

An Epilogue

Fitting [Out-fitting] In

*Who is he fooling and what is he
really doing there?*

They encountered each other in the parking lot, the one that was reserved for upper administration.

The dean looked at the professor, who was on his way to another parking lot much further away and started voicing what he probably thought was a compliment. Stopping abruptly, he tried to swallow the final words of the sentence.

‘You look so much bet’

The professor smiled politely. Both knew exactly what the rest of the sentence was going to be, and both silently agreed not to pursue the issue. The professor had cut his dreadlocks.

After all, he thought, the dean seemed like a *mensch*, and surely didn’t intend any bias.

In fact, he was the one who encouraged the professor when the latter’s million-dollar grant application to set up a performance research centre was not allowed to leave the university on grounds that it was not likely to succeed at the federal level. However, the inside story was that the untenured assistant professor in the Faculty of Arts wouldn’t have had much chance of success at that level anyway. Why not support a tenured full professor from chemistry, for example?

This dean was also the same one who commented at the professor’s hiring interview that the job was contingent on him completing his Ph.D., even though the requirement for the position specified an MFA or equivalent experience. The professor was ABD at the time, with an MA and an extensive and enviable international career at the highest professional level in his field.

Back then he still had his dreadlocks. Now, in the parking lot more than seven years later, and with his title changed to tenured associate professor, Ph.D.; they were gone [...] shed. The dean had also retired but was recalled to head a newly established faculty [...] health sciences, I think.

Who am I and why am I here?

I remember precisely when and why I first started growing dreadlocks. It was a long time ago in the Caribbean, before I became a professional dancer and choreographer.

My last attempt came out of pure frustration. I had gotten tired of driving the three hours from Münster in Germany to Amsterdam in Holland every time I needed a haircut.

‘Why not grow some dreadlocks again?’

Now, a few years on from the comment in the parking lot, with more than a little ‘salt-and-pepper’ on my head, and the title of tenured Full Professor next to my name, I wondered about the numerous ‘slips’ of the tongue I had experienced from colleagues and strangers *en route*.

‘Who am I fooling, and why am I really here?’

‘Do I really “look much better” without my dreadlocks?’

‘Why did I shed them? And why are they still lying in the top drawer of my cupboard amidst numerous socks and underwear? How many other discarded masks still lie in the cupboards of my house?’

The term ‘fragmented subjectivities’ comes to mind.

Four different Deans and a number of institutional re-organisations at the faculty and departmental levels later and I’m still trying to fit into a system that will always see me as ‘other’.

Tracy McMullen’s ‘riffs’ on Curtis Mayfield’s gospel-inspired *People get ready, there’s a train a’comin’* (1965). She claims that there is no need to get ready for a future that is already here. McMullen also suggests that the African American tradition of improvisation offers perspectives on notions of the self, hope and the future that reveal a great deal about being in a world that ‘does not erect fictitious boundaries around a self that cannot, in fact, be located’ (McMullen in Heble and Wallace 2013: 266).

I once published an essay titled ‘Performing the now: Mingus’ Pithecanthropus Erectus’ (Daniel in Hui and Whyton 2017), which looked at the life and work of musician/composer Charles Mingus.¹ Following McMullen, I argued that the post-colonial, post-slavery, post-institutional ‘self’ did not really exist and thus had little to prop itself up against or gather around. One could, however, begin to recreate such an individuality through an ongoing improvisational search that would open up possibilities for becoming.

I think about what I have become, or rather about what I have given up to become.

‘Who am I fooling, and what am I really doing here? Do I look much better without my dreadlocks? Under whose gaze?’

Fitting [Out-fitting] In

This final chapter concerns itself with the performativity of identity from the perspective of a Black male artist and scholar working in a School for the Contemporary Arts within the Canadian university system. Having spent the greater part of my life in countries outside my own native land,² and in the professional world as dancer, performer, choreographer, media artist and scholar, one could say that I have acquired a fair degree of experience about the nature of various discourses on performance and the performativity of identity. Since I regularly lecture on and challenge many of these ideas in both my intellectual and artistic work – at the same time encouraging my students to do the same – the thematic of this book gave me an opportunity to comment on some of my experiences within a wider context.

Three issues compound the challenges someone like me faces in an average day. The first is that my job as a dance and performance studies scholar sits squarely in the realm of what is known as Research/Creation in Canada and, as such, is considered already on the margins of valid academic research. Second, in promoting an approach to art scholarship that intersects with a wide spectrum of disciplines, I am often confronted with the borders that many of these disciplines erect to protect their domains from people like me. Third, my own immigrant Caribbean/Black African ancestry makes me extremely sensitive to what I see as a certain ‘colonisation of minds’ that the dominant forms of discourse foster within academia, and the difficulty people like myself encounter in trying to offer alternative approaches. In short, I am no stranger to the prejudices against race, language and academic discipline, nor to the many other subtle – and not so subtle – discriminatory practices operating both inside and outside academia. Given that many of these biases are grounded in historically established configurations of inequality and impact what takes place in the classroom, the boardroom, in adjudication panels where research funding priorities are determined and in hiring, promotion and tenure committees where one’s performance is being assessed, this chapter is a study of ‘fitting in’ as I am tasked to help ‘outfit’ a generation of students – mostly White – who, all too often, are more concerned with what they are entitled to rather than the possibilities that exist for their own development.

So, what’s your background?

Most of us working in the realm of the arts are fairly acquainted with some form of this question. I call it the ‘establishing a genealogy’ question. We always want to know what someone else’s intellectual lineage is, how they got to where they are now and who their mentors or influences were along the way. In many ways,

the question is similar to another ambiguously worded one encountered by those who have a language, accent, racial origin or other characteristics that deviates from some tacitly agreed norm. This is the ‘Where are you from?’ or ‘Where are you *really* from’ question. When positioned within the context of academia, where disciplinary categories, theoretical and conceptual frames within particular knowledge fields and the ‘impact value’ of one’s own research within a diverse socio-political and economic sphere play a large role in situating someone’s work, these questions converge in a dynamic space that generates a great deal of tension, not to mention misunderstandings and downright fallacies of one sort or another. To put it another way, a wide range of personal and institutional prejudices come into play, and when the neoliberal politics of university administrators are added to the mix,³ important things get sacrificed.

To be fair, the above-mentioned questions are often asked out of curiosity, and sometimes in a non-guarded or naïve manner to elicit information, start a conversation or simply to check out the competition. However, these situations also present a rich field of investigation for people like me, artists/scholars whose research involves detailed examinations of human beings ‘performing’ their way through the complex structures of privilege, entitlement and institutional power that White Supremacy offers. These *mise-en-scènes* are composed of so many different layers that it is not difficult to lose one’s sense of self while playing several scripted and unscripted roles. Acknowledging that others may genuinely want to know more about one’s background to better locate one in the intellectual machinery, the question is nonetheless how far such performances can be sustained before one or more of the many masks we wear begins to reveal themselves. A fascinating quality of these encounters is that no matter what one suspects about the nature of one’s own exclusion from orbits of institutional power, there is rarely any overt admission of exclusivity until the proverbial slip of the tongue. When such slips occur, and they frequently do, the supporting cast can be left with debilitating feelings arising from the recognition of their role as mere placeholders fulfilling a mandated but vaguely articulated notion of institutional inclusivity. To put it even more colourfully, one can find oneself playing the role of the ‘spice’ that adds taste to a dish, but which must not be confused with being the meal itself, or even having a real influence on the decisions made at the table. Such realizations are always painful for the ego. Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately, the stories I tell here are minor narratives in a larger discussion regarding notions of equity, diversity and inclusivity, or what I see as a process of ‘fitting [out-fitting] in’.

First, how does one ‘fit into’ a paradigm, research or otherwise, that essentially ignores the validity of one’s dance, choreographic and performance practices as critical modes of knowing? Second, how can such ‘embodied’ practices inscribe themselves within institutions of power when the actors themselves and the very

methods they use to investigate that knowledge are already perceived as unworthy, or barely tolerable at the margins of serious research? Third, who constructs the ontological and epistemological bases that support this type of knowing, and/or the perceptive lenses and inscriptive practices through which such knowledges can be recognized and promoted? These are all extremely difficult questions to even begin to consider here. But unless they are faced head-on, I believe the ‘colonisation’ of minds that currently substitutes for real critique in certain quarters of the academy will continue. More importantly, unless there is a critical mass of ‘bodies of difference’ in the practice rooms and lecture halls of the academy to engage in such dialogue, we are being profoundly delusional in our use of the terms ‘equity’, ‘diversity’ and ‘inclusivity’.

A colleague of mine spoke quite frankly at a scholarly gathering⁴ about the fact that there are quite distinct approaches to and notions of diversity and inclusivity in the part of Canada from which I write. Acknowledgement comes first for the First Nations community; after all, the term ‘First Nations’ itself undeniably calls for such recognition. After this comes, the Chinese-speaking community and the substantial contributions they make to help keep the West Coast economy vibrant, an economy that relies to a great extent on a booming real estate business and a growing tech industry.⁵ Third in line comes the South Asian or Indian community who form a powerful and important economic and cultural presence. And only then, if there is any goodwill left, could one perhaps begin to talk of a Black community. Having experienced this prioritization as an unwritten rule in my years of living amongst this ‘diversity’, I understood what my colleague meant.

These statements, to my mind, were certainly not meant as derogatory or prejudicial. However, this individual was called to task by a member of the audience, another colleague, who warned against articulating any hint of discrimination against Asians that was already tacitly promoted in the community. Theoretically, I saw her argument. However, I felt that my other colleague’s point became lost amidst a kind of sensitivity – or institutionally-practiced conservatism – that always seems to mollify glaring problems that require address, at the same time drawing attention away from policies that are themselves inherently discriminatory.

Caught in such maddeningly contradictory circumstances, one is forced to take a step back and evaluate one’s own position within what too easily turns into what Rinaldo Walcott calls ‘competitive oppression exceptionalism’ (Walcott in Broeck and Junker 2014: 96). Such attitudes serve no helpful purpose whatsoever and indeed create even more unwanted tensions within and across racial groups. But one could be forgiven for asking whether we can ever move away from such dichotomized modes of thinking. What, then, are we really trying to achieve here, and what could the role of the artist be as an intellectual within a system that not only ignores the potential of artistic perspectives, but actively forces them into

frameworks that deny their very potential? Indeed, one can ask whether it is possible for new theoretical and conceptual models to emerge from an institutionalized framework that forces people like myself to ‘fit in’ to something that fundamentally was not designed to accommodate difference.

Admittedly, these same questions have dogged my extended residence in countries on both sides of the Atlantic throughout a professional career as dancer and choreographer. In the past, however, the issue had more to do with how I saw myself being presented through the lens of other people’s choreographic ideas, and my own struggle to articulate an individual creative voice. These international performance stages were precisely the locations where bodies like mine desperately strove to ‘train’ a different type of gaze, one that could offset the negative effects of a colonial past. Now, as a scholar, I encounter some of the same institutional barriers, and I am again forced to ask: when will we be ready for such conversations and in what kinds of forms will these conversations come? Damned if I can, damned if I can’t! If I’m cast in the role of trying to perform new identities for my own survival, then perform I must. However, in the meantime, I often feel that my greatest performances take place in my daily efforts to negotiate a space to exist within institutions that do not truly recognize the modes and structures of knowing that people of difference bring. We always seem to be trying to fit into an uncomfortably limited and limiting space. And for bodies and minds accustomed to wide open physical and mental vistas, this is quite disconcerting.

Where are you from? I mean, where are you really from?

These two questions, especially when they follow one another, always provoke a deep sense of frustration, and, consequently, a re-examination of the notion of self that any person of colour, immigrant or outsider feels within a system. These are complex questions, and responses can evoke tensions since one always wonders which ‘you’ is really under examination. Which part of me is out of place? And why does it appear to others that I do not belong? These are more than rhetorical questions, they speak to foundational aspects of who one ‘is’ and/or intends to ‘become’, and hence are profoundly philosophical.

As the only tenured Black faculty member at the time of this writing in a department of more than thirty full-time professors, and another half that number of part-timers, I am a minority. But race isn’t the only criterion that problematizes issues of belonging or fitting in. When my mostly White and mostly female students in a studio class comment on what they see as a ‘cultural’ approach to the physical practices that I offer, what exactly do they mean? And what about the more ‘diverse’ student population in my lectures and seminars whose first language is

not English? Or others who come from cultures that have a decidedly different epistemic logic than what is on offer? However, as the sum total of the material I teach is by no means *Black*, I often wonder if the comment about ‘a cultural thing’ means that the material is in some way flawed. A temporary director of a well-known contemporary dance academy in Rotterdam, Holland – where I had been invited as a guest artist – once called my studio practice ‘Afro-Caribbean Limón’. This was referring to my adaptation/interpretation of a dance technique I studied at the Juilliard School and had performed as a member of the José Limón Dance Company of New York. It visibly amused me that this colleague chose to ignore the fact that all such so-called modern and/or contemporary dance techniques have had substantial input from Black bodies throughout their development,⁶ input that is unacknowledged in many of the written histories that continue to be disseminated. Ironically, he also recognized that there was something I added to the technique simply by performing it, a point that is lost on many writers who should know better.

Another relevant point is that on a daily basis I do not encounter more than three or four Black students on my way through the halls of the department I teach in. Very rarely do I have two at the same time in any of my lecture courses, and never have I had more than three at any one time in the studio courses I teach. This is quite shocking for someone whose work attempts to create a dialogue between these diverse bodies. However, the more important issues at stake here and the questions that need to be asked should be: where are these people, and why are they not here? Do my teaching practices or those of colleagues like myself across the university not accommodate what they are looking for? Could it also be that there are not many of ‘us’ people of colour in the city in the first place? Or that those who are around do not think the programs offered are worthy of their time and effort? Whatever the case, the onus seems to be on me to go find and invite these diverse student populations into the institution, which in turn begs the question: is that part of the reason I was hired in the first place? And if this is indeed the case, why are my substantial and ongoing efforts to attract such students not being supported by said institution?

Growing up in a place where we were taught that Columbus ‘discovered’ the Americas more than five and a half centuries ago, and that he was followed by others who brought our ancestors here through an ignominious trade, the issue of how to go about dismantling deeply embedded modes of thinking about who we are and what our worth is continues to be of concern. But how does one go about decolonizing a mind, starting with one’s own? This is a question the Kenyan writer Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o himself wrestled with. Part of his solution was to go back to writing in his own Indigenous tongue, where I believe he felt his identity was more embodied in the rhythm, syntax, meter, colour and tone of the language. But even

that was short-lived since wa Thiong'o was forced to leave Kenya for the United States where the dominant language is English and he was required to teach in an English-speaking university. Perhaps one of the ways to decolonize institutional spaces for those who have been deprived of our Indigenous languages is to resist the institutionalized forms of White discourse that continue to support the types of biases I mentioned earlier. The arts can play a key role in such efforts by looking more closely at the spaces between the verbal and the non-verbal. This then begs the question of whether the academy, with its current curricula, has the means to decolonize the spaces it claims it wants to. These questions will certainly not be addressed without the establishment of a certain 'critical mass' in the spaces where 'new knowledge' is being 'produced'.

Oh! You're a professor? What do you teach?

My first response to these two questions is almost always to say yes, I teach dance, theatre and performance studies. This elicits the inevitable follow-ups: 'What kind of dance?', 'You mean you can actually get a Ph.D. in dance?' and 'What is performance studies?' By this time, I am already preparing for the upcoming explanation of what studies in dance, theatre and performance studies entail. And if the questions appear genuinely curious, I try to explain how all of these interests combine to form a comprehensive approach to teaching, scholarship and research. Amidst the genuine surprise and obvious confusion, I'm usually enjoying the entertainment for what it's worth as I try to discover more about the nature of the personality standing in front of me. The scene is a truly fascinating one and the reader would be correct in thinking that this could be a unique opportunity to do a reverse anthropological, sociological and/or ethnographic case study; 'Kafka's Ape revisited,' if you wish.⁷ And if, as 'Red Peter', I am consigned to a continual reportage of gratitude to the academy for supporting my *Entwicklung* (educational development) then I can be forgiven for seeing the entire experience for what it is – an extended and ongoing performance of identity that's taken more than five hundred years to unfold. Walcott and others were correct in their observations that 'The colonial history that gave rise to contemporary life in the West [still] haunts our present' (Walcott in Broeck and Junker 2014: 96), and this presence is evident in all aspects of our everyday lives.

Soon after my appointment as an Assistant Professor in a Canadian university, and perhaps already sensing what lay ahead, I created a new dance and performance work titled *Relatively-Well-Centred* (2000). This would be my first attempt in Canada to implement a choreographic model I had begun developing much earlier in the United Kingdom and other parts of mainland Europe – primarily Germany – in academic, professional and community dance institutions. This

model included using in my works students I was assigned to teach in several disciplinary areas, faculty members from across the university and professional artists working in the so-called 'market' outside academia. The response to this first work was quite strange to my mind at the time; I thought either no one understood my intentions, or colleagues were too polite to comment on what they saw. I received absolutely no critical feedback outside the cast and creative team, something that baffled me since I assumed that in such an environment critical dialogue was expected and even encouraged. Even gentle probing failed to squeeze much out of my colleagues.

Relatively-Well-Centred utilized text from Franz Kafka's *Ein Bericht für eine Akademie*, or 'A Report to an Academy' (1917), Mari Evans's *I am a Black Woman* (1970) and Virginia Woolf's *Orlando* (1928). Its aim was to explore some of the key issues inherent in these writings, which was essentially a critique of knowledge through the performance of culture, gender and race. The work was also part of a larger strategy to position dance and other performance practices as valid modes of academic research. This habit of drawing inter- and trans-disciplinary references through well-known works, in this case literary writings, has always been strategic to both my studio practice and my intellectual/theoretical work. Such an approach underlines the idea that we human beings exist in bodies that have complex histories, are embedded in multiple domains, have 'selves' and memories that exist simultaneously in different spatiotemporal orbits and can be investigated by methodologies that do not obey prescriptive disciplinary categories.

Relatively-Well-Centred utilized the basic concept embedded in an ellipse, which describes a trajectory that is quite different from that of the circle. The structure of the circle is described as a set of all points on a plane that is at fixed distances from a central point or focus. The ellipse, on the other hand, suggests that there are two foci, with points on a plane that are at fixed distances from two central points or foci that eventually stretches the shape of the circle into an extended form, the ellipse. One can say that the circle is a special type of ellipse, or conversely, the ellipse is a special type of circle. One can also say that if an object is moving in an elliptical trajectory with only one visible centre or focus, there must be a second invisible focus. The idea behind the *mise-en-scène* in *Relatively-Well-Centred* is that the White performers onstage were the visible focus and the second 'invisible' centre or focus was the pre-recorded images of Black bodies on a screen behind, creating a doubly centred 'elliptical path' with the audience as observing subjects. Additionally, the music for this work consisted of African drumming patterns, voice and percussion executed by my only Black colleague in the department – Albert St. Albert Smith, a highly skilled musician and lecturer who had spent decades accompanying dance classes and had run a biennial field

school to Ghana until his retirement. However, none of his music was obviously recognizable, since it was deliberately electronically manipulated into something quite ‘other’ by another colleague, Martin Gotfrit, a White musician/composer. The musicians who contributed to this work never appeared live on stage, nor did I, but we were all instrumental in determining the trajectory of the work. A subtle message of this approach was that few artists of colour had access to the structures of institutional power and that their work could only be visible through the work of others or be presented only through the mediation of others. This, to be sure, was just one layer of the performance and, as I mentioned, the audience was not required to know this. The other layers literally spoke for themselves, since the performers danced to pre-recorded excerpts from the texts of Kafka’s ‘A Report to an Academy’, Woolf’s *Orlando*, and Evans’s *I am a Black Woman*.

Kafka’s ‘Report’ spoke of an ape that had been captured in Africa, brought to Europe and taught to become a human being. After such an accomplishment, that ape was called before representatives of ‘the academy’ and asked to give an account of that accomplishment – a defence, so to speak. Woolf’s *Orlando* is a feminist manifesto that traces the life and adventures of a poet who changes sex from male to female and lives over centuries, meeting the key figures of English literary history along the way. Evans’s *I am a Black Woman*, on the other hand, is a poem that focuses on the struggles of African American women and the experiences that made them such strong and resilient individuals. All three of these texts, to me, were unique critiques not only of how the structures of institutional power worked but also of how they could be decentred. In fact, my argument was that the protagonists were all ‘relatively well centred’ because of their own efforts to become something other than what was expected of them.

This initial effort to introduce what I had hoped would stimulate critical dialogue was met by polite silence. Even as I sought feedback, no one said a word about what I saw as the most important aspect of the work, namely, how to introduce a lively debate about diversity and inclusivity through an individual artistic practice and to offer a critique of an institution that seemed to discourage what it actually advertised as part of its social and educational mandate. A decade later, and after much effort in developing new works with varying degrees of criticality, I rechoreographed and restaged a section of *Relatively-Well-Centred* as *The Report* and *Kafka’s Report...revisited* in two separate versions (2010 and 2016, respectively) using just Kafka’s text in the original German with a partial translation by my playwright colleague Marc Diamond.⁸ *The Report* presented White bodies performing classical ballet routines *en pointe*, subsequently transformed by a contemporary vocabulary that challenged the ballet’s institutionalization. The ‘ape’ role was reprised by the original Canadian/Filipino actor/dancer Vic Ustare (2010)⁹ and later by Marc Arboleda (2016).¹⁰ These works were well received, or

I should say received very good applause from my audiences, but still no discussion about the fundamental problems that generated the work in the first place. That was left to me to introduce in my own classes.

What's ahead?

Those with an ancestry embedded in the experience of the Atlantic Slave Trade have inherited a peculiar relationship to the descendants of those who enslaved their forefathers, as well as with the institutions created to keep slaves in check. Each has become trapped in the other's orbit, rooted in each other's gaze. Escape from this cycle demands that we strive to become something 'other than', to radically shift the focus away from a dynamic that forever perpetuates an illusion that presumes its own truth. But what could this radical shift be and from whence can it come? I firmly believe that a new and more diverse set of bodies must infiltrate current institutions in order to radically change the discourses they proliferate. These bodies must challenge what has become normative, actively promote shifts in perception, and expose the many possibilities that lie hidden between the yes/no, subject/object dichotomies of an inherited rationalist mode of thinking and being. As McMullen (2013) argues, we are dealing with a future that is already here, and something 'other than' the past must describe that future.

Argentinian-born scholar Enrique Dussel put it another way by saying that 'the Latin American intellectual has the challenge, in addition to the normal academic duties of the European or American world, of having to establish the bases for the construction of an explanation of the cultural reality from which his or her own reflections emerge' (Dussel, in Alcoff and Mendieta 2000: 269). In other words, they must envisage a somewhat different epistemology. I argue that this is a challenge that everyone who questions commonly held institutional practices must accept. And in accepting that challenge, they must also find a way to position the performing body as an intelligent and knowing entity that reveals itself to its owner and to others. That owner just needs to recognize what is already inherently within his, her or their sphere. I see my own task as contributing to this not so subtle perceptual shift, a shift that includes my response to a call to:

interrogate the established structures and the creative individual, as well as philosophical and educational processes, towards the search for decolonization of the body and the form; and by so doing effect a decolonization of knowledge specifically in dance but generally across disciplines.¹¹

Perhaps this book is merely the beginning of that task, or perhaps the end of my efforts, in the sense of laying a strong theoretical base with the requisite epistemic logic to support it. I argued in my hypothesis that we human beings were fragmented subjectivities cognitively embodied through our experiences of space, place and time. In other words, the spaces we inhabit and the practices we engage in are documented in and through cortical and cartographic maps, and an investigation of these maps through movement, dance, choreography and performance reveal a great deal about who we are and what we could become. Therefore, if dance is positioned as the movement behaviour of the human body in space/time and choreography the deliberate organization of those movements into coherent and meaningful structures, then cartographical mapping is the conception, production, dissemination, representation and study of maps of geographical territory, and cortical mapping the method through which the brain dynamically represents relationships between two different kinds of territories, i.e. the body and the environments in which we as owners of those bodies exist. Movement is indeed analogous to thought unfolding.

Finale

To conclude, Cuban-born Jamaican dramatist, novelist and cultural theorist Sylvia Wynter once argued that the principal ‘fantasy’ with which Columbus would challenge the existing models of geographic placement came from his ‘messianic apocalyptic fervor’ on the one hand, and his ‘psychosocial motivation as a lowly born cartographer and occasional merchant to better his social status’ in an emerging Spanish society on the other (Wynter in Hyatt and Nettleford 1994: 23).¹² Wynter had first-hand experience of what it was like to live both in and out of her home country in the aftermath of official colonialism even as its effects continued to manifest in her everyday life. This condition speaks to what Meerzon (2012) called the condition of the exiled, i.e. the individual who belongs neither here nor there but who uses the condition as both punishment and privilege. Although Meerzon was referring to Poet Laureate Derek Walcott in that instance, I think the same applies to those who find themselves in similar situations.

But what about those who no longer have the option of a native home or language to return to or to gesture from. Wynter recommends that we go back five centuries to fully understand how and why we find ourselves in this position today and decide what we can do to help solve it. Though we are the inheritors of voyages we did not ask for, never wanted to be a part of, but were nevertheless drawn into, those of us who are offspring of the enslaved need to make our ‘salvation’ an integral part of that solution. The position statement of dislocation and displacement that began this book must transform into one of relocation and

repositioning. The self and its ‘being’ must emerge dynamically by performing its way through all the environmental, doctrinal, political and socio-economic frameworks that colonizing processes have erected to constrain it. And this is what I hope I have achieved for myself with this publication.

NOTES

1. Charles Mingus was born in Nogales Arizona on 22 April 1922 of mixed heritage; African American, German American, British, Chinese and Native American (Horton 2007). He died in Mexico on 5 January 1979 at the age of 56, soon after working on music for an album with the Canadian singer/songwriter Joni Mitchell.
2. I was born on the Caribbean island of Trinidad and educated at Naparima College; an all-boys secondary school founded by Canadian Presbyterian missionaries for the sons of Indian indentured servants who were brought in to replace the ‘emancipated’ African slaves in the mid nineteenth century.
3. See Hall et al. (2015: 16) critique of Neoliberalism’s project as ‘a reassertion of capital’s historic imperative to profit – through financialization, globalisation and yet further commodification’, and Bill Readings’ critique of the University and its administrative manipulation of teaching and research objectives in his 1996 monograph, *The University in Ruins*.
4. This exchange took place at the ‘Continuing Conversations’ 15 October 2015 roundtable discussion at the Djavad Mowafaghian Cinema, Goldcorp Centre for the Arts, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver. The discussion was part of a three-day seminar dedicated to remembering, and continuing, the work of British public intellectual Stuart Hall. Retrieved 30 January 2016, www.henrydaniel.ca/news/.
5. Ryan Holmes (3 February 2016) – *The Financial Post*. Retrieved 30 January 2016, from: ‘Without affordable housing, Vancouver risks becoming an economic ghost town’ <https://financialpost.com/entrepreneur/fp-startups/without-affordable-housing-vancouver-risks-becoming-an-economic-ghost-town>.
6. Contemporary dance techniques such as Graham, Limón and Horton have all had major influences in their developmental process from Black dancing bodies since the early part of the twentieth century. Dance historian Brenda Dixon-Gottschild (1996, 2003) has written extensively on the Black influence on modern and contemporary dance, including George Balanchine’s neo-classic ballet, by a Black movement and music aesthetic.
7. I’m referring to Franz Kafka’s story about an ape who is captured somewhere in Africa and trained in Europe to become human. After a rigorous education, ‘Red Peter’ is asked to make a report to an academic committee about his transformation. Kafka’s *Ein Bericht für eine Akademie* or ‘A Report to an Academy’ was first published in 1917.
8. Teacher, theatre director, playwright, novelist, opera librettist, Professor Marc Diamond died suddenly at his home in Vancouver on 17 November 2005, aged 61, www.sfu.ca/~gotfrit/Marc_Diamond.htm.

9. www.henrydaniel.ca/the-report.
10. 5 August 2016, www.henrydaniel.ca/news.
11. 'Decolonizing Bodies: Engaging Performance.' 3rd Biennial International Dance Conference. The University of the West Indies, Errol Barrow Centre for Creative Imagination, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados, West Indies.
12. Wynter, Sylvia. '1492: A New World View' in *Race, Discourse and the Origins of the Americas: A New World View*.