemblage' (DeLanda 2016: 6-7). Critically, there are always larger and smaller assemblages depending on the [--- pg 205---] perspective or scale from which an event / object / thing is observed. Body-assemblages are, I propose, collections of processes that come to materialise what is categorised as 'body' (whether biologically, materially, or technologically rendered) into being. What this means for costume is threefold; 1) costumes are agents within a body-assemblage; 2) costumes are themselves assemblages; 3) the ontological slippage of costumes (as a 'put on') affords insight into body as assemblage. If scenographics irritate or complicate normative models of thing / world / reality, the irritant of costume scenographics becomes a highly useful standpoint from which to investigate what costume does as a socio-material technology. Moreover, this also repackages costume as an agent for investigating complex processes that resist observation, such as the interrelated projects patriarchy, colonialism, and capitalism and their effects, such as climate crisis and oppression.

Costumes as body-assemblage irritants is what my proposal for costume scenographics rests upon. Essentially, I am interested in how the showing dressing of costume can reveal, complicate, and affirm aesthetic models of human as 'in process' and significantly more porous, as a category of life, than is conventional considered. This offers a further expansion on the idea of showing dressing towards a cultural investigation of 'showing human'. Accordingly, the provocation of investigating the category of 'human' through acts of costuming is at one level critical (posthumanist) and at another a simple observation that costumes allow us to perform otherwise: to outperform the cultural frameworks that are learnt as the 'right way' the 'only way' to be (human). It is this quality of costumes to outperform normative models of appearance, and therefore of normative models of 'the human', that my proposal for costume scenographics offers to the costume scholarship. Approached as a method for investigating the biological, ecological, and social assumptions of the human, costume practices have the potential to investigate cultural body politics and transcend the

anti-theatrical bias that frames staged material cultures: as fake, vapid, derivative. My argument for costume scenographics focuses on the personal, social, and political orientations – whether to bodies, worlds, or cultures – produced by acts of showing dressing.

My approach to costume scenographics is, effectively, a statement on how costumes orientate human-centric feelings of place. If scenographics are a collection of techniques or traits that craft feelings of place, then costumes also have the potential *to* place: enacting a feeling of near or far, familiar or foe. Yet, an individual's feeling of being placed will always be bound to how they are orientated more generally. This includes personal orientations (emotional, sexual, embodied) along with cultural orientations (nationalities, normativities, regulations), which are, in turn, practiced through spatial orientations (proxemics, haptics, kinesics). This triad of personal, cultural, and spatial orientations are engaged tactically by scenographic practices. As the plural description of these multiple orientations coming together, scenographics is the framework I adopt for investigating how staged material practices (from gardening to installation art) craft feelings of place. Often best described as producing 'atmospheres' (as a combination of emotion and place), the atmospheres produced through scenographics is critical to understanding the value of these techniques in the enactment, regulation, and judgements of place politics more generally. Costume is one of many methods for producing scenographics.

For matters of clarity, while I argue that all costumes produce scenographics, my proposal sits alongside a growing number of provocations on the critical value of scenographics as a critical framework for investigating all manner of crafts and politics: such as 'justice scenographics' (Hann 2020), 'painting scenographics' (Hann 2021a), 'scent scenographics' (Kjellmer 2021), scenographics as tactical atmospherics (Hann 2021b) and 'gender scenographics' (Hann 2022). Each instance is looking to describe and articulate the potentiality of scenographics as a framework for negotiating

the complex intersection of place, body, and politics as felt orientations. With regard costume, the implied interconnectedness between place-assemblages and body-assemblages affords a timely provocation in an era of climate crisis. Costume scenographics afford a, to use the words of Carl Lavery (2016: 232), 'weak' method for navigating [--- pg 206---] the deep philosophical and aesthetic challenges that the 21<sup>st</sup> century faces. I read Lavery's distinction between 'strong' and 'weak' performances of tackling climate crisis as, in the first instance, not underplaying the need for material systematic political and energy revolutions (strong performances) and, in relation to art, the different kinds of affects that accumulative methods (weak performances) have in acts of revolution. Weak performances are the irritants that over time build up as a wave in individuals and societies that crescendo into change.

The weak performances of costume scenographics were overt in a number of the experiments I witnessed in Oslo. Berit Haltvik and Jenny Hilmo Teig's *Redressed* (2021) investigated previously made costumes the pair had designed to improvise 'new ways of showing the costume pieces that differed from the original characters' (Haltvik and Hilmo Teig 2021). The project had also emerged out of an interest in reflecting how the spaces around their studio (in an industrial harbour in Trondheim in Norway) were being rezoned and developed. The results were a series of transformational acts where two performers, Kjersti Stenby and Anna Ladegaard, moved from an amorphous blob to two handmaids connected by a shared Bonnette, via a series of animalistic forms (trucks) and ritual dress (crowns). I also witnessed much of the pairs process, in collaboration with the performers, of continually redressing to find new characters, but also narratives. I observed a concerted effort to see how these collections of unrelated costumes could perform together. Indeed, each 'character' in the final performance was composed of costumes from at least two different performances. They were each assemblages of discrete 'costumes' remade into new costumes.

Of course, this process is highly familiar to any costume professional. The costume rail has been a formative part of any venue or studio-based practice for centuries. The reuse of costumes for different performances is common practice. Haltvik and Hilmo Teig's combinations of different costumes from previous performances highlighted the potential of these rails as starting points for performance. The reperformance of these costumes as new costumes offers an insight into how costume assemblages (of sequins, cotton, sticks, lace, etc) collaborate in underlining the *showing* of showing dressing. In terms of costume scenographics, these experiments effectively enacted a manifesto of reuse and repurpose. While not to disregard the original place-based context of the project (regeneration in Trondheim), formative to the costume's scenographics were that they were in process – that the costumes had been one thing and were now finding their way as another. In watching the project evolve, it was impossible not to think about how these costumes would continue to transform into a near and deep future. How they may be used in new performances, but also how their own material assemblages will continue to change (as they already have done from having been grown in cotton fields or moulded from thermoplastics and the oils that had one been living creators, etc.). The costume scenographics of showing dressing, in this instance, offered a weak insight into futures ecologies of costuming practices, as well as reminders of how the 'tyranny of the new' plays out in Late Capitalist cultures.

Costume scenographics are the techniques and traits that render a feeling of place through costume. An overt example of this was Natálie Rajnišová's *When two stories meet* (2021). She described how her costume practice is 'fascinated by the idea of costume as an independent phenomenon and as a tool to change the body, to set the freedom of the performer by hiding it' (Rajnišová 2020). This exploration of freedom through hiding was self-evident in Rajnišová's performance, which consisted of two costumed characters who meet on a fictional island. The first is covered head to toe in blue

hair and is native to the island. The second is a full body wicker suit that is inspired by the Amazonian Kayapo tribe's ritual dress called 'Bep Kororot'. This character is, within Kayapo mythology, the protector of the bees and the basket like structure – covering the head, arms, legs, and torso – reflect this social function. The Kayapo's materialisation of Bep Kororot has, however, also gathered a contemporary popular culture following due to its similarity to an American Astronaut's spacesuit. It is this cultural reading that Rajnišová's performance taps into as this second character explores the island as if an alien, a visitor. To aid this reading, Rajnišová provided a storyboard that [--- pg 207---] detailed the events of the island's history and the arrival of the visitor.

In terms of costume scenographics, the way in which the costumes changed or re-orientated the atmospherics of the sites they journeyed was critical. The performance itself was promenade with audiences starting in the same location and then choosing to follow one of the two characters. The two then lead the audience groups into the same black box studio, where a final ritual dance is enacted. For instance, the Bep Kororot character arrived in the distance with the audience between two of the school buildings. The material on the ground was loose stone chips. The costume's materiality caused the Bep Kororot character to walk in a slow manner with legs apart. As they got closer, the rubbing and continual movements of the wicker materials was audible to the audience. Combined with the sounds of the footsteps on the loose chips and the characters occasional attempts to investigate the surface, the costume performed in relationship to its surroundings to such a degree that it charged the site. I propose that Rajnišová's costume reorientated its surroundings and asked the site to perform otherwise, as-if-it-were a Luna landscape. The costume scenographics were what gave the site its 'stage-ness'. This offers an important insight into what my proposal for costume scenographics offers costume studies. Namely, that costumes are *also* formative to producing staged atmospheres. I stress the also in this context, to cite the histories of costume being underplayed as third fiddle to set and lighting design in the hierarchies of theatrical



production cultures, but mainly as a reminder that scenographics are always plural. Yet, in this instance, Rajnišová's costume re-orientated a felt relationship to the materialities that pre-existed (of the stone chips, the tall brick walls, the windows, the sky, etc.) and produced the stage-ness of this site. In those terms, the costume was formative to any feeling of this site as a stage.

The same process of re-orientating the surroundings occurred with the blue haired costume. In this instance, the performance started on natural stone with a water fall in the background. These landscapes then, in the event of the performance, were activated as this character's 'world'. Importantly, I suggest that any readings of this site as a stage were activated by the costume's materiality and the performed gestures that it sustains. This points to a central tenant for my argument for scenographics. There are no stages without scenographics. This challenges the assumption that stages pre-exist scenography. My proposal is that stages are produced by scenographics. Whether culturally operating as 'heterotopias' (Foucault 1986: 27) or a 'special space' marked off for performance (Schechner 1968: 48), the stage-ness of a site is materialised through scenographic techniques (of set, light, sound, costume). But importantly, the focus on orientations renders scenographic acts as inclusive of intangible techniques (spacing, atmosphere, placing) that prepare or active feelings of place. It is these qualities that I assign to scenographics. Costume scenographics engage this same potential to activate a site of action through the tangible and intangible techniques of place orientation. Accordingly, I propose that Rajnišová's costumes re-orientated everyday places into stages and this observes the formative potential of costumes to make performance (as well as describe character or identity).

The scenographics of Snezana Pesic's costumes for *Performing Modified Bodies* (2021) presented an altogether different orientation. Pesic describes the performance as an investigation into 'burgeoning popularity of cosmetic surgery and a contemporary fashion silhouette emerging from

corporal modifications' (Pesic 2021). The costume objects Pesic brought to the workshop were masks and augmented shorts made of 'soft leather, plastic, and silicone; stretched, stitched, and formed in the same way that skin is sculpted in plastic surgery' (Pesic 2021). Unmistakably, the costumes were symbolically loaded with codified textures such as the dotted pen lines mark up by a surgeon as part of pre-operative preparation, along with the post operative (healed) results that come from procedures such as face lifts, botox as well as buttock and breast augmentations. A third performer, Debora Styvsova, operated a camera linked to a live feed projection on the back wall. This technological process allowed for close ups of the costume textures, including the qualities of the cow leather (former cow skin) and its material correlation to human [--- pg 208 ---] skin. The overall journey of the performance was one of two characters engaging in a combination of wonder (at what is possible through technological process of body modification) and reflection (on how they perform through/with these new technological bodies).

Cultures of body modification and body dysmorphia are an area I have personal knowledge of. As a trans woman, I am highly familiar with these cultural and practical processes of medical inventions for matters of appearance. It is therefore impossible for me not to experience the scenographic orientations of Pesic's costumes through my own transness. As evidenced by numerous surveys, medical intervention and surgical procedures are culturally assumed by cis (non-trans) people to be at the core of what transition looks like for trans people. Many trans people will elect to undertake surgical processes often to align with social models of passing, sexual relationships and/or to affirm their 'seriousness' as a trans person. The technological body achieved through surgical inventions remains a formative image of transness in the public imagination, which is closely aligned with the cultural imagery of plastic surgery more broadly. Nevertheless, gender traditions and transness is, I argue, first and foremost a social practice. The experiences of transness are produced through the shifting or changing of social markers of appearance (dress, gesture, language, etc), possibly along

with name, to socially perform otherwise. Surgical processes are an extension, or augmentation, of these social performances. Legally in the UK and EU, an individual's legal status as 'transgender' is not bound to surgical inventions, yet the medical route for defining and treating gender dysmorphia (as a medical condition) remains at the forefront popular understandings. I offer this contextualisation to frame how my own transness felt in relationship to Pesic's costume scenographics.

The choice to include the 'technological eye' of a live feed camera particularly resonated. It spoke clearly to the interrelationships between plastic surgery and costume as forms of technology. Yet this was a showing dressing of plastic surgery that held the attention. To adopt another of Schechner's (1985: 112) models of performance, the costumes directly engaged the double negative of theatricality as 'not not' plastic surgery. This was not plastic surgery, but it was also not not plastic surgery. The highly detailed and refined craft of Pesic's leather masks, along with the lacing of the corsets as if a surgical suture, all performed through this double negative of their own surrogacy. Indeed, surrogate objects are a staple of scenographic practice. The potential for surrogate objects to perform otherwise is, I argue, critical to understanding costume as a technology. The not not of a surrogate object invites an active slippage between sign and signified, the real and the not-real. Moreover, this slippage obverses the political potential of scenographic surrogacy to allow, in this uncertainty or known replication, to perform otherwise. A surrogate object performs differently to an original. Yet, this does not necessary lead to a value judgement (on the original being better than the surrogate). Rather, I argue, that surrogates can perform in a manner that is unique to surrogacy. Pesic's costume scenographics excelled in drawing attention to the distinctive politics of surrogacy as a special form of technology, or cultural form, that permits objects and people to perform in ways the 'an original' cannot. This, in turn, orientates a commentary on plastic surgery as a kind of surrogacy, such as a breast implant performing the role of a human breast. While Pesic's work could

be read as offering a value judgement on this practice (as a good or a bad thing), the main take away from the performance is that this is a 'possible thing'. It is possible for an implant to surrogate for a breast and that, at a social level, there is no critical distinction (unless otherwise highlighted). Socially, Pesic's costumes remind us that surrogate objects can perform as-if-they-were originals. Indeed, this tension between the recognition of surrogacy and authenticity remains at the core of 21<sup>st</sup> century ethics – or more directly does it matter, socially, if a technological body performs as-if-it-were a strictly biological one.

The scenographic surrogacy of Pesic's costumes, as not not buttock or breast implants, offered a framework for examining how technologies of bodily modification are judged more generally. Whereas normative body fashionings – from ear piercings to clothing – have one level of cultural status, plastic surgery seem [--- pg 209---] ingly counteracts the deep-seated Romanticist ideology of 'be your true self'. Queer cultures in multiple forms have adopted this same mantra as a rationale for queerness, to perform and socially be recognised as authentically queer. Yet, the tactics of queerness often focus on technologies of artifice, such as dress, make up, wigs, and tattoos. Plastic surgery sits at this same moral intersection between the bodily autonomy to express ideas of self (aligning body with orientation) and the regulation of these same processes through legal, social, and moral codes (governing what is 'acceptable' bodily modification). While the complexities of these morality judgements exceed the context of this chapter, the costume scenographics of *Performing Modified Bodies* served as an apt reminder of the power of costume to permit an individual to perform otherwise. In observing your own body-assemblage, or that of others, caught in the act of appearance, this affords a tool for reflecting upon the cultural politics of how bodies are judged, regulated, and valued. Costuming is a technology for investigating the cultural politics of bodies.

While the use of technology (in its various forms) is more readily understood as ‘scenographic’ (lighting, sound, projection, etc.), the use of scent is a less discussed and less identified technology of scenographic orientation. Lotta Barlach’s *The Weight of Lavender* (2021) is a wonderful case in point. The performance consisted of two silk costumes with pockets throughout. One of the costumes contained lavender and the other cardamom seeds. Each costume had a distinctive scent. Barlach’s describes how she collaborated with the two performers, Matilda Gustavsson Drobina and Olivia Hansson, by discussing ‘what the scents and the sounds evoke and transformed interpretations into movements’ (Barlach 2021). The team experimented with a range of dance styles, rhythms, speeds, and gestures to investigate the potential of these scent producing costumes. One of the outcomes of the experimentation in rehearsals was to play with the sounds crafted by the movements of the seeds in the silk pockets. This combination of the sounds and scents of the costumes became, in many ways, the primary orientating tactics of Barlach’s costumes in performance. Yet, the idea of scent as a performance technology has been persistently underwritten and underexplored in creative works.

Viveka Kjellmer offers a useful study on the scenographics of olfactory art. She argues that ‘scented scenographics can add important values to visible artworks and that they do not necessarily have to be pointed out or explained to be effective’ (Kjellmer 2021: 83). Critically, Kjellmer suggests the place orientations of scent scenographics operate as a technology that exceeds the cultural codification of olfactory art, such as perfume, to position ‘scent as a scenographic tool’ (Kjellmer 2021: 85). In turn, the scenographic framing of scent offers a methodology for investigating ‘fragrance as a multisensory communication tool reaching far beyond mere prettiness’ (Kjellmer 2021: 86). Barlach’s scented costumes are, following Kjellmer’s model, a tool for investigating the cultural politics of scent as well as the orientations crafted by being *with* scent. Scent in this regard acts as a place orientating technology that, literally, modifies the qualities of an atmosphere to

perform otherwise. Barlach's scented costumes, while no doubt an agent in the atmosphere of the performance, were also minor manifestos on what costume can do. Scent operates beyond the visual. If one of the starting points for costume scenographics is to confront or challenge the idea of costume as 'symbolic dress' as visually coded, Barlach's work offers a statement on the possible materialities of costume practice. If not strictly focused on rendering a visual symbol, costume is arguably freed up to examine the immaterial processes of orientation. Scent as a scenographic tool is also a tool of costume.

The provocation that scent is a tool of costume suggests a further question: can scent operate as an act of costuming? Consider this thought experiment: if a performer were to walk on stage and the only orientating technology as to their character, aside from how their body-assemblage is otherwise read, was a distinct scent of perfume: is the perfume performing as-if-it-were a costume? Moreover, following Aoife Monk's (2010) argument that nudity on stage can operate as a form of costume, this would suggest that the aesthetic tasks of costume can be also undertaken through scent. To my knowledge there are very few, if any, examples [--- pg 210---] of a scent costume being examination in quite this way. Yet as Kjellmer suggests, the orientating technology of scent can operate as a scenographic tool. Following on this from, I would propose that scent as costume offers a further provocation on the future of costume materialities. In particular, Barlach's *The Weight of Lavender* offers an example of scent as costume (as distinct from scent as place, or scent as memory) that is also formative to the task of making performance. In conceiving scent as a scenographic tool, there is also further scope for future research on scent scenographics as a critical-creative starting point for unlearning the dominance of visually codified and ocular-centric perspectives on performance production. In this regard, Barlach's experiment with scent laden costumes points to further investigations into the materialities and sensory possibilities of costume practice.

The proposal for scent as costume is part of my broader proposal for rethinking scenography beyond vision. Yet, this position is not unique to costume scenographics. Sally E Dean's work is a case in point and was aptly investigated as part of *Give Them Wings & We Shall See Their Faces* (2021). Dean argues that, what she has branded, Somatic Costumes™ have the 'possibility of changing our body image and body schema, affecting not only how we move and experience our bodies, others, and the environment, but also what we create and how we perform' (Dean 2014). Focused on material practices for engaging somatic awareness of bodily processes, there is a distinct alignment with my own approach to costume scenographics as irritating the body-assemblage. This was directly apparent as part of my own experience of Dean's work in Oslo.

I entered the space in a see-through head covering, but invited to close my eyes if I wished. My feet were bare. With my eyes closed, I was led by a guide and with light touches on my shoulders. The guide gestured, via directional touches, for me to kneel onto a cushion in front of me. As my hands adjust to the floor space, I felt what I would later discover to be a trough of lentils. I couldn't help but peek slightly with my eyes as I ran my fingers through the lentils. In what was only a glimpse, I realised I a lot. First, that the lights were dimmed in the studio. Second, that while I had only put it on minutes before, I had forgotten about the see-through head covering that I was now peeking through. Third, that in opening my eyes I was, in fact, missing out. I was missing out on not looking. On allowing my sensory matrix to attune itself to not looking. To feeling the orientations of this place. Ironically, this momentary peek affirmed a cultural politics of art analysis that, I personally, was keen to challenged, but yet still found difficult to practice. The sensory complexity of my personal journey through Dean's *Give Them Wings ...* offers much on the cross over between costume scenographics and costume somatics. Beyond the peek (and now with my eyes firmly closed), there were several sensory adventures that my guide took me on: from traversing the studio at pace, and learning to trust their light touches to keep me safe, to the various materialities that

shifted my bodily attunement. At one point, I found a heavy coat jacket that I am put on. At another, I stepped into the lentils trough and the guide gently sprinkled some on the tops of my bare feet. Lastly, I discovered a mound of paper chains that I look to navigate and rest within. These bodily attunements to materialities were gentle yet unsettling, comfortable yet disorientating. It is these felt tensions that remains with me to this day. I continue to feel the costume somatics I experienced that day.

The embodied, or more precisely somatic, legacy of my experience with Dean's installation is, I would argue, one of the main things at stake in the proposal for costume somatics. While not to underplay the presentism I experienced during the journey, the gestures I felt as the lentils rained upon the tops of my feet or when I put on that coat have remained part of my bodily memory. I can still feel them, especially on my feet. It has left me questioning how well I know my body and indeed the potential of my body to feel, in different ways and at different registers. I offer my own experience of *Give Them Wings ...* as a wayfinding exercise in asking what is at stake in acts of costuming. While I have suggested that costumes are liminal practices of appearing otherwise, what if costuming extends to acts of feeling otherwise. Costume somatics undoubtedly, from my reading, speak to this intersection of feeling and costume. It offers new [--- pg 211---] routes for thinking through the showing dressing of costume as also a showing feeling: a methodology for reflecting on how feeling is produced, experienced, and practiced. Moreover, if costume scenographics irritate learnt normativities of appearing, costume somatics irritate the normativities of feeling. This interrelationship between costume scenographics and costume somatics offers a number of fruitful avenues for future research that I have only begun to touch upon here.

In conclusion, I have offered this thought experiment on costume scenographics as a gesture towards approaching the multi-sensory and place orientating traits of costume practice. If the



primary criteria for judging costume shifts from what it 'looks like' to what it 'feels like', this journey has the potential to remap the political task of costume more broadly. Indeed, as with scenography, costume is often underwritten as a key tool of political discourse and dismissed as pretend play or not serious. As I have outlined in this chapter, costume can act as a critical tool in investigating the ways in which appearance is regulated, codified, and judged. My proposal for costume scenographics, based on my experiences at KHIO, is presented as a wayfinding lens for debating what costume does beyond an ocular-centric positionality. Inclusive of scent and somatics, placing and staging, costumes have latent atmospheric potentials in the same model of sound and lighting. In attempting to ask what costume does, it is also clear that costume acts as a critical lens for navigating the complex moral, political, and cultural frameworks that categorize bodies, humans and nonhumans. Far from being a derivative art or 'mere' pretend play, costume is a technology for performing otherwise in an era when bodily determinism and the regulation of appearance is seemingly on the rise.

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