

The Conscious Unconsciousness
A Corporeal Monodrama with Electronic Music

by

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores embodied self-exploration and healing through an original multimedia performance work, *The Path*. The project investigates how integrating sound design, electronic music composition, interactive technology, choreography, filming, and video editing externalizes internal struggles, depicts transformative processes, and communicates profound emotional states. Through seven structured sections, the narrative follows a veiled character burdened by physical restraints and identity-masking attire. Their journey—from isolation, cyclical struggle with imposed identities, and despair, to confrontation, healing, and ultimate liberation—serves as a metaphor for confronting challenging mental states and achieving authentic self-discovery. The methodology centers on autobiographical inquiry, utilizing movement, designed objects, and digital tools to create highly personal artistic expression. Sound design plays a crucial role, employing processed vocal fragments, environmental textures, motion-triggered feedback, percussive elements, and saxophone drones to sonically manifest psychological tension, memory intrusion, and catharsis. Visual choices, including strategic use of noise, monochrome palettes, and layered symbolic props, reinforce themes of burden, failed solutions, and gradual shedding. Crucially, the work positions itself as a potential therapeutic model, proposing that non-verbal, body-centered creation offers pathways to understanding unresolved emotional pain and somatic trauma. The resulting film documents a raw, vulnerable process of self-confrontation, demonstrating how creative media becomes a powerful instrument for personal discovery, resilience, and communicating complex psychological states.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to all lives oppressed by forces, whether visible or invisible, who persist unyieldingly in their pursuit of freedom and happiness.

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CHAPTER 1 - FOUNDATION

Introduction

"It's a path, not a loop" – this is the central message I wish to share through this creation.

For a long time, my artistic career seemed stuck in a tormenting loop, dragging my personal life into a whirlwind of self-doubt, aimlessness, and unease. The inception of this piece came from my mentor, Dr. Fernanda Navarro, who suggested it as a way to liberate my repressed inner voice. She encouraged me to create something not for external validation, but to listen to my own inner self—a work in which the presence or absence of sound or a written score would not determine its value.

And so, I embarked on an uncharted journey, experimenting with choreography, costume and prop design, photography, editing, and scoring a 30-minute film. Through this process, I began to understand myself more deeply. With this work, I was able to lead myself out of that cycle, realizing that everything occurs with purpose. It is not a loop, but a path that may appear to be one.

Behind the Creation: A Journey of Self-Exploration and Sharing

Throughout the creation of this work, I held onto a guiding belief that continually encouraged me to persevere. This belief stemmed from the potential impact that the work might have in the future.

I understood that, even if the piece were to resonate with a small number of individuals, it would still be meaningful. More importantly, I hoped that others might draw inspiration from my journey of self-exploration and healing. In my view, this process is not limited to composers. Anyone seeking to understand themselves—

especially those who feel lost or are experiencing pain without knowing its source—can engage in this approach of creating an art work for the purpose of self-discovery and healing.

In contemporary society, individuals are often overwhelmed by external noise and increasingly reliant on visual information. As a result, the inner voice is frequently neglected. When emotional pain remains unresolved, it can become stored within the body. Attempts to process such pain solely through intellectual means may overlook its physical dimension. Allowing the neglected inner voice to express itself through moving the physical body can reveal emotions and memories that have long been suppressed or forgotten.

I sought to create a piece that others might reference through this work. If even one person can benefit from it, that would be deeply meaningful to me.

This project incorporates multiple disciplines beyond music composition, including choreography, videography, and video editing. I am a composer and not formally trained in these other areas; however, I believe that professional titles are not a prerequisite for meaningful expression. Physical and visual forms of expression should remain accessible to anyone.

Initially, I lacked the confidence to invite collaborators because this is not a project that I could have envisioned the creative process in its beginning stages, or the increasing difficulty of communicating with others. A completely safe space was necessary in order to let the vulnerable inner parts willingly show themselves. So, for several months, all video recordings were created independently using a smartphone. As my confidence grew, I invited my husband to collaborate on the filming process in White

Sand National Park in New Mexico. This partnership marked a significant turning point, allowing me to embrace vulnerability and share my work more openly.

Each filming session was followed by careful review. By repeatedly watching the footage, I analyzed the motivations behind my own movements and identified recurring patterns. This iterative process became a form of self-inquiry, revealing aspects of myself that I had not previously recognized.

I hope that others may similarly discover their inner needs through inner-voice guided physical movement and/or other types of creative work. With documentation, these recurring patterns can be found and analyzed. Once the unwanted programming in our body is revealed, the power of reprogramming will take over and grow.

In chapter two, this dissertation introduces the artists, works, and psychological practices that have influenced this project. Chapter three details the choreographic process; chapter four discusses the filming and video production; chapter five focuses on sound creation; and chapter six provides a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between narrative, visual elements, choreography, and music across the seven sections of the work.

CHAPTER 2 - INFLUENCES

2.1 Music

Pamela Z

A few years ago, I encountered the work of Pamela Z, an American composer-performer who uses her voice and daily life objects-based sounds with electronic processing and gesture-activated MIDI controllers to layer, loop, and transform sound in real time. Her approach to sampling the voice into structured musical gestures inspired me to use my own voice as the primary material in this work. I also incorporated motion sensors to manipulate vocal samples, extending this influence into my own practice. Pamela Z's work is particularly significant for the way it dissolves the boundary between performer and instrument. Her use of live processing and gesture control allows the body to directly shape sound in real time, creating a feedback loop between movement and sonic output. This relationship informed my own use of motion sensors and interactive systems, where physical gestures trigger and transform vocal materials. In this sense, sound in my work is not composed in a fixed manner, but emerges through embodied interaction, reflecting a similar integration of technology and corporeal expression.

Björk

Björk's compositional language frequently positions the human voice not merely as a melodic carrier, but as a primary source of raw data for digital manipulation when she uses vocal-only materials. Instead of sampling in a way that seeks to preserve the "organic" identity of a recording, Björk's work often treats her own vocal folds as a wavetable or a granular synthesizer. In her album *Fossora* (especially the song *Tröllagabba*) (Björk, 2022), by sampling and re-contextualizing her own vocal output, Björk

effectively separates the “voice” from the “singer.” This process does not strip the voice of its humanity; rather, it extends the reach of the human body into the digital domain, allowing a single breath to become a structural foundation for an entire orchestral landscape. Similarly to Björk, I recorded vocal samples and used fragmented vocal samples to create a sound world in which the vocal identity and its raw emotional impact get amplified.

2.2 Dance

Butoh

While researching Palmela Z, the work, *Gaijin* (Z, 2020) had an extra impact by introducing me to Butoh dance for the first time. In the performance still from *Gaijin* (Figure 1), the dancers’s movements and white makeup used on their entire body externalized their unadorned, inner pain. They deliberately chose not to display the traditional notion of beauty but instead bravely exposed their true inner feelings, which has encouraged me to confront my true self.

Figure 1

Performance still from "Gaijin" by Pamela Z



Note. From *Gaijin* [Video], by P. Z, 2020, Vimeo (<https://vimeo.com/455757379>).

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Butoh is a post-World War II Japanese avant-garde dance form characterized by slow, hyper-controlled movement, striking physical imagery, and an aesthetic that resists fixed definitions; it was developed in Tokyo in the late 1950s by Tatsumi Hijikata and Kazuo Ohno as part of a broader experimental performance culture.

Rather than pursuing athletic virtuosity, the movement arises from a sense of inner vibration, in which the body appears to respond to an invisible, internal gravity. In my piece, my movement vocabulary does not attempt to mimic the literal aesthetic of Butoh; rather, it is anchored by where the body is moved, not by momentum, but by the internal

emotional conflict. It is an attempt to map the inner tremors of the psyche and reveal how the unconsciousness in our body can bring the true voice onto the stage.

Tanztheater and Pina Bausch

Captured by her primary biographer Norbert Servos, Pina Bausch stated, "I'm not interested in how people move, but in what moves them," (Schmidt, 1982, p. 15) a philosophy that emphasizes the internal or subconsciousness is the drive of a body's movement. "Pina Bausch pioneered Tanztheater (dance theater) as a medium where the 'why' of human emotion supersedes the 'how' of technical movement, redefined the boundaries of the stage. Her work centers on the visceral experiences of the performer, transforming personal memory and repetitive labor into a profound theatrical language." (Bausch, as cited in Servos, 2008, p. 16)

In her 1977 work, *Bluebeard: While Listening to a Tape Recording of Béla Bartók's Opera "Duke Bluebeard's Castle"* (Bausch, 1977), Bausch uses Bartók's tape recording not as a background, but as a physical antagonist. The protagonist constantly stops and rewinds a tape recorder, forcing the dancers to repeat grueling, fragmented movements. I can see this "broken record" mechanic serving as a literal and metaphorical representation of being trapped in a psychological loop. The large number of repetitive movements strikes me with its inevitable expressiveness. It inspired me to move my body freely without directing it but then observing what has been repetitive so I can figure out "what moves my body". I used this idea of repetition similarly in my work to show the character's cyclical quests and struggles.

2.3 Performance Art

Marina Abramović

Marina Abramović, a foundational figure in performance art, has profoundly influenced my understanding of the body as both a primary subject and a generative medium. Her work frequently centers on extreme endurance, testing the limits of physical and psychological capacity to place the performer in states of radical vulnerability and exposure. By stripping away the safety of artifice, she reveals the raw intensity of human presence—a quality that resonates deeply with my own creative practice. Her "long durational" approach suggests that the body is not just a vessel for expression, but an instrument that reveals truth through the exhaustion of its own defenses.

Her willingness to confront pain and personal history through performance has encouraged a shift in my approach toward greater honesty and structural transparency. In my film project, this influence is visible in the use of physical strain and repetitive movement within the choreography. Rather than viewing movement as a purely aesthetic or decorative element, I treat it as a visceral record of time and effort. In part V of *The Path*, I used the mallets to hit a drum attached to my bamboo hat, and the woodblocks on my body madly. But when I first came up with this idea, there was nothing attached to me. I clearly wanted to hit myself because I felt that creating pain may chase away the pain inside of my body. This gesture mirrors Abramović's statement that the "physical reality" of sweat, trembling, and fatigue serves as proof that the artist is not "acting" but is undergoing a genuine physical process (Jestrović, 2019).

Womanhouse

The core of my choreographic expression lies in the repetition and oscillation of symbolic gestures, a strategy deeply influenced by the *Waiting* monologue (by Faith Wilding)—a seminal performance from the 1972 *Womanhouse* project. Organized by Judy Chicago and Miriam Schapiro as part of the Feminist Art Program at CalArts, *Womanhouse* was a landmark collaborative installation that transformed a dilapidated Hollywood mansion into a site of feminist critique (Schapiro, 1972). Within this reclaimed domestic space, Chicago and Schapiro encouraged artists to explore the "hidden" labor and psychological confinement of the home through "consciousness-raising" techniques (Chicago, 1975).

Faith Wilding's *Waiting* (1972) serves as the most profound influence on my work within this context. In the performance, Wilding uses a repetitive rocking motion to create a suspension of time, forcing the viewer to endure the "waiting" alongside her. Moving her upper body like a metronome, she recites a monologue that chronicles the lifecycle of a woman as a series of passive, gendered expectations: waiting to be fed, waiting to grow up, waiting for a husband, and waiting for the end.

Wilding does not merely perform a gesture; she embodies the crushing weight of "expected womanhood," using the repetition of the rocking motion to represent the erosion of individual agency through domestic stasis. As the performance progresses, her body bends further and further, physically manifesting the psychological toll of a life spent "waiting to be given" purpose by others. Her work touched me deeply and reminded me of how many people like us, are born figuratively chained.

I have integrated this concept of repetitive, symbolic physical gestures into my own work to explore a similar state of exhaustion and distortion. In my choreography, this influence is reflected in how a single, movement that carries heavy emotion--when repeated to the point of fatigue—can break through the "social mask" of the performer. Much like Wilding's use of the body as a site of systemic exposure, I aim to transform simple acts of physical endurance into a visceral revelation of the unconscious self, moving past aestheticized motion to reveal a raw, unfiltered presence.

Olivier de Sagazan

In *Transfiguration* (Sagazan, 1998) (Figure 2), a work by Olivier de Sagazan, the artist presents a visceral descent into the dissolution of identity. The performance begins with a recognizable human figure, who gradually obscures and distorts their own face using clay and paint, transforming into an unrecognizable, primal entity. This process highlights the instability of identity and the fragility of socially constructed selfhood.

This idea strongly resonates with my work, particularly in the use of masks, coverings, and layered materials that gradually conceal and distort the body. Similar to Sagazan's transformation, my character undergoes a process of losing and reconstructing identity through accumulation and removal. The moment in my piece when the body becomes fully covered by the black veil, after attaching masks and woodblocks, reflects a state in which the original self is no longer visible, emphasizing both the loss of identity and the potential for transformation.

Figure 2

Performance Still from Transformation



Note. From “*Transfiguration*” A performance of Olivier de Sagazan [Video], by O. de Sagazan, 2010, YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ljqvg7xaxc>). Copyright 2010 by Olivier de Sagazan.

2.4 Psychology

The Body Keeps the Score

Inspired by a psychiatrist and author, Bessel van der Kolk’s *The Body Keeps the Score*, my work *The Path* employs choreography rooted in somatic theory—specifically the premise that trauma and repressed emotions are physically encoded within the nervous system rather than existing solely as conscious memories. In my project,

choreography functions as a form of "somatic experiencing." Movements were designed as "bottom-up" explorations rather than purely aesthetic choices; they were intended to evoke and subsequently dissolve the physical "patterns" that manifested as creative resistance during years of artistic stagnation. By prioritizing instinctive bodily impulses over cognitive control, I used the editing process to actively "re-script" these deeply held physical imprints. Consequently, the attire and movements captured in the film externalize this internal "score," allowing the music to arise organically from authentic kinetic expression rather than from abstract compositional demands.

Drama Therapy

My creative process is further informed by two core concepts of drama therapy: Self-Revelatory Performance and Aesthetic Distance.

Self-Revelatory Performance is a process in which the performer develops a work based on their own real-life struggles or "stuck" points (Emunah, 2015). Unlike traditional theater, the primary objective is not mere entertainment, but a psychological breakthrough for the performer (Emunah, 2015, 2020).

Aesthetic Distance involves finding the "middle ground" between emotional overwhelm (under-distance) and detachment (over-distance) (Landy, 1994).

Landy suggests that at this "midpoint," a confluence of thought and feeling occurs, allowing for catharsis and the objective exploration of traumatic material. (Landy, 1993; Sajnani et al., 2020).

I treat this project as a "middle ground" of self-revelation. The acts of choreographing and filming the performance allow me to externalize my struggles, rendering them visible and objective. Putting on the prepared attire and props in front of the camera establishes the necessary distance from my trauma, facilitating a breakthrough through controlled representation.

Imagery Rescripting

Imagery Rescripting (ImRs) is a technique used primarily in Schema Therapy and CBT to treat traumatic or distressing memories. Instead of simply remembering a past event, the individual enters the mental image and actively intervenes to change the outcome. The goal is not to "delete" the memory, but to reclaim agency and meet the emotional needs that were neglected at the time of the original event. (Arntz, 2012, p.423)

Key Stages of ImRs:

1. Activation: Bringing the distressing memory into the mind's eye.
2. Intervention: Introducing a "rescriptor" (often an adult version of yourself) to enter the scene.
3. Restoration: Changing the narrative—stopping a perpetrator, providing comfort, or altering the environment—to achieve emotional resolution. (Arntz, 2012, p. 424)

In therapy, I engaged in Imagery Rescripting, guided by my therapist to document a recurring nightmare. Regardless of the dream's specifics, it consistently

placed me in life-threatening peril—unfavorable, inescapable, making me feel helpless and powerless, leaving only the futile attempt to flee. After scripting the original nightmare, we reworked the narrative into a version where I held agency: equipping myself with weapons or superpowers, introducing an ally, and rewriting the ending. I then began practicing this rescripted scenario, particularly before sleep. Remarkably, this practice not only instilled a sense of strength and control during visualization but also carried over into my dreams. Even when facing unfavorable circumstances within the dream, I now possess a degree of agency. Ultimately, these nightmares ceased.

I have since applied this principle of rescripting to the film and my video editing. In the first filming session in White Sand National Park, I walked away from the sand dunes at the end of the story with my black leotard and disappeared in the view. This gesture did not seem like a “happy ending” for the character. After reviewing the footage, I decided to change the ending to the current version in which the character takes off the black leotard and sits still in peace among the sand dunes. I still struggled mentally to some degree at that time, but through rescripting the story, I gained more power and confidence from this process. Also, when editing, I discovered empowerment through deciding how the story unfolds and concluded that I don’t have to follow an earlier version of the story I had created; I could create a totally new story if I wanted. As an example, in an earlier version of ending, the character instead of sitting in peace, they walked away and disappeared with wearing the black attire which creates a ending with heaviness.

This experience revealed a crucial insight: what I truly need is not a life free of obstacles, but a belief that I am capable of making changes.

CHAPTER 3 - MOVEMENT, DANCE, PROPS

3.1 Introduction and Background

This work did not originate from a predetermined academic pursuit; it emerged from an urgent, intuitive imperative—a necessity to traverse a landscape of profound creative stagnation. At its heart, this project was conceived as a sanctuary: a deliberate space to excavate the unrecognized creative impulses buried within, to give voice to long-suppressed inner whispers and unspoken emotional truths.

It was Fernanda Navarro, my friend and mentor, who first recognized the depth of my creative paralysis. She offered a radical suggestion: to create not for external validation, but solely for myself. Guided by this insight, I began documenting the disparate elements that were the most salient to me at that time—movement, percussion, voice. Initially, working with sound felt like a battleground of frustration, a realm where I felt utterly incapable of producing anything resonant, and so I set it aside.

3.2 Choreography: Self-Exploration

The process that unfolded was inherently experimental, a practice of radical listening. I surrendered to the intelligence of my own body, seeking to understand its unarticulated desires and its needs for props and form. The first inklings were simple yet potent: blank stickers to inscribe, black veils for concealment, woodblocks for sound, chains for weight and meaning. Confined within a small office, I sat on the floor, encasing myself in stickers, driven by a primal need to be wrapped, hidden, and unseen.

Soon, the pull intensified; I reached for chains, objects imbued with deep personal resonance, symbolizing the very constraints I yearned to shatter.

In that confined space, amidst the act of veiling myself, affixing triggering words, and draping chains upon my body, a sudden, visceral urge erupted— a need to release, which manifested in beating the surface that I had previously covered with stickers. This raw act became the first draft. At the time, the motivations remained opaque. Yet, through reviewing the footages, clarity emerged: the act of covering was symbolic. It offered a fragile sanctuary, a protective cocoon, while simultaneously functioning as a means of evasion.

Transitioning to a dance studio, its soft flooring inviting rolling and release, I was initially immobilized by fear and unfamiliarity. Beyond adjusting to the new physical environment, a deeper anxiety surfaced: the terror of potential performance before an audience. Only when I reaffirmed the piece’s purpose—that it existed solely for myself and Fernanda, perhaps never to be shared—did my body begin to yield, its movements tentative at first, then recorded once more.

Within this new space, I discovered a series of meaningful grounded movement: crawling, contorting my flexible form into evolving shapes, binding myself with chains. I added masks and black clothing, deepening the layers of concealment. Through repeated viewings of the recordings, patterns emerged with striking clarity—repetitive cycles of bending and rising, kneeling and crawling sustained over time. These movements, I realized, were a somatic expression, articulating the long-held restrictions my body had

endured. They spoke of a mental and physical constraint, unable to stand or move with unburdened freedom.

Gradually, the stickers affixed to my body revealed their true weight: they symbolized the trauma and external expectations that I had suppressed within me for a long time. This immersive and intimate journey of self-exploratory choreography became a catalyst for profound self-understanding and acceptance, and entertained the idea of transforming the work to an art work.

3.3 The Core Movements in My Choreography

Through a cycle of recording, analysis, and refinement, several "core movements" crystallized as essential to the work's body language:

1. Constriction and Release: Repeated sequences of bending and standing while burdened by chains.
2. The Grounded Self: Extended periods of kneeling and crawling, punctuated by the "searching" gesture of looking up from the floor.
3. The Masking/Unveiling: The ritualistic application of stickers, the wearing of masks, and the eventual removal of these layers.
4. Cathartic Percussion: The rhythmic beating of the woodblocks and the body itself, specifically targeting the areas covered by stickers, serving as an act of somatic release.

3.4 Attires and Props Making

In the creative process of this project, the selection and crafting of costumes and props formed a cornerstone, breathing life into the work. An ensemble encompassing hand drums, ancient Chinese bamboo hats, wood blocks, stickers, wooden mallets, metal chains, and a black leotard and black veil, was brought into being. These elements transcended mere visual enhancement; they became potent conduits, delving deep into the character's inner realm and enriching the work's visuals with profound layers of meaning.

The metal chains (Figure 3), a pivotal element, embody the sometimes invisible yet obvious constraints that have long weighed upon the character. Wrapped around the neck, wrists, and ankles, these two chains impose physical limitations, mirroring the psychological chains that bind the character. This externalization of mental confinement not only creates a visual impact but also stirs a sense of unease in the audience, compelling them to ponder the underlying reasons behind such a design and the character's struggles.

Figure 3

Attires and Props Used for The Path, Part 1



Note. Chains (left), black leotard (center-left), the original bamboo hat (center-right), and the modified bamboo hat (right) are used in *The Path*. Photograph by the author.

I removed the original white veil from the ancient-style Chinese bamboo hat and sewed a black veil in its place (Figure 3). Traditionally, such hats served to obscure identity, a function that harmonizes perfectly with the character's deep-seated fear of exposure. Complementing the hat, a black leotard was chosen to envelop the character (Figure 3). Black, a color steeped in symbolism, epitomizes repression, darkness, and sorrow. Professional musicians usually wear black on stage, yet here, it is imbued with deeper significance, expressing the character's hidden emotions and the shadowy facets of their personality. As the narrative unfolds, the black veil gradually extends, enveloping the character's body. This is not merely a physical barrier but an emotional manifestation, spreading the weight of depression and sorrow, and symbolizing the intricate, burdensome landscape of the character's inner world.

Figure 4

Attires and Props Used for The Path, Part 2



Note. The hand drum on top of the bamboo hat (top left), labeled masks (top right), labeled woodblocks (bottom left), and wooden mallets (bottom right) are used in *The Path*. Photograph by the author.

The hand drum, positioned atop the bamboo hat and shrouded by the black veil (Figure 4), introduces an aura of mystery. Its presence subtly hints at the character's inner turbulence and unease, a rhythmic pulse echoing the fluctuations of their mind. The wood

blocks (Figure 4), are affixed with velcros that can be seamlessly attached to the black clothing, which is similarly equipped with the corresponding velcro. This removable feature mirrors the multifaceted "burdens" the character carries throughout their life journey—be it emotional scars, external pressures, or internal struggles with self-perception. Stickers, affixed to both masks (Figure 4) and wood blocks, symbolize the various "attachments" imposed on the character by the external world, such as scars, memories, and voices. Each layer of stickers carries the weight of the character's "growth." In the film, the words on these stickers are intentionally rendered indistinct, as each audience member carries their own unique emotional baggage. This ambiguity allows every viewer to project their own experiences onto the work, fostering a deeply personal and resonant engagement.

The wooden mallet emerges as a pivotal turning point, a catalyst for breaking free from entrenched patterns and pursuing transformative breakthroughs. Each strike of the mallet is a defiant challenge to past constraints, a fervent yearning for freedom and rebirth.

In summary, these conceived costumes and props do more than construct a stage imbued with symbolic depth; they lay bare the character's inner conflicts, journey of growth, and flicker of hope. They beckon the audience to embark on a profound exploration of the intricate and captivating complexities of human nature, revealing the beauty that lies within its depths.

CHAPTER 4 - PERFORMANCE AND FILMING

4.1 Site - Why White Sand National Park Was Chosen

After completing the initial draft of my video project, I decided to develop it into a graduation dissertation project, which led me to consider how to optimize the work. Initially, I was inclined to create in the dance studio I had access to, but I felt there might be a better, more appropriate site for this creation. A memory emerged of traveling to White Sands National Park—a surreal and beautiful place.

The unique charm of White Sands National Park deeply captivated me. The vast expanse, with its endless dunes, offers visitors opportunities to find solitude in this broad landscape. One can distance oneself from the crowd and enjoy tranquility. I thought that the collision between the darkness of the character and the brightness of the environment in the White Sands National Park would undoubtedly add a unique artistic and perceptual tension to the work.

Moreover, the theme of the piece revolves around "peeling off," symbolizing the shedding of layers that the character wraps around themselves. The environment of White Sands National Park seems inherently suited to this theme, imbuing it with a metaphorical sense of cleansing and healing that the character shedding the layers of black veil, attached objects and eventually the black leotard after using the white sands to "wash" themselves. Visually, the character wears a black costume in contrast to the white sands at the beginning and ends with a color that can blend with the environment. Going to the White Sand National Park was not just a change of scenery but also a source of inspiration. The undulating terrain of dunes makes walking challenging, even with

appropriate footwear. However, it is precisely this difficult walking experience that sparked my creative inspiration. I noticed that footprints left on the sand are clearly visible, so I decided to incorporate these traces into the narrative of the work. In one scene, the character chases or follows footprints on the ground, with the soft sand recording each step, becoming an integral part of the piece.

This change in venue also prompted substantive adjustments to my original creative plan. In the initial version set in the dance studio, I planned to gradually affix labeled stickers onto masks and my body. But in the actual environment of White Sands National Park, I found this action out of place. Strong winds made it difficult to fix the stickers, and the paper seemed incongruous due to environmental differences. Therefore, I altered the shooting method: I affixed all the stickers on masks or wood blocks before filming. Thus, what appears in front of the camera is the process of directly wearing already-decorated masks and placing labeled wood blocks on my body. This series of changes occurred naturally due to differences in the settings, reflecting the influence of the environment.

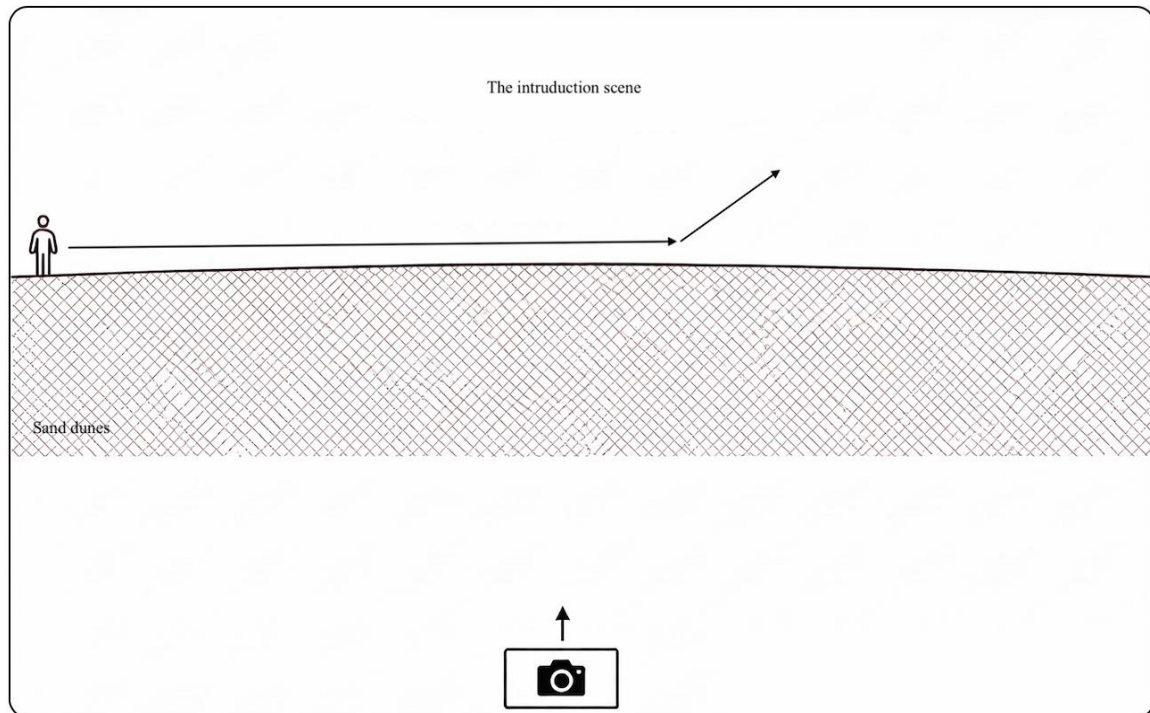
4.2 Filming in White Sand

Performance Maps

To ensure seamless collaboration with the videographer, I translated the conceptual framework of the performance into visual sketches. These diagrams served as a precise guide, clarifying the intended actions within each scene and outlining the videographer's corresponding positioning and responsibilities.

Figure 5

Sketch for "The Path": Introduction Scene.



Note. The character walks from left to center as the arrows indicated.

The opening scene (Figure 5) depicts the character emerging from the left flank of the dunes, progressing steadily toward the center.

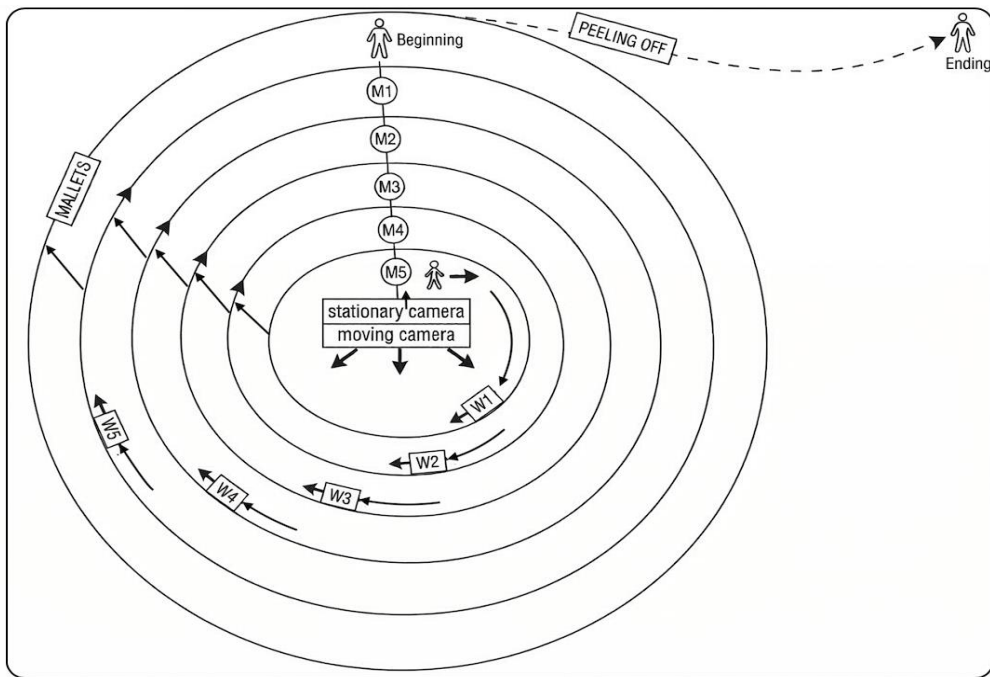
Figure 6 illustrates the "main stage," the central area where the bulk of the footage was captured. There were two cameras used in this scene: a stationary camera and a handheld camera operated by the videographer. The arrows trace the character's movement path. The performance begins at point "M1" (Mask One), with the character advancing gradually toward the stationary camera. After laying all the masks upon the sand, the character transitions into a crawl, moving toward "W1" (Woodblock One) and

entering a symbolic loop. The culmination occurs at the "peeling off" marker, where the character sheds the layers binding their body, then proceeds to the final destination.

This choreographic map embodies the core thematic message: life experiences can often trap us in painful, unrelenting loops, where progress feels elusive. The burdens we carry—masquerading as solutions yet shaped by external programming—become oppressive weights. It is only through confronting this suffocating reality, turning inward to embrace the authentic self, that we can heal the past and forge a new path forward.

Figure 6

Sketch for "The Path": The Main Stage.

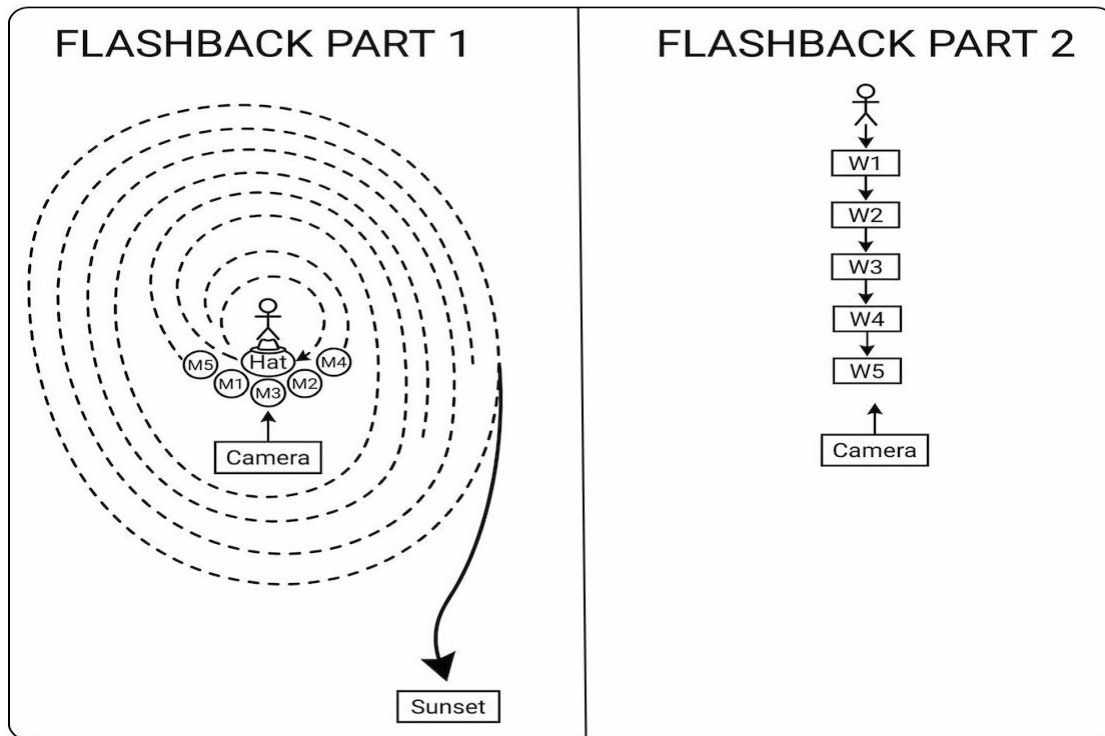


Note. The character starts moving from the “beginning” sign and continuing with where arrows direct until the “ending” sign.

The subsequent sketches (see Figure 7) outline two flashback sequences, interwoven with the main stage footage, depicting the cyclical nature of traumatic experiences. In "Flashback Part 1," the character sits down, gathers masks from the ground and wears the masks, one by one, layering the masks on top of each other. After all masks are layered onto the face, the character picks up and wears a bamboo hat with a long veil; the hat and veil symbolizes the crushing weight of suppressed emotion and constrained existence. The character then travels the "loop" repeatedly before heading toward the sunset. "Flashback Part 2" echoes the main stage's mask-gathering sequence, but with the character collecting woodblocks, striving to stand tall and unyielding.

Figure 7

Sketch for "The Path": Flashback



Note. Flashback Part 1 (left) and Flashback Part 2 (right).

Environmental and Logistical Challenges

The process of filming the performance in White Sands National Park presented significant logistical and artistic challenges, many of which were unforeseen. As this was my first time undertaking such a project in this environment, our preparation was necessarily adaptive. This section details the primary obstacles encountered during the shoot and the on-site solutions developed to address them.

Upon arrival, the videographer and I quickly realized that the vast, open landscape required us to move far from the established pathways and from other visitors. This necessity, combined with carrying extensive equipment, costumes, props, and instruments, proved physically demanding. Once a suitable location was found, another issue emerged: the fragile ground surface. Our initial movements disturbed the sand, making it impossible to use that specific area for staging the performance. We needed to relocate, which introduced a new variable: changing light conditions. The sun's angle, quality, and intensity shifted over time, complicating the sense of continuity. Furthermore, the uneven terrain made it very difficult to produce stable images using a handheld camera. We therefore had to adapt to the terrain conditions and, after shooting for three days, we bought a stabilizer to ensure smooth and stable footage.

Adaptations and New Ideas

Several technical hurdles impacted both the performance and its documentation. My vision was severely limited because of the long black veil attached to the hat. The veil obstructed my view and compromised my sense of direction and navigation. To compensate, I created a physical guide system on the ground, using footprints (as it

became part of the narrative), lines, and circles drawn in the sand as markers. I could then follow these visual cues by looking down. Simultaneously, the videographer provided real-time verbal direction, coaching me through the performance. This reliance on his voice, however, conflicted with my need to record the ambient sounds for field recording. Compounding this issue, strong winds interfered with the microphone's windscreen, ultimately rendering the field audio unusable.

In post-production, I reviewed all footage and identified unavoidable issues, including shaky camera work and inconsistent lighting. To mitigate these problems, I constructed a narrative structure during the editing process. The idiosyncrasies of the raw footage and the gradual change in natural light provided an opportunity to digitally alter light, color, texture, and movement, allowing me to explore an unforeseen and yet positive layer in my creative process as those changes and alternating can represent timeline shifting, character's mental status and its transformation.

Interpersonal Collaboration and Artistic Vulnerability

Finally, the collaborative nature of this project with the videographer (who is also my husband) was unique and rewarding. While I arrived with a pre-conceived plan, the inspiration of the moment often led me to improvise and required new actions from the videographer. This required excellent communication skills amongst the collaborators, and exceptional flexibility and adaptability on the filmmaker's part, as he had to interpret and execute evolving instructions. This dynamic was particularly significant for me on a personal level. In the past, I would not have felt comfortable performing or sharing such vulnerable work when it was still in the process of creation, even with my husband.

However, in this context, working closely and trustingly with the videographer marked a profound transformation in me. It represented a shift in my artistic practice, allowing me to be more open and collaborative, a change I attribute to the specific creative rapport we established.

CHAPTER 5 - SOUND

5.1 Introduction

In this work, the synergy between visuals and sound constitutes the entire narrative. Sound is not merely an accompaniment to the visuals; rather, it is intrinsic to component essential to understanding the story. For instance, the character's driving force in the first half of the story stems largely from their "inner voice." These "voices" gradually become the source of the character's suffering, ultimately leading them to break the deadlock by percussively generating sound.

Just as the character is visually enveloped and constrained by layers of masks and objects, a similar approach is adopted in the sound design. Short, thin sound samples are layered and expanded in various ways to build sonic density, which is then stripped away layer by layer as the plot unfolds.

The primary sound production method involves recording materials in the recording studio, followed by processing them using various editing techniques and effects within Logic Pro to suit different contexts. Furthermore, Max/MSP, VCV Rack, and motion sensors were utilized to further process the raw materials to meet specific narrative requirements, alongside the built-in synthesizers in Logic Pro. Finally, the sound design incorporates recordings created in collaboration with saxophonist Calvin Wong.

In this chapter, I will describe my creative process such as how I recorded all the materials, how those materials were processed and how I used the sensor tracker M5 stick

with VCV Rack and Max/MSP to create the “triggering” effects I used when the character beats the objects on their body.

5.2 About the Recording Process

The foundational sonic material for this piece was generated entirely within the recording studio and home studio environments. This was necessitated by the fact that the original field recordings were largely unusable because of clipping and excessive noise. For the capture of movement sounds, vocal elements, and saxophone performances, I employed two microphones: a dynamic (Sure SM57) and a condenser (RØDE NT1 5th Generation).

First, to realize the sounds synchronized with the character’s physical actions—particularly the sound of chains and other attached objects that produce noise during movement—I wore the chains myself in the studio and physically replicated the movements depicted in the video during the recording process. Additionally, I recorded percussive textures using hand drums and woodblocks, contributing both to the kinetic detail of the movement and to the broader atmospheric quality of the soundscape.

Second, the vocal component of the piece comprises several distinct categories, each serving a specific role. These include: whispered short phrases such as “where is it?” and “what is it?”; the whispered articulation of words inscribed on the masks and woodblocks (e.g., “positive,” “tough”); and fragmented phonetic elements—vowels (e.g., “a,” “o”) and consonants (e.g., “s,” “b”)—produced by applying consistent, brief bursts of air pressure to the vocal cords while rapidly fluttering the tongue.

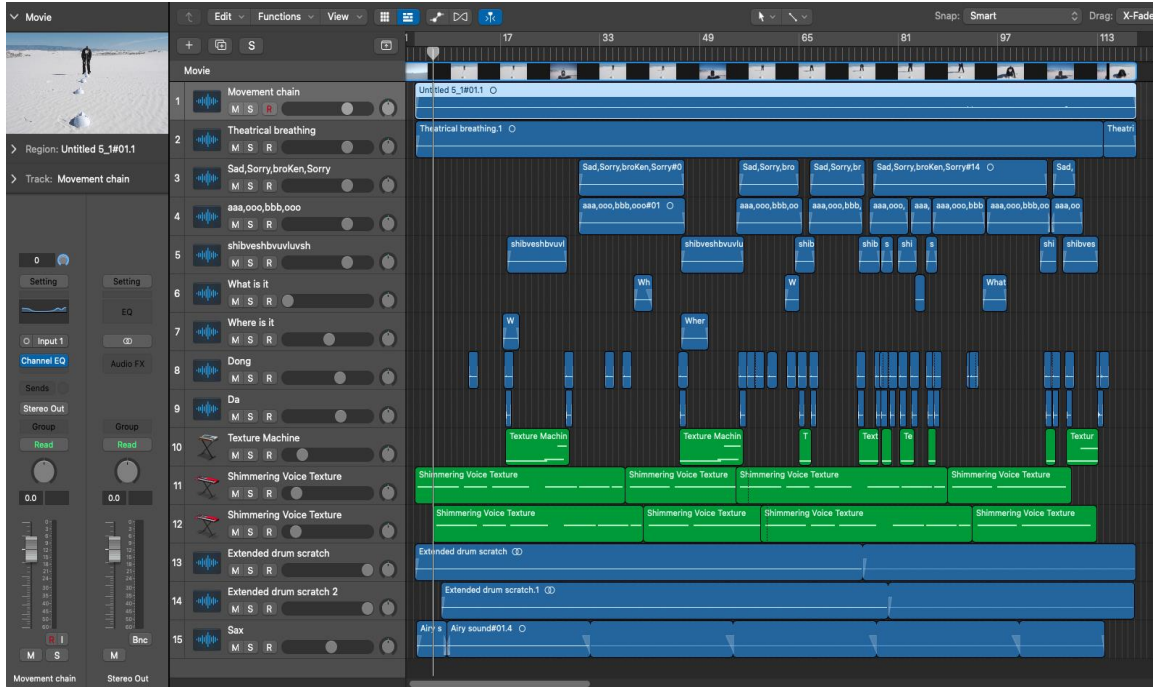
The final recording phase involved the saxophone. I collaborated with saxophonist Calvin Wong, who executed two distinct types of performance. The first consisted of controlled gestures: dynamic swells from *niente* to *forte*, timbral trills, flutter-tonguing, and airy tones, all applied to a specific pitch collection (D, E, G, A, B) that mirrors the wind chimes used elsewhere in the piece. The second required Wong to improvise using the same pitch and sonic materials while watching the specific parts of the film.

5.3 Processing and Editing

Following the recording sessions, I imported all audio files alongside the video into Logic Pro. To ease the management of files and effects, I divided the entire composition—and correspondingly, the video—into seven discrete sections. Figure 8 illustrates the organizational structure within Logic Pro, exemplified here by Part II: *Mask On*. Audio files were systematically grouped by category: movement sounds, whispers, saxophone, and so forth. The ability to compose while referencing the visual component ensured precise synchronization of every sound snippet with its intended moment.

Figure 8

Logic Pro Session Interface for the "Mask On" Scene



Note. A screenshot of the working stage in Logic Pro that shows the film on top-left and layers of sound files that categorized by its function.

Nearly all audio files underwent equalization to achieve a balanced, cohesive, and clear overall sound. To meet the varied sonic demands of the piece, I utilized Logic Pro's built-in plugins, including standard reverb, the Space Designer reverb (which enabled the creation of spatialized, directional "ringing" effects), and Echo Delay for layered echoing textures. Space Designer and Echo Delay were applied extensively to the whispering and vocal elements, creating an immersive effect that evokes the character being enveloped by dense, internal whispers. Once the composition, mixing, and mastering were complete,

I exported the seven sections as individual audio files, then recombined them within a single Logic Pro session for final alignment with the video.

5.4 The Use of Motion Sensor + Max/MSP + VCV Rack

In Part V, titled *Hitting*, the character uses wooden mallets to strike body-attached objects—drum-hats, chains, and woodblocks. My conceptual vision for this section centers on the character’s struggle to purge the intrusive sounds within their mind, where the words labeled on the woodblocks function as emotional triggers. Rather than relying on the previous method of manually synchronizing sound snippets with the visual in Logic Pro, I opted to implement a motion sensor system to trigger pre-recorded sounds, comprised of the above-mentioned words.

To achieve this, I integrated the M5StickC Plus motion sensor (Figure 9), a TP-Link portable router, Max/MSP (utilizing a custom patch designed by Seth Thorn for sensor data processing), and the modular synthesis environment VCV Rack.

Figure 9

Hardware Configuration

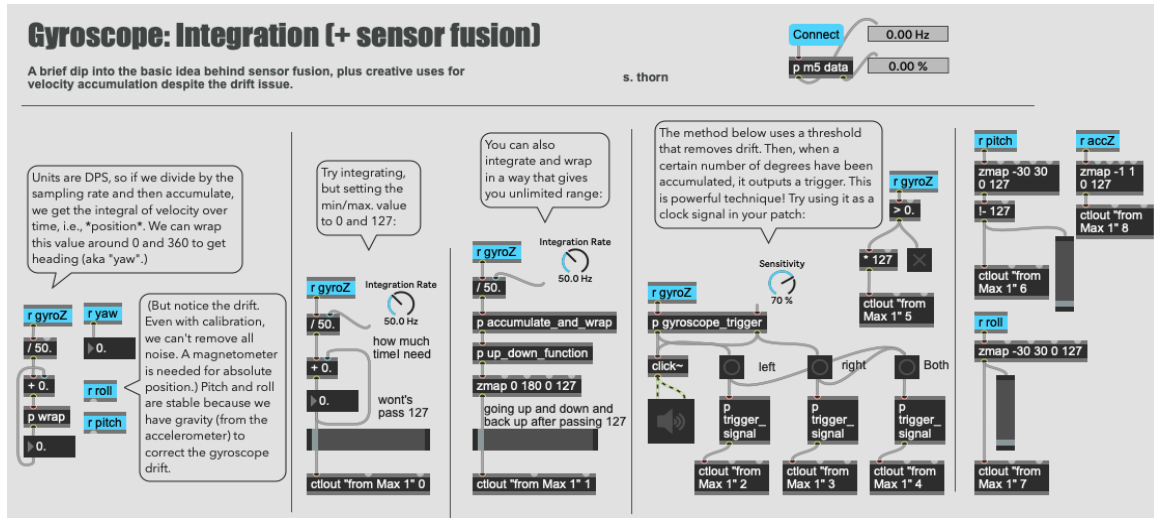


Note. M5StickC Plus (left) and TP-Link Portable Router (right)

By establishing a connection between the M5StickC, the router, Max/MSP, and VCV Rack, I enabled the motion sensor's data—transmitted wirelessly—to be processed by the Max patch (Figure 10), which in turn controlled the modular synthesizers within VCV Rack. My role focused on constructing the VCV Rack patch (Figure 11). The MIDI CC to CV module received the control signal from Max. The Audio 8 module was connected to the microphone used for recording vocal samples.

Figure 10

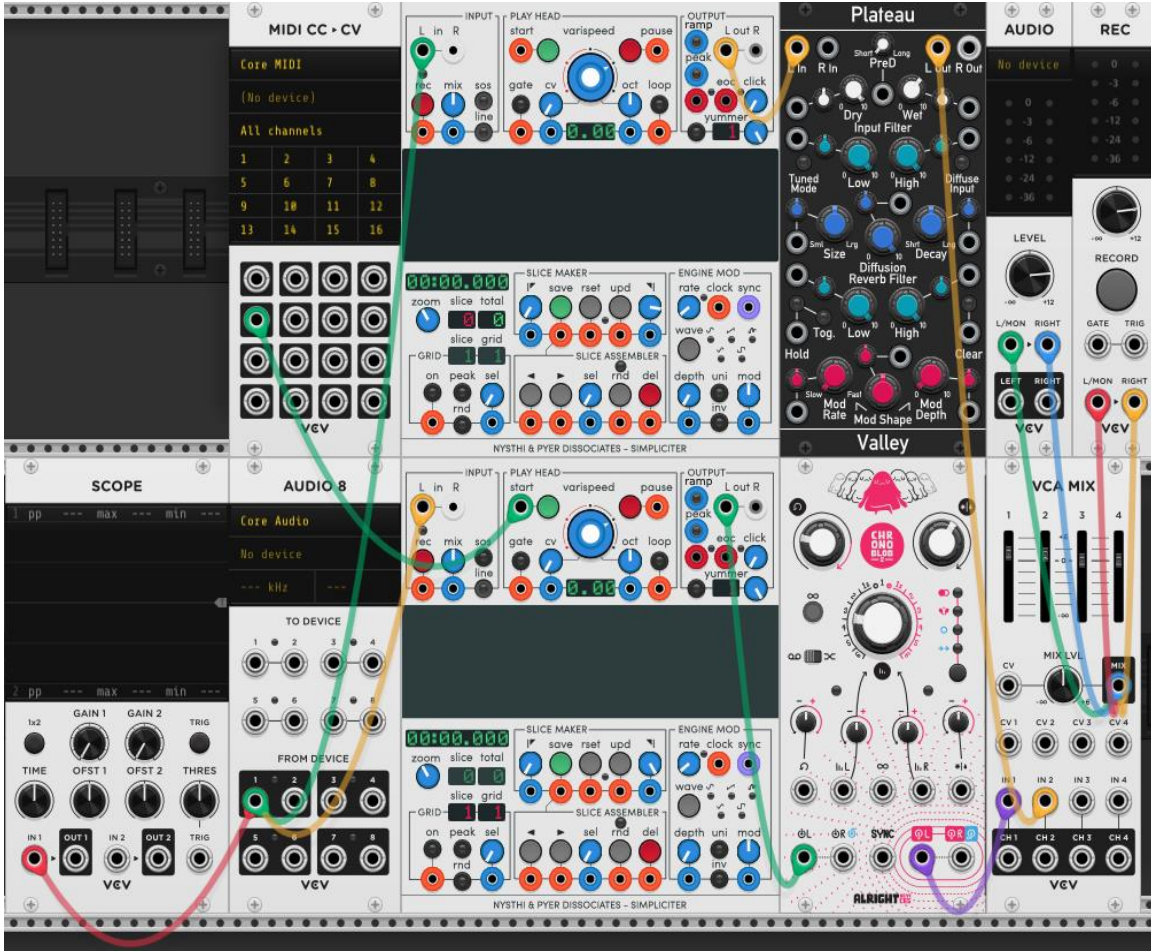
Max/MSP Patch created by S. Thorn



Within this patch (Figure 11), I incorporated two instances of SIMPLICITER, a multi-track sampler and granular processor capable of real-time sampling. The upper SIMPLICITER held layered, slow-paced whispers of vowels and consonants drawn from the “triggering words,” serving as the sonic foundation. The lower SIMPLICITER stored my recorded voice of the full triggering words (e.g., “move on,” “strength”). SIMPLICITER allowed precise selection of sample start and end points, enabling the extraction of specific snippets. By routing the control signal from Max to these modules, I achieved real-time triggering of the stored samples. The outputs of the SIMPLICITERS were then processed through Plateau and Chronoblob 2 to add reverb and delay effects. Finally, the Record module captured the processed audio, which was saved as audio files and subsequently imported back into the Logic Pro session.

Figure 11

Modular Synthesis Configuration in VCV Rack for the Scene Hitting.




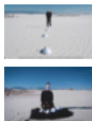


5.5 Material Organization




Organizing the diverse sound ideas and materials into a cohesive thirty-minute composition, aligned with specific scenes, presented a significant challenge. This process underscored the critical importance of maintaining detailed documentation to function as a personal working score. Figure 12 illustrates this foundational framework, mapping key information across all scenes—including narrative events, character movements, and

corresponding sound concepts—alongside their precise timestamps. Beyond its organizational function, this systematic sorting proved vital in reconnecting me with the original creative inspirations behind each idea.

Figure 12

Timeline and Information for The Path

Timeline and information					
Picture	Time	Events	Visual editings	Key movements	Sound ideas
	Part 1: 00:00-01:52	A fully covered character (with chains, veils, and woodblocks) walks from stage-left to the center.	Black and white filter	Walking, bending, straightening, falling, crawling, and gazing into the distance.	Ambient sound; movement sounds for walking and falling (chains/blocks); wind chimes.
	Part 2: 01:53-05:35	The character puts on masks while attempting to stand.(with flashbacks of the past)	Alternating "real-time" and "flashback" footage with noise filters on the flashbacks.	Walking, putting on masks, bending/straightening, and flashback sequences.	Sounds of chains being released; noise for flashbacks; internal monologue (voice in head); contrasting sound textures; processed vocalizations (related to labels on masks); heavy breathing; airy saxophone textures.
	Part 3: 05:36-11:16	Transition to face crawling and attaching labeled woodblocks.	Continued alternating between real-time and noisy flashbacks.	Crawling; attempting to stretch against the resistance of chains; attaching five labeled woodblocks sequentially; struggling to stand upright; face-down walking.	"Heavy/foggy" atmospheric sound; rhythmic breathing; chain movement; internal voices; airy saxophone playing.
	Part 4: 11:17-15:48	Donning the black bamboo hat and veil, followed by crawling toward the "sunset."	Color filtering that creates the illusion of extended shadows.	Covering oneself with veils; crawling; lying still as if deceased; moving toward sunlight.	Intensifying chain sound feedback (suggesting distorted perception); loud, intense breathing; inner whispering; distorted woodblock and chain sounds; transitioning to silence with subtle saxophone.

Timeline and information					
Picture	Time	Events	Visual editings	Key movements	Sound ideas
	Part 5 15:49-21:45	Playing/striking attached objects, followed by washing and removal of woodblocks and chains.		Sitting and striking attached objects with sticks; standing and walking while beating objects; washing with sand; removing woodblocks and neck chains.	Percussion synchronized with striking movements to trigger "voices in head"; saxophone; rainstick mapped to movement with a subtle melodic line.
	Part 6 21:46-23:28	The Dance: Attempting to remove chains from the ankles.		Sitting and standing; stretching and extending the body; struggling against ankle chains; kicking movements.	Synchronized percussion; saxophone; audible breathing.
	Part 7 23:29-30:00	Washing with sand, removing the hat and masks, and walking away.	Alternating real-time and flashbacks	Walking and sitting; washing with sand (with flashbacks); removing headwear; walking away and removing the black outfit.	Rainstick adding a subtle melodic line; wind chimes; light breathing.

However, a timeline listing only key events proved insufficient for fully realizing the intricate sound design. I needed a more integrated tool to align sound concepts, temporal progression, and key visual elements of each scene, providing clear guidance during the material assembly phase. Consequently, I developed a simplified "score," incorporating text and imagery, as depicted below (Figure 13).

This verbal-visual guide to assist the organization of the sonic material features key visual frames representing each scene at the bottom. The top two rows detail the specific words, vowels, and consonants employed in the whispered and spoken vocal recordings. A horizontal arrow spanning the width of the score represents the piece's temporal flow, from start to finish. A vertical arrow indicates the layering of sound sources. This visual chart proved indispensable, enabling me to clearly visualize the intended sound layering for each scene while simultaneously tracking the recording and processing workflow amidst the substantial volume of materials.

CHAPTER 6 - NARRATIVE, VISUALS AND MUSIC

In this chapter, I will detail the narrative, visuals, choreography and music of each of the seven parts of this piece.

Part I - Introduction



Time Stamp: 00:00 - 01:53

Narrative, Visuals, and Choreography:

The opening scene presents the character enveloped in black attire, wearing a black hat with a veil covering their body, slowly emerging from the left side of a white hill. Their gait is unsteady, their body is chained, and marked by abnormal, discordant movements. Frequent bending, staggering, falling, and even crawling culminate in the character sitting motionless at the center of the frame, gazing into the distance. This sequence introduces the character and setting, establishing an atmosphere of solitude and mystery that sets the stage for subsequent developments and sparks the viewer's curiosity.

Sound:

I created an auditory landscape composed of wind chimes, the clanking of chains synchronized with the character's movement, collisions of wood blocks, and sustained bass tones that create the ambiance. The wind chimes bridge unites the viewer's visual

and auditory perception, evoking the imagery of wind, while the character's irregular percussive sounds mirror their wavering steps, setting the tone for the rest of the story.

Part II - Mask On



Time Stamp: 01:53 - 5:35

Narrative, Visuals, and Choreography:

the character begins bent over, masked (without the black hat and veil), struggling against restrictive chains. In front of them lie five masks, each labeled with different words. A failed attempt to stand up triggers a flashback in which the character is kneeling amidst these masks, seeking for solutions. I used Premiere Pro for some visual effects like adding noise to blurs colors, symbolizing awakened memories and hinting at the past. The alternation between “real-time” (symbolized by the clear visual) and “flashbacks” (represented by noisy visual) exemplifies the character’s cyclical quest for answers. Believing that masking (or that the masks) can provide a solution, the character repeatedly puts on new masks, only to find increasing physical burden, ultimately leading to collapse. The collapsing movements of the character, putting on different masks, also demonstrates the weight of carrying a facade that doesn’t correspond to its inner life.

Sound:

a. Movement and Environmental Sound Design

While I was working in the recording studio, I recreated several sounds that are meant to connect the character's movements with the symbolic weight that certain objects and actions carry. For example: metal chains represent repression, being imprisoned, and unable to move freely; breathing sounds can bring more liveness of the character and show its exhaustion and internal struggles in movements, and the percussion sounds of "dong" and "da"¹ are produced by a hand drum and the woodblocks, which are both attached to the character's body later in the scenes. The way these sounds are synchronized with movement was inspired by footstep accompaniment² in Chinese opera. Using those short, sharp percussive sounds like "dong" or "da" to simulate the force of movements (e.g., bending, standing) can highlight their impact and significance. When both percussive sounds "dong" and "da" are used simultaneously, it creates a clear turning point that triggers the flashbacks of the memory that invades the character's mind.

b. Atmosphere and Textural Sounds:

Drum scratching: It was first recorded in the studio while lightly scratching the hand-drum, then processed by extending the duration and lowering the pitch to create a low-frequency bed, establishing an oppressive atmosphere.

¹ Traditional Chinese percussion music uses a system of onomatopoeic characters (words that imitate sounds). This unique notation system is called "Luogujing" (锣鼓经), or literally "Gong and Drum Scriptures."

² In traditional Chinese opera performance, percussion instruments—such as gongs and drums—are often used to punctuate and accompany the stylized movements of performers. The percussion ensemble closely follows actors' gestures and footsteps, reinforcing rhythm, signaling dramatic shifts, and highlighting stage actions in a highly synchronized musical-theatrical system.

Airy sound played by Saxophone: I recorded airy sounds from a saxophone, which were supposed to mimic human breathing. I combine the recorded saxophone sounds with Logic Pro's Texture Machine to generate sustained drone-like tones, layered with the drum scratching for a psychedelic background.

The electronic noise generated by a Texture Machine and a synthesizer in Logic Pro is introduced here to match the grainy/noisy visuals, amplifying the sense of technological malfunction in scenes that represent the character's flashbacks.

c. Creating Noise Through Text:

The masks worn by the character are labeled with words such as “smart”, “smile”, “tough”, etc.; I broke down these words into vowels, consonants and phonemes and recorded these fragments using my own voice. I then processed the vocal sounds in Logic Pro by duplicating more layers and using space designer, echo delays, etc. to increase the density and effectiveness of sound. Another layer of abstract expression that is made by breaking down text labels on masks (e.g., "sad," "sorry," "broken") into vowels and consonants, transforming them into fragmented noise snippets. They are the “painful stuttering” repetition of single vowels (e.g., "a," "o") or consonants (e.g., "s," “b”). These sounds are processed with delay, reverb, and spatialized processors in Logic Pro to convey the character's anguish at being emotionally blocked, unable to express fully.

d. Whispering

For the “real-time” and “flashbacks” that are paired with phrases like "What is it?" and "Where is it?" loop repetitively within the scenes, creating suspense and pressure. In flashback sequences, "Where is it?" serves as a memory cue, while "What is it?" is attached to the “real-time” scene.

Part III - Woodblocks on



Time Stamp: 05:36 - 11:16

Narrative, Visuals, and Choreography:

Building on the "searching" motif, faint footprints emerge in the sand. Following these trail, the character discovers labeled wood blocks as potential remedies, attaching them to their body amid flashbacks. Despite multiple attempts after attachment, a full upright posture remains elusive, plunging the figure deeper into disappointment and darkness.

Sound: Continuation and Variation

This part reuses the core elements from the last section, such as the sounds of chains being moved, breathing, percussion sounds, and the electronic noise generated by a Texture Machine. While the character picks up woodblocks to attach to their body, the sounds of the vowels and consonants echo the text labels on the woodblocks ("fertility", "strength", etc.).

Exchanging the positions of the questions "What is it?" and "Where is it?" implies that "Part II" became a memory (flashback) that now stimulates the behavior of the character, and the "new memory" isn't much different from the previous ones to enhance the looping of the struggles.

Another subtle new element here is the sound of scratching the velcro while the character moves their body with their face on the ground. This gesture implies that the friction of the movement is getting greater than before, bringing more pain and resistance.

Part IV - Covered Crawling



Time Stamp: 11:16 - 15:48

Narrative, Visuals, and Choreography:

The noise of the screen is cleared, adopting a monochrome, shadow-draped aesthetic devoid of memory inserts. The character is covered by the black hat and the long veil, and the figure transitions from seated to crawling, embodying the grip of despair. This segment conveys entrapment and futility, portraying the raw, grotesque struggle against losing sanity. Exhausted, the character collapses, barely moving, until sunlight imparts vitality, guiding a slow approach toward renewal.

Sound: Intensification and Contrast

In Part IV, I continue to utilize the core sound materials introduced in the preceding sections, namely chain sounds and breath. However, these elements are subjected to processes of intensification. To more forcefully depict the character's exhaustion and mental condition, the latter half incorporates increasingly agitated gasps. The overall texture is enriched through layering sound samples, resulting in a denser,

more resonant sonic fabric. Furthermore, the saxophone's role evolves beyond mere breath mimicry; it becomes a pitch-shifting element that is the extension of the prior gesture. Crucially, effects like Spellbound that sound like heavy drones are introduced. This shift serves both as a deliberate contrast to earlier sections and as a significant marker of the character's psychological transformation. Its purpose is to heighten the emotional weight and evoke connotations of visual color shifts.

Part V - Hitting



Time Stamp: 15:49 - 21:45

Narrative, Visuals, and Choreography:

Sunlight heralds a turning point, altering the character's behavior. Repetition between bent and upright positions reflects hesitancy and resolve. Using the wooden mallets to lift the black veil, the character is curious about the world. They forcefully strike against a head-mounted drum that symbolizes the dissipation of mental turmoil. Aggressive hits to the attached wood blocks signify rebellion, culminating in liberated leg movement that enables the character to stand up. After that, the character kneels down and uses the white sand as a healing and cleansing element, as if in a purification ritual, shedding the constraints represented by the woodblocks (attached to the limbs) and chains (attached to their neck and arms.)

Sound: Interactive Sound

Part V marks a distinct new beginning, signifying the character's resolve to embark anew following a “baptism” by sun and stillness. A key prop here is the introduction of two wooden mallets. Diverse sonic outcomes are generated by striking different parts of the body with these implements (drum-hat, chain and woodblocks). The previously discussed design employs motion-triggered sound technology, utilizing motion sensors to track bodily gestures. Upon impact at specific locations, corresponding vocalized words or conceptual phrases (e.g., “strength”, “move on”, “break through”) are triggered as audio feedback. This design fosters a multi-sensory connection between the audience's hearing, vision, and overall perception, deepening their understanding of the character's inner world. In the latter segment, the character “washes” its body using white sand, accompanied by sounds from rain sticks and Crystal Rain, a synthesizer in Logic Pro. The emergence of a melody for the first time further enriches the emotional layers, portraying a transition from fatigue to heightened awareness.

6.6 Part VI - The Dance



Time Stamp: 21:46 - 23:28

Narrative, Visuals, and Choreography:

Freed from the chains and blocks attached to their upper body, the character starts to free their lower body, by gradually removing the restraints in their ankles.

Choreographically, initial repetitions of kneeling and sitting evolve into “prowls”,

expansive leg swings, and finally, decisive upright shaking off of chains—each extension symbolizes a gradual conquest of freedom.

Sound: Progress Towards Freedom

Part VI focuses on the character's progressive attainment of freedom, where restraints are reduced solely to chains binding the feet. The chain sound regains prominence; its dynamic presence meticulously recreated during post-production to achieve tight synchronization with the visuals. Saxophone long tones, deployed in interlocking high-low registers forming two distinct layers, add musical depth. Simultaneously, the incorporation of percussive drumbeats reinforce the rhythmic quality of the leg movements. Additionally, previously established sounds, such as “theatrical breathe” and “drum scratch”, are integrated. Together, these elements coalesce to create an atmosphere simultaneously charged with tension and brimming with hope. The character's ultimate liberation from the foot chains signifies the impending transition into part VII.

6.7 Part VII - De-layering



Time Stamp: 23:29 - 30:00

Narrative, Visuals, and Choreography:

Concluding with a moment of healing, a "sand wash" precedes the layer-by-layer removal of the black headwear and masks, revealing the character's true visage. After this

transformation, the character departs, leaving behind the discarded black garments—exposing the original inner layers and signifying an authentic self-unveiling.

Sound: Healing and Release

Serving as the finale, part VII concentrates on the character's healing and self-liberation. All external constraints— chains, wood blocks—are removed, symbolizing being freed. Musically, the recurring melody returns (played with synthesizer Crystal Rain), accompanied by the reappearance of and rainstick sounds, creating a serene, far-reaching ambiance. The saxophone's breath motif resurfaces, now rendered with tranquility, complemented by wind chimes. This combination conveys a state where, despite an unknown future, inner peace has been achieved. The piece concludes with the character shedding their garments, layer by layer, until the character is covered with a bright light. Correspondingly, the music undergoes a gradual reduction of layers, ultimately dissolving back into the most essential sound: breath itself.

CONCLUSION

This research has demonstrated how a practice-led, multimedia performance – embodied in *The Path* – functions as a convergence of artistic inquiry and therapeutic exploration. By harnessing the interplay of sound, movement, visual design, and technology, this work externalized internal psychological states, evolving from a personal quest to overcome creative stagnation into an investigation of the body's capacity for revelation, processing, and transformation when granted agency.

The creative process affirmed the body not as a passive conduit, but as a dynamic site of memory, resistance, and healing. Prioritizing somatic impulse over predetermined systems unveiled patterns of repetition, tension, and release that resonate with deep psychological cycles. The integrated choreography, soundscapes, and responsive technology rendered these internal dynamics perceptible, forging a cohesive expression capable of witnessing and reshaping unconscious processes.

Cyclical suffering often masks directional growth. The guiding message, "it's a path, not a loop," was crystallized as both conceptual framework and lived truth. Through iterative creation, reflection, and reconfiguration – especially within filming and editing – authorship over personal narrative was reclaimed, mirroring therapeutic imagery rescripting, where agency is restored through transforming one's relationship to the past, not its erasure.

This project also blends conventional boundaries of artistic expertise. Developed across disciplines without formal specialization, it underscores that authentic expression stems not from technical mastery, but from vulnerability, curiosity, and persistence as engines of innovation and meaning.

Consequently, *The Path* proposes a model where interdisciplinary creation, grounded in autobiographical and somatic exploration, offers a methodology for both artistic production and personal healing. While inherently subjective, its implications resonate beyond the individual, suggesting that non-verbal, body-centered practices provide accessible pathways for navigating unresolved emotion in a world saturated with external noise and disconnection from the inner self.

Ultimately, removing the final layer signifies not a completed transformation, but an ongoing unveiling, a renewed capacity for mindful forward movement. Ending on breath – the primal sound of life – affirms a return to origin, presence, and the boundless possibility inherent in the path itself.

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APPENDIX A

THE PATH FILM

[Consult Attached File]