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## **Between the Personal and the Universal: Asian American Solo Performance from the 1970s to the 1990s**

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## BETWEEN THE PERSONAL AND THE UNIVERSAL:

*Asian American Solo Performance from the  
1970s to the 1990s*

esther kim lee

In 1994, solo performer Dan Kwong led thirty Asian American men in a workshop presentation titled, “Everything You Wanted to Know About Asian Men (but didn’t give enough of a \$#\*@! to ask),” at the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles and the Highways Performance Space in Santa Monica, California. The shows were mostly sold-out, and more people wanted to participate in Kwong’s solo performance workshop, which he continued to offer. Despite the apparent success, however, Scott Collins of the *Los Angeles Times* wrote a scathing review of the production and criticized the show as “much ado about nothing”: “A series of inchoate and painfully long-winded monologues, interspersed with forgettable video segments, ‘Asian Men’ almost played like a parody of politically correct performance art.”<sup>1</sup> A week after the review appeared, the *Los Angeles Times* published Dan Kwong’s response, which summed up his philosophy of solo performance:

Telling one’s story on one’s own terms is an act of self-empowerment and validation, as an individual and as a member of a group. It says, ‘I am here and my experience, our experience in this culture, matters.’ To do so takes a stand against everything an oppressive society attempts to shove down our throats—exemplified by those voices that say, ‘You and your issues are of no concern to us.’ Collins’ dismissal of the group as ‘having nothing of consequence to say’ and his belittlement of ‘ethnic consciousness-raising’ comes from the classic position of privilege in a society that has systematically silenced those not of the dominant group.<sup>2</sup>

Kwong's statement echoes the artistic goals of Asian American solo performers who have struggled to tell their stories on their own terms.

At least since the 1970s, Asian American solo performers have gained increasingly in popularity and have become an indispensable part of Asian American culture. Often written, directed, and produced by the performers themselves, Asian American solo performances have brought a heightened sense of truth. They also have let artists work beyond and against the conventional styles of established theatre companies, by incorporating multimedia techniques, autobiography, storytelling, ethnic specificity, and gender and sexuality in their works. They also have toured nationally and internationally, often as incidental diplomats of Asian America. Some performers have focused more on political issues, and others have been concerned with aesthetic aspects, but all of them have addressed their identities (which include more than race and ethnicity) in the style. The 1990s saw a great increase in the number and diversity of solo performances, and I focus on Dan Kwong to discuss the dominance of autobiography during the decade. Finally, I conclude the article with a study of Denise Uyehara's solo performance that purports to represent authenticity by using the concept of "borderless identity," one that both transcends and embodies all labeled identities.

### **AVANT-GARDE: WINSTON TONG**

In the 1970s, solo performances usually were performed in off-off Broadway spaces such as The Kitchen, Franklin Furnace, Performance Space 122, The Performing Garage, and even nightclubs, storefronts, and loft apartments in New York City. Solo performance, as an alternative theatre, rarely was reviewed by the mainstream press. Needless to say, its audiences were mostly other artists, and the majority of them never made a living with their solo works.<sup>6</sup> Winston Tong was among a number of Asian American avant-garde artists in the 1970s, a group that included Jessica Hagedorn and Ping Chong. Many, like Hagedorn, were known for their multimedia works and experimental art, but Winston Tong was recognized mostly for his originality in solo performance. Tong did not set out to participate in Asian American theatre, which was emerging in the 1970s in New York City; he was more interested in the avant-garde art move-

ment than in social movements such as the Asian American Movement that had inspired other Asian American theatre artists.

Born in San Francisco to immigrant parents, Winston Tong received a B.F.A. degree in music from the California Institute of the Arts and moved to New York City after graduation. Between 1976 and 1979, Tong created more than a half-dozen solo shows that now are recognized as the first solo performances by an Asian American artist. He began to work on solo performance because he realized early in his career that going solo was the best way to achieve his artistic goal.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, Tong's style was fiercely independent and original. Eileen Blumenthal, in her review, described Tong's work as a melding of "widely divergent forms and sensibilities: his extreme economy of means is akin to types of traditional Chinese theatre; his use of puppets, dolls, and silhouettes calls elements of Japanese Bunraku and Javanese shadow puppets; and his startling, pervasive eroticism has roots in nineteenth century French Symbolism."<sup>8</sup> Tong's surprisingly unique intercultural and avant-garde sensibility made a powerful impact on the New York audience, and his solo performances earned him an Obie award in 1978.

Of Winston Tong's solo shows in the 1970s, the most well-known were the "Three Solo Pieces," performed at La Mama Experimental Theatre Club in April and May of 1978. The three pieces were *The Wild Boys*, *Bound Feet*, and *A Rimbaud*. Both Daryl Chin and Eileen Blumenthal provided descriptions of each piece in their reviews and gave valuable information on the details of the performance. According to Chin, each piece lasted from twenty to thirty minutes, with texts as central elements: William Burroughs for *The Wild Boys*, a self-written text in Cantonese for *Bound Feet*, and selections from Rimbaud's *Illuminations* for *A Rimbaud*.<sup>9</sup> Music was also crucial to the pieces: punk rock in the first, Satie in the second, and Ravel in the last. Stage techniques included slide projection, silhouettes, and a doll, which he used as a character representing both himself and another person.<sup>10</sup>

In *Bound Feet*, two dolls were used to portray the ancient Chinese practice of binding women's feet. The following description by Eileen Blumenthal was long, but I am including it here because it provides a rare detailed description of the performance:

Tong walks on stage dressed in black, his face [powdered] female-theatre-mask white, and explains earnestly that “In China the Empress is Chinese, and so are all of her subjects.” He sits on a small stool, then, and begins to wash, powder, and bind his feet; meanwhile, we hear a recorded dialog in Cantonese between a mother and child—at first lighthearted, then with the child increasingly troubled and finally agonized, the mother cajoling and comforting. Partway through binding his first foot, Tong suddenly looks up, registers the intrusion of the audience’s curious eyes, and places a small, black screen to hide his preparation. His feet finally bound, he stuffs them into tiny red satin slippers, and limps about the stage a bit—again noticing at one point the distressing witnesses to his very personal toilet. Now the music of Eric Satie’s “Gymnopédies” begins, and Tong unfolds a black cloth on the stage, revealing two nude dolls, a male and female, made of white muslin with white plastic faces and black hair. The man has a penis, the woman no visible breasts or genitals—but tiny, red satin slippers on her bound feet. Quietly, almost ceremonially, Tong dons white, satin funeral clothes and, arranging the dolls on the cloth, he kneels facing the audience to manipulate them. He carefully places the woman on her side, head thrown back, one knee bent. The male doll now moves to her, puts a hand to his crotch, then on her feet, removes a slipper, and leans down and kisses the stunted foot. Tong squeezes the woman’s waist and her body contracts in an orgasm of pleasure/pain. Suddenly, as if overcome with anguish, passion, and the violation of prying eyes, Tong covers the dolls and hobbles off.<sup>11</sup>

Tong’s manipulation of the dolls impressed the spectators and made them feel like voyeurs of a world in which he was playing god. Similar intimacy and eroticism were staged in the third piece, *A Rimbaud*, which featured four dolls: a sultry mermaid, a skeletal death-as-woman, an elegant young man (who looked like a miniature version of Tong), and what Gussow calls “a mysterious catlike female predator” or what Daryl Chin calls “a leopard with a human face.”<sup>12</sup> All of the dolls were animated by Tong himself, with much accuracy and realism. He preferred dolls to puppets because, for him, “dolls live by themselves, and puppets have to be brought to life.”<sup>13</sup> Tong saw himself as androgynous and a “free spirit,” and used the dolls as his created actors to represent various facets of himself.

Tong did not explicitly use his Chinese American ethnic identity as a theme in his work and preferred to include it subtly. As Daryl Chin observes, for instance, *The Wild Boys* ends with a popular song, “Limehouse

Blues,” from the 1930s that makes reference to “chinks.”<sup>14</sup> Tong also used his Chinese background to tell a universal story of love and pain, as he did with *Bound Feet*. But, experiences of racism never deterred Tong from exploring the avant-garde art movement. In fact, for Tong, reacting to racism was secondary to developing his performative techniques and artistry, as is reflected in the following comment he made in an interview:

I started singing with Tuxedo Moon [in San Francisco in the 1970s]. I remember one of the first nights someone said “Get that screaming chinaman off the stage.” Some punk said, “He can’t even sing, he’s just screaming.” They said that in France too, but I was proud of it. We developed that technique. You have to shout a certain way to get it right.<sup>15</sup>

Tong continued to focus on his art and performed as a singer, poet, visual artist, and solo performer in the U.S. and Europe throughout the 1980s.<sup>16</sup>

Winston Tong’s work from the 1970s remains historically isolated from other Asian American solo pieces, mainly because he was the first and because he did not address the so-called “Asian American consciousness” that became the foundation of Asian American theatre. Moreover, most Asian American performers outside of the New York City avant-garde theatre circle never got to see Tong’s work, and when they did, it was judged apolitical and thus not “Asian American.” Indeed, most Asian American solo performances throughout the 1980s bore no resemblances to the universal sensuality of Winton Tong but instead emphasized Asian American history, experience, and identity.

### **ACTING: LANE NISHIKAWA AND JUDE NARITA**

By the early 1980s, solo performance was limited no longer to off-off Broadway theatre, and Asian American performers joined the fast-growing number of solo performers around the country. Asian Americans, like other groups, were influenced by feminist solo performers who since the 1960s had developed a particular form of the genre. For feminist performers, solo performance provided a powerful mode of representation through which to expose personal material in public.<sup>17</sup> Preconceived notions of women and womanhood were not enacted or portrayed, but rather, women were themselves on stage. By being themselves on stage,

the performers broke taboos and silences repressing women, using the theme, “personal is political,” in their performances. And, they took control over their bodies and gained the right to write about themselves, thereby winning the right to rewrite history and reveal truths about womanhood. Audiences were witnesses to the performers’ detailed confessions and revelations of their private lives, and the sharing of the “unspeakable” empowered all those involved and gave them voice. According to Jeanie Forte, “the intimate nature of the work, the emphasis on personal experience and emotional material, not ‘acted’ or distanced from artist or audience, is what most characterizes this alternative, heterogeneous voice.”<sup>18</sup>

Asian American performers also addressed the issues of identity and self-representation. In many ways, Asian American performers had more explaining to do on stage than feminist and other ethnic minority artists. Asian faces and bodies, along with the stereotype of Asian Americans as the perpetual foreigner and stranger, demanded explanation of the obvious: where they were from and what they were doing in America. Similar to disabled performance artists, the body-in-view generated stares and mandated a story. Rosemarie Garland Thomson’s explanation of disabled performance artists, therefore, applies readily to Asian American solo performers:

The meaning of the body, thus the meaning of self, emerges through social relations. We learn who we are by the responses we elicit from others. In social relations, disabled bodies prompt the question, ‘What happened to you?’ The disabled body demands a narrative, requires an apologia that accounts for its difference from unexceptional bodies. In this sense, disability identity is constituted by the story of why my body is different from your body.<sup>19</sup>

The Asian American body also demands a narrative and an explanation of why it is different and strange. Asian American solo performers thus have been more dedicated to educating audiences about how Asian Americans have been imagined and actualized in history.

The first ones to take on such a role of performer/educator were actors. In some ways, they had no choice. Racial discrimination on top of the generally low employment rate in the acting industry gave them no option but to create their own roles. For actors Lane Nishikawa and Jude Narita, solo performance became their most (and often only) viable form

of theatrical expression. With solo performance, they found a venue in which to write their own material, tell stories, enact multiple characters, and teach audiences about the issues related to the Asian American identity. But most importantly, solo performance gave them the opportunity to create roles for themselves and a way to make a living as actors.

A Sansei, Lane Nishikawa was born in Hawaii and grew up in Southern California. While attending San Francisco State University in the mid-1970s, he met Eric Hayashi and Marc Hayashi, brothers who were active members of the Asian American Theatre Workshop (AATW). Nishikawa began his participation in the workshop by appearing in Lonny Kaneko's *Lady Is Dying* (1977), directed by Frank Chin. Nishikawa was an ambitious actor, but he, like others, learned quickly of the entertainment industry's casting discrimination against Asian American actors. Opportunities in the industry were virtually non-existent or unacceptable to him. Moreover, Nishikawa did not find characters in Asian American plays to be satisfying; available characters were angry Chinamen, disillusioned Nisei farmers, and even benign versions of popular Asian stereotypes. As a young Sansei living in San Francisco, Nishikawa could not sympathize with such characters and wanted to see characters with which he could identify. So, he created his own characters.

Using his previous experience as a writer, actor, and director, Nishikawa put together a collection of nine monologues about the Asian American experience and created his first one-man show, *Life in the Fast Lane*. The show begins with Nishikawa addressing the audience as if he is talking to an imaginary casting director, seated in the house. It is immediately obvious that the casting director knows nothing about Nishikawa's Japanese American background. Nishikawa tries to explain who he is to the "casting director." And, in his relentless attempt, he finds his voice, which Randy Barbara Kaplan calls "quintessentially Asian American":

Thus, after responding to imaginary questions about his background, Nishikawa performs a loving tribute to his Oba-chang, the issei grandmother who nurtured both his spirit and his stomach as a boy. The succeeding monologue grows out of Nishikawa's delineation of Asian media stereotypes as enemies to be killed or houseboys to be dominated: he portrays a Texas redneck whose children are driving him to racial distraction with their romantic entanglement with Asian



Americans. As a sly twist, at the end of the monologue, Nishikawa turns the tables on the audience, transforming himself into a Japanese father who is outraged to learn that his son is marrying a *hakujin* (Caucasian), demonstrating that the door of prejudice swings both ways.<sup>20</sup>

Nishikawa is himself on stage but also acts a number of characters, both Asian and non-Asian, for the purpose of storytelling. The primary purpose of the monologues is to teach the audience about Asian American history that has been excluded from American education. For instance, in the monologue, “They Was Close, Those Brothers,” Nishikawa tells the story of Uncle Blackie, who fought with the all-Nisei 442<sup>nd</sup> Regiment during World War II. What Nishikawa reveals is not necessarily his personal life but rather, pieces of forgotten history that are close to his heart.

In other words, Nishikawa’s solo performances may not have told much about the intimate details of his own thoughts, but they educated the audience about “the impact of major events in Asian American history on the current stage of Asian America.”<sup>21</sup> The focus on cultural education made Nishikawa’s solo shows appealing to many, especially those interested in the contemporary issues of multicultural education. As soon as *Life in the Fast Lane* premiered at Asian American Theatre Company, it was revived the following season and began to tour. For the next four years, Nishikawa performed in front of numerous sold-out audiences in theatres and universities around the United States, Canada, and Europe. The success of *Life in Fast Lane* led Nishikawa to develop more solo performances, which have included *I’m on a Mission From Buddha* (1990) and *Mifune and Me* (1993). In *Buddha*, Nishikawa again played multiple characters and identities in order to tell stories from Asian America. According to Steven Winn of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Nishikawa’s transformation on stage was “as dangerous as it [was] empowering” because it raised questions of what and who he really was:

In the course of his 80-minute show, Nishikawa leaps easily from a slide rule-packing nerd to a pseudo-stoical spurned lover, an innocent first-time visitor to Japan to a teary Japanese American veteran of World War II. He plays a rapper in a leather jacket, and he plays himself, facing the audience straight on, like Spalding Gray, with nothing more than a table and a beaker of water to mute the autobiographical frankness of his monologues.<sup>22</sup>

The most empowering aspect of the show was Nishikawa's redefinition of Asian American manhood. The characters, all male, ranged from the stereotypical nerdy Asian man to the honorable war veteran. As Nishikawa subverted undesirable stereotypes of Asian men, he replaced them with confident, sexy, fun, and real characters as a tribute to actual Asian American men he had known, including himself.<sup>23</sup>

Jude Narita's career is similar in many ways to Lane Nishikawa's: she is a Sansei, is based in California, and turned to solo performance after experiencing disappointments as a struggling actor. Born in Long Beach, California, Narita was a serious student of acting, studying with Stella Adler in New York and Lee Strasberg in Los Angeles. However, such solid training did not give her the opportunity she wanted. Tired of passively waiting, she created her first and best-known solo show, *Coming into Passion/Song for a Sansei* (1985). Like Nishikawa, she played multiple characters in order to reveal unknown details of Asian American history, especially in regards to gender roles and expectations. Just as Nishikawa focused on Asian American manhood, Narita addressed the experiences of Asian American women. But unlike Nishikawa, Narita included Asian women outside of the United States in her exploration of Asian American identity. As Melinda L. de Jesús assesses, Narita's work "manifests a distinct Asian American feminist and third-world feminist consciousness."<sup>24</sup>

*Coming into Passion* begins with the narrator, a Japanese American newscaster, emphatically rejecting her "Asianness" and wanting to be "American." But, the assimilated newscaster gradually discovers through her dreams the commonalities she shares with women in other countries: "the Filipino mail-order bride, the Vietnamese bar girl, the nisei woman interned as a child, the Cambodian refugee, and the troubled sansei teenager, and the storyteller who weaves the tale of a little girl caught in the bombing of Hiroshima."<sup>25</sup> Each character experiences abuse, loneliness, and suffering, much of which is caused by the actions of Western men, both abroad and domestically. By empathizing with these women, the narrator experiences what feminists would call "consciousness raising" that allows her to embrace her Asian American female identity.

As other feminist theatre artists have done for many decades, Narita empowers herself and the audience with her message, and she does so not

only by preaching but also with her life and artistry. The fact that she writes, acts, and produces the show itself demonstrates her determination and fearlessness, and, for Narita, the process of creating is part of the message: “Every woman knows about standing up for herself. But the perception of Asians is that they don’t like to rock the boat, be troublemakers: ‘That’s past, let’s get on with life’—never dealing with the pain, the loss, the injustice. So this is my view of Asian life. And sure, there’s some outrage, some things that need to be said, in an artistic way.”<sup>26</sup> Moreover, as de Jesús describes, Jude Narita has created solo performances about the “contemporary Asian and Asian American ‘Everywoman’” and has made a great contribution to Asian American theatre.<sup>27</sup> Her later solo works, such as *Stories Waiting to be Told*, *The Wilderness Within*, *Celebrate Me Home*, and *Walk the Mountain*, also address the lives of Asian and Asian American women, including her own. Narita’s commitment to the Asian American and third-world feminist consciousness has led her to perform her shows around the country and in Asia, in various venues.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, as one of the first Asian American female solo performers, Jude Narita has inspired other artists such as Lauren Tom, Patty Toy, Szu Wang, and Michelle Emoto (aka Darling Narita) to empower themselves by telling stories on stage of Asian and Asian American women.

Lane Nishikawa and Jude Narita were among the first Asian American solo performers to emerge in the first half of the 1980s. Their shows received national and international recognition as having educational value, and they often performed as cultural ambassadors for non-Asian Americans. By playing multiple characters, they displayed their acting talents and portrayed a wide range of Asian and Asian American identities that would otherwise never have been seen on stage. Another important factor in their appeal was low production cost. Because the performer wrote, produced, performed, and sometimes designed the show, the cost was much less expensive than producing or inviting a play production or group performance. The low production cost also meant versatility to perform in all kinds of venues, from school auditoriums to assembly halls. Moreover, the multicultural messages of these solo performances touched a chord in the 1980s, when schools looked to the arts to teach multiculturalism and pluralism. In the 1980s, a new flow of money from

city, state, and federal agencies gave incentives to schools to promote multicultural education. With such encouragement and support, Asian American solo performers were able to take Asian American theatre to all parts of the country, by performing in colleges, universities, and high schools in even the remotest areas. This combination of multicultural education, low cost, grant incentives, and novelty made Asian American solo performance popular in theatre touring circuits and educational systems.

Starting in the second half of the 1980s, other solo performers such as Brenda Wong Aoki and Sandra Tsing Loh began to create their own shows and joined the group of solo performers who were being sought after at an increasing rate. Moreover, veteran Asian American performers such as Nobuko Miyamoto added solo performance to their repertoires.<sup>29</sup> Most of these new solo performers began their careers as actors like Nishikawa and Narita, and by the 1990s it became almost expected that every actor have a solo piece in his or her back pocket readily available for performance. But, a number of them emerged from other directions, including visual arts and performance arts. This trend continued through the 1990s, during which the number and diversity of Asian American solo performance grew exponentially. More performers chose solo performance not as an alternative to (or a form of) acting but as a way to develop new modes of artistic representation and storytelling. And a dominant form in the 1990s was autobiographical solo performance.

### **AUTOBIOGRAPHY: DAN KWONG**

In Asian American theatre, expression of selfhood has been central, as exemplified by artists such as Winston Tong, Lane Nishikawa, and Jude Narita. But since the late 1980s, solo performances have evolved into a more direct form of autobiography, in which performers would speak in the first-person voice as themselves during the most of show. Meiling Cheng, in her study of autobiographical solo performance, describes this voice as being “halfway between a public presentation of the self and a theatrical construction of this self’s multiple personas.”<sup>30</sup> Cheng adds that such performances often concern the “artist’s auto-projection as a subaltern individual who has been turned into an ‘other’—being named as

‘multicultural,’ ‘ethnic,’ ‘feminist,’ ‘queer,’ ‘poor,’ ‘old,’ ‘handicap,’ or ‘foreign’—by her/his acculturation in this country.”<sup>31</sup>

As Meiling Cheng’s study reveals, a major locale for the new genre was the Highways Performance Space, an alternative live art venue in Los Angeles.<sup>32</sup> Founded in 1989 by writer Linda Frye Burnham and artist Tim Miller, Highways has provided a multifunctional venue for a diverse group of artists who wanted to experiment artistically and to explore cultural and social issues. A number of Asian American solo performers have found support and a sense of community at Highways. One of them is Dan Kwong, who is best known as a major autobiographical solo performer in American theatre. Cited by many critics as “a master storyteller,” Dan Kwong has been recognized as having created a new form of solo performance. Born in Los Angeles to a Chinese American father and a Japanese American mother, Kwong grew up with a distinct experience of interethnic discrimination. He has received training in dance, baseball, martial arts, and visual arts, all of which are reflected in his performance. He attended the School of the Arts Institute of Chicago, where he learned to develop multimedia shows, and in 1989 Kwong presented his first show, *Secrets of the Samurai Centerfielder*, at Highways. The show uses baseball as a metaphor for his childhood and family history, which includes the immigration of his mother’s family, the internment of his maternal grandparents during World War II, his parents’ divorce, his model-minority sisters, and Kwong’s inability to fit into either Chinese or Japanese American cliques in school. Kwong resorts to the center, the neutral place where he is farthest from pain and isolation, and most importantly, where he can have the best perspective of his situation.

After the success of *Secrets*, Kwong developed other autobiographical shows, including *Tales from the Fractured Tao with Master Nice Guy* (1991), *Monkhood in Three Easy Lessons* (1993), *The Dodo Vaccine* (1994), and *The Night the Moon Landed on 39th Street* (1999). While all of his shows are autobiographical in content and multimedia in style, each focuses on a specific theme: *Tales* summarizes Kwong’s “dysfunctional family, Asian American style”; *Monkhood* depicts experiences of Asian American men; *Dodo* examines HIV/AIDS in the Asian American community and homophobia; and *Night* asks broader questions of “human existence itself

rather than focusing on issues of race, culture, or gender.<sup>33</sup> Kwong would be the first to admit that some shows are more didactic while others may be overly personal, but taken together, the body of work reflects the career of a multitalented artist with many stories to tell.

Dan Kwong's contribution to Asian American theatre goes beyond his shows; he has taught and inspired a number of artists to pursue autobiographical solo performance as their career. As mentioned at the beginning of this article, he founded the performance workshop, "Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Asian Men," in Los Angeles. He focused on men because previous performance festivals attracted more Asian American women than men, and he wanted to encourage more men to participate in the arts and have a voice of self-expression. In the first workshop, Kwong led about thirty Asian American men to write autobiographical performance pieces for twelve weeks. Gary San Angel (who participated in the workshop and a year later formed his own group, *Peeling the Banana*, in New York City) describes how the workshop let Asian American men open up:

The first exercise is the basic one: You write down five things that you love about being an Asian male and five things you hate about being an Asian male. Some real key things about what you struggle with come out—about what you appreciate, what you value. At the time I thought, 'These would be the kind of questions you'd get from a self-help book.' But he just did it in such a way that you felt safe and open enough that these questions allowed me and the rest of the guys to open up in a way that we never did in our lives. For me, it was like putting a mirror to yourself. You get to see all the great things, but you get to see all the ugly things too.<sup>34</sup>

The workshop ended with the presentation of works by nine of the participants (Gary San Angel, Radmar Agana Jao, Hao Chorr, Royd Hatta, Mark Jue, Darrell Kunitomi, Alex Luu, Yoshio Moriwaki, and Hwang Pham). Tying the performances together were the participants' memories of growing up as Asian American boys, experiences of racism, and reconciliation of broken relationships.<sup>35</sup> Dan Kwong empowers the Asian American identity and challenges American identity by telling stories of his life. And, he has inspired others to use his workshop techniques to continue breaking the cycle of silence that often has characterized Asian

American men and women. For example, Gary San Angel's group, *Peeling the Banana*, has grown since 1995 to include women members and has performed regularly in New York City.<sup>36</sup>

Dan Kwong sometimes enacts other characters, but he makes it obvious that the purpose of such "acting" is to further his autobiographical story. He never becomes other characters (by, for example, changing costumes) but instead imitates them as he remembers them from his past. For example, when Kwong uses a Chinese accent to tell a story of his grandfather, he imitates the old man's behavior as he saw it as a child. In other words, Kwong does not release his characters from his memory because his purpose is not acting but storytelling. Whereas Lane Nishikawa and Jude Narita do their best to become different characters as authentically as possible by acting them, Kwong shows us what he remembers of the people in his lives by indicating and imitating them.

#### **AUTHENTICITY: DENISE UYEHARA**

In some ways, the 1990s brought Asian American solo performance full-circle, back to the style of Winston Tong. During the decade, a number of artists, trained in visual art, modern dance, and performance art, intentionally attempted to experiment, subvert, blur, and ultimately expand the definition of solo performance. Focusing on universal sensuality and visual aesthetics, they seemed on one hand to continue from where Tong had left off. On the other hand, they also incorporated acting and autobiography in their performance and storytelling. The Asian American solo performers of the 1990s were indeed a truly diverse group of artists, and many of their works successfully integrated various styles of both the past and the present.<sup>37</sup> And, they did so with a new edge.

Denise Uyehara, in particular, used her body to redefine the notion of authenticity in the context of Asian American history and culture. All Asian American performers, including the four I have discussed thus far, have chosen solo performance in order to realize some form of the authentic self. Winston Tong did so by using dolls as extensions of himself, while Lane Nishikawa and Jude Narita attempted to portray an authentic Asian American experience with acting. For Dan Kwong, there was noth-

ing more authentic than being himself and telling his life stories on stage. For all of these performers, their physical presence was a statement on its own; no one could dispute the authenticity and realness of their bodies and personal histories. Denise Uyehara's shows acknowledged this tradition, but with her later works she moved beyond the accepted definition of the "authentic" Asian American experience. She presented her body not only to represent herself or her Asian Americanness (or femaleness for that matter), but also to be a signifier of what she calls a "borderless identity," one that embraces her existence in the grand history of humanity.

A fourth-generation Japanese American born and raised in Southern California, Uyehara had some opportunity to explore her Asian American identity in schools and theatre groups, including the Asian American Theatre Projects led by Dom Magwili. Not surprisingly, her early shows more or less reflected the performative tradition set by previous Asian American artists. Her first solo performance piece, *Headless Turtleneck Relatives: A Tale of a Family and a Grandmother's Suicide by Fire*, is about her grandmother, who committed suicide by lighting herself on fire. A collection of family oral stories, the autobiographical piece helped her to make sense of "death, life, and family legacy" and to "honor [her] past."<sup>38</sup> Uyehara describes the show as one that she "*had* to create." Her break with conventional Asian American theatre came with her second and most well-known solo performance piece, *Hello (Sex) Kitty*. It was one she "*wanted* to create: I knew it was the right time for me to talk about sex, sexuality, lust, love, all that stuff. If I had written *Hello (Sex) Kitty* as my first solo piece, it probably would have been more difficult to have fun with and less deeply rooted in truth."<sup>39</sup>

Uyehara's new voice and style struck a chord in the 1990s, a decade during which theatre artists of all backgrounds celebrated hybridity and multiplicity, especially in terms of sexual identities. Moreover, a new generation of Asian Americans welcomed the complicated and sexualized definitions of race and rejected what Meiling Cheng has called the "static cultural nationalist conception of racial identity."<sup>40</sup> In 1993, the year before the premiere of *Hello (Sex) Kitty*, she co-founded the Sacred Naked Nature Girls ensemble, a "culturally diverse experimental performative collective," with Danielle Brazell, Laura Meyers, and Akilah Oliver. The



four women were of diverse ethnic backgrounds and sexual orientations, but they shared an artistic vision to explore “issues from the specifically feminist to the universal.”<sup>41</sup> Their first show was performed entirely in the nude, in the Highways Performance Space in Santa Monica, California, as part of its annual “ecce lesbo/ecce homo” festival of lesbian and gay performance art. For Uyehara, stage nudity was used to express the most honest truths of her experience as a woman, a human being, and an Asian American. And, her identity as an Asian American was not defined separately from her bisexuality and the celebration of her “natural” female body.

However, some Asian Americans (whom Uyehara calls “older-minded”) objected to her approach and criticized her nude performances as not reflecting “the way Asians talk about sexuality.”<sup>42</sup> Uyehara has responded to such criticism by emphasizing that she has never stopped writing about the “Asian American experience”—what she is and the life she has lived. And, the decision to perform in nude came “very naturally,” as Kariann Yokota has explained: “[The Sacred Naked Nature Girls is] a piece about women, womanhood and the intersection of being lesbian, straight, bisexual, African American, Asian American and European American.”<sup>43</sup> Denise Uyehara also explores these broader issues of identity in *Hello (Sex) Kitty*, which for her is not just about the Asian American experience.

In *Hello*, Uyehara addresses the issues of sexuality, dating, domestic violence, and the AIDS epidemic by portraying several vastly different images, archetypes, stereotypes, and caricatures of Asian women and men. The characters range from “Asian Chic,” to “Mad Kabuki Woman,” to “Dyke Asia,” and finally to the “Vegetable Girl” who talks to her Hello Kitty doll. The characters represent the wide-ranging experiences of Asian women, and they certainly are meant to contradict each other. While Uyehara’s uses of multiple characters are similar to the methods of Lane Nishikawa and Jude Narita, she adds a sense of irony and self-consciousness in portraying the characters. In other words, she does not become “Vegetable Girl” or “Asian Chic” and enact her as a real person but rather parodies her in order to reveal the absurd social constructions of the Asian female identity.

Denise Uyehara delivers a more universal message, especially with the ending of the show. This last scene begins with a character named “Woman” examining her naked body in a mirror, as if she is alone in a bedroom. She carefully examines herself: “back, front, breasts, stomach, muscles, and finally between her legs.”<sup>44</sup> She then picks up a letter and reads:

Dear Miss Uyehara,

I saw your work in progress at the Institute for Contemporary Arts in London and I have some suggestions for you. I wished you would keep your shirt on. Also, fishing about in one’s pubic area (I admit I wasn’t watching this “part” too closely) and then handling members of the audience, probably contradicts with E.E.C. hygiene regulations. These comments are meant to be helpful and I hope that you will take them as such.

Yours sincerely,

wuhajdfjehelwefhkj (illegible signature)

“Woman” puts the letter back into an envelope, looks back into the mirror, and wraps her arms around herself, covering her body. After a moment, when “she is ready” and “finally sees herself clearly,” she pulls out and puts on black lingerie. The show ends with “Woman,” dressed in black lingerie, interacting with the audience by sitting on “various laps, crotches, etc.” and inviting an “Asian woman” onto the stage for a dance. With the final image of two Asian women dancing flirtatiously, Uyehara brings an elegant closure to the questions and issues she raises throughout the show, which—according to her—is about “being an Asian American, a bisexual woman, and a human being, not necessarily in that order.”<sup>45</sup>

Symbolically, the character of Woman willingly embodies all of the disparate characters with her nakedness. She sings like the Vegetable Girl, wears black lingerie as wished by another character, and boldly flirts with another woman as fantasized by yet another character. In other words, Uyehara creates and embodies the generalized (and arguably universalized) Asian woman with nudity, with all particulars stripped away. And in so doing, Uyehara subverts the imposed images of Asian women and presents and celebrates the unaffected and authentic “Woman.” Uyehara ends the show by hinting towards an identity that is much more and beyond that of Asian America and is closer to the “intersections of identities,” or what she would later call “borderless identities.”

Uyehara's use of body to express "universal" and "borderless identities" received closer examination in her third solo performance piece, *Maps of City and Body* (1999). In the piece, she tells stories about people of diverse backgrounds while staying in the style of biographical solo performance. For example, in a scene titled, "Blue Marks," Uyehara describes a family in her childhood neighborhood of Westminster, a suburban area in Orange County, California. The Abrams consist of a Jewish couple and their adopted daughter of Mexican descent. In the story, the daughter runs away with a biker to rebel against her adopted parents' Jewish background. In the actual performance, Uyehara pulls out a pen as she describes a visit she had with her mom, Mrs. Abrams. The following is her narration, along with a description of her action:

Then I looked over and noticed the blue markings on Mrs. Abrams' arm

*(Draws dark blue lines with her pen on the inside of her forearms.)*

—in the same color as the blue varicose veins on her legs, I thought—  
but in the shape of small numbers the size of alphabet soup.

I knew they were marks from those camps,  
not the ones my parents were in, but the same war.

I had seen them in black and white photos  
of this place in the World Book Encyclopedia.

Thin bean people dressed in striped pajamas  
whose eyes met the camera.

When Mrs. Abrams saw me looking  
she turned her arms away

so I knew it wasn't something to discuss over cool aide.<sup>46</sup>

By the end of the scene, Uyehara's arm is decorated with blue marking, not in the form of small numbers but with lines, as if she is drawing a map on her body. She makes the intention of this action obvious in a later scene titled "Mapping the Body." In the scene, she describes a past abusive relationship (of hers or someone else's) while also introducing her desire to draw "a map of her body." She juxtaposes the sharp verbal abuses of a "Man" with her calm, poetic narration: "This body does not lie, it knows where it has been and that tells it where it is going."

Unlike her earlier shows that focus on her own racial identity and life stories, *Maps* charts the lives of other people whom she encountered throughout her life. Her body becomes a canvas on which the paths,

courses, and intersections of many people's memories and life stories get drawn. And, she literally marks the points and lines of the map on her body. Uyehara's approach to "borderless identity" and the concept of embodying other people's lives and memories echoes what Erika Fischer-Lichte describes as the "historically determined body":

Yet the human body never exists as pure nature, apart from history. From the beginning of life, culture starts to shape, restructure, and regulate the body and its physical needs and functions. [ . . . ] As a result each individual body participates not only in the natural order but also in the symbolic order of culture. The body, like any other cultural phenomenon, is historically determined.<sup>47</sup>

Uyehara thus sees her body not only as an Asian American female, bisexual, and fourth-generation Japanese-American, but as a byproduct of the history of which she is a part along with billions of other people on the globe. And, the collective identity is essentially borderless. In so doing, she empowers the Asian body on stage: she can now be anyone and everyone.

## CONCLUSION

Denise Uyehara's later solo shows have many resemblances to Winston Tong's solo performances of the 1970s: both address the universality of human suffering, love, and loss, and both use their bodies and visual metaphors to reveal the most vulnerable aspects of themselves. Both reach for the universal by using the personal. Within this spectrum of the personal and the universal, the careers of these two artists reflect the process through which Asian American solo performance has flourished in the last three decades. Stories from Asian American solo performances are deeply and sometimes disturbingly personal, and audiences become voyeurs to the performer's private thoughts. Without the conventional medium of theatrical representation (e.g. an actor enacts a character written by a playwright) filtering the "truthfulness," solo performers are as "authentic" as they can be on stage. However, as I have explored in this article, Asian American solo performers also have enacted other characters and embodied other cultural identities. Their live presence on stage has not been used exclusively for telling personal stories, but they relate as

well other stories and other experiences. Some have focused on Asian American experiences, while others have found no limit as long as they could empathize. They have shown that an Asian American body on stage is both culturally specific and historically determined. And, they also have shown that while it is crucial to experiment artistically and to know and educate about their culture and history, it is also imperative to acknowledge their “borderless identity” and humanity.

## Notes

1. Scott Collins, “‘Asian Men’ Closes After Much Ado About Nothing,” *Los Angeles Times*, 4 Sept 1995, calendar sec., p. 4.
2. Dan Kwong, “Counterpunch: Ethnic Images, Issues and ‘Asian Men,’” *Los Angeles Times*, 11 Sept 1995, calendar sec., p. 3.
3. See David T. Mitchell, “Body Solitaire: The Singular Subject of Disability Autobiography,” *American Quarterly* 52.2 (2000): 311.
4. Asian American solo performers began to emerge in large numbers in the late 1980s, but the tradition of solo acts and one-person shows in theatre history is extensive. Indeed, the tradition of one person telling a story to an audience is arguably the oldest form of theatre and in both Western and Eastern cultures. As John S. Gentile writes in *Cast of One: One-Person Shows from the Chautauqua Platform to the Broadway Stage* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1989), “the one-person show is as old as humankind, dating back to the ancient oral poets and storytellers.” In the United States, one-person shows began to gain popularity and legitimacy in the late nineteenth century with platform performances such as the reading tours of Charles Dickens. In the twentieth century, such acts became integral to mainstream theatre with the success of solo performers such as Cecilia Loftus, Dorothy Sands, Ruth Draper, and others. The movement continued to flourish in the second half of the twentieth century and by the 1960s had proliferated on and off Broadway and on the national touring circuit. In the 1960s, one-person shows in America began to take two different directions with opposite styles and purposes. One direction came in the form of biographical one-person shows such as Emlyn Williams’s impersonation of Charles Dickens and Mark Twain. These popular biographical one-person shows were performed on Broadway and received international recognition. The second direction appeared in off and off-off Broadway venues, where a very different kind of solo act was being developed as part of the alternative theatre movement. It had its roots in performance art. Unlike the performers of biographical one-person shows, performance artists did not act out a character or focus on a narrative story. Instead, the performers were often themselves on stage, voicing the artistic and political messages of the shows. The performer’s self became the essence, and the “I” voice represented the

- author/performer. Deborah Geis describes this movement as “postmodern revisioning of subjectivity” and argues that it “inspired new approaches to the portrayal of characters’ ‘inner lives.’” See Deborah Geis, *Postmodern Theatric[k]: Monologue in Contemporary American Drama* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993) and Peggy Phelan, “Spalding Gray’s *Swimming to Cambodia*: The Article” *Critical Texts* 5 (1988): 27–30.
5. I acknowledge the limitations in using five Chinese American and Japanese American artists as “representative” Asian American solo performers. The diversity in solo performers’ ethnic identities and performance styles has increased steadily, and no selection of artists can truly represent the entire spectrum of Asian American solo performance. However, the five artists I have chosen to discuss have made a significant impact on the shaping of the very definition of Asian American solo performance. I am interested in exploring how Asian American solo performance has been defined and changed since the 1970s by using the works of the five artists as case studies.
  6. Jo Bonney, ed., *Extreme Exposure: An Anthology of Solo Performance Texts from the Twentieth Century* (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 2000), xi.
  7. Eileen Blumenthal, “The Solo Performances of Winston Tong,” *The Drama Review* 23.1 (March 1979): 94.
  8. *Ibid.*, 87.
  9. Daryl Chin, “Winston Tong: Three Solo Pieces,” *Bridge: An Asian American Perspective* (Summer 1978): 54.
  10. The opening piece, *The Wild Boys*, was the most jarring of the three with noisy electronic sounds and images of youth rebellion. Mel Gussow of *The New York Times* described the piece as a “brutally and harshly contemporary” tale of a “wild boy.” Tong enacted “Johnny,” a kid who leaves his home to join the wild boys and experiences rejection, vulnerability, and meaningless sexual (implicitly homosexual) encounters. See Mel Gussow, “Theater: ‘Three Solo Pieces’ by Winston Tong,” *New York Times*, 10 May 1978, sect. C3, p. 22.
  11. Blumenthal, “The Solo Performances of Winston Tong,” 88.
  12. Mel Gussow, “Theater: ‘Three Solo Pieces’ by Winston Tong,” Chin, “Winston Tong,” 56.
  13. Blumenthal, “The Solo Performances of Winston Tong,” 91.
  14. Chin, “Winston Tong,” 56.
  15. Gina Hall, “The Winston Tong Interview.” <http://www.fadmag.com/items/tong/tong.html>.
  16. Tong rarely collaborated with other Asian American theatre, but in 1992, he participated in Tsunami, a festival of Asian American performance art at the Asian American Theatre Company in San Francisco. He performed “1st Generation Stigmas” which had text, music, puppetry, and video and addressed the experience of growing up as the first-born son of immigrant parents in America. The show received an extremely negative review from Steven Winn of *The San Francisco Chronicle*, who echoed other reviewers’

- descriptions of Tong's later work as self-indulgent and pretentious and concluded that the show was a "mystery" to him. For reviews of Winston Tong's work post-1970s, see Mel Gussow, "Stage: Puppeteer As 'Frankie and Johnnie,'" *New York Times*, 7 Jan 1982, sec. c:3; Sylvie Drake, "Stage Review: 'Rasputin' Falls Short of the Mark," *Los Angeles Times*, 15 Apr 1987, sec. calendar: 3; Bernard Weiner, "Acrobatic Actors Work Around a Wall," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 18 Nov 1989: C8; Steven Winn, "Winston Tong's Solo Show is a Mystery," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 17 Jan 1992: D13.
17. See Lenora Champagne, "Introduction," *Out from Under: Texts by Women Performance Artists*, ed. Lenora Champagne (New York City: Theatre Communications Group, 1990), xi.
  18. Jeanie Forte, "Women's Performance Art: Feminism and Postmodernism," *Theatre Journal* 40 (1988): 221.
  19. Rosemarie Garland Thompson, "Staring Back: Self-Representations of Disabled Performance Artists," *American Quarterly* 52.2 (2000): 334.
  20. Randy Barbara Kaplan, "Lane Nishikawa," *Asian American Playwrights: A Bio-Bibliographical Critical Sourcebook*, ed. Miles Xian Liu (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 255.
  21. *Ibid.*
  22. Steven Winn, "The Many Faces of Asian Actor on a 'Mission,'" *San Francisco Chronicle*, 9 Mar 1990, p. E10.
  23. In the mid-1990s, Nishikawa became increasingly interested in the history of Japanese American soldiers of World War II and developed a semi-fictional two-men show with Victor Talmadge based on a 50-year friendship between a Japanese American soldier and Jewish American man. Written by Nishikawa and Talmadge, *The Gate of Heaven* chronicles the lives of two men from the time the soldier rescues the Jewish man from the Dachau concentration camp during the war. The show raises what Roberta Floden of the *Marin Independent Journal* calls "many of the ironies and paradoxes of life in the United States" but mainly focuses on the bond between two men and the friendship that transcends ethnicity, history, and time. The full script is published in Brian Nelson's anthology, *Asian American Drama* (New York: Applause, 1997).
  24. Melinda L. de Jesús, "Jude Narita," *Asian American Playwrights: A Bio-Bibliographical Critical Sourcebook*, ed. Miles Xian Liu (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002): 246.
  25. *Ibid.*
  26. Janice Arkatov, "Narita's 'Song' Looks at Roles of Asian Women," *Los Angeles Times*, 26 Aug 1987, part 6, p. 3.
  27. de Jesús, "Jude Narita," 248.
  28. For instance, in 1992, she traveled to Asia as a member of the Women's Delegation to Vietnam and Cambodia under the sponsorship of the Women's Union of Vietnam and the Asia Resource Center in the United States.
  29. See Lucy Mae San Pablo Burns, "Something Larger Than Ourselves: Interview with Nobuko Miyamoto," *The Color of Theater: Race, Culture, and*

- Contemporary Performance*, eds. Roberta Uno and Lucy Mae San Pablo Buns (New York: Continuum, 2002), 195–206.
30. Meiling Cheng, “Highways, L.A.: Multiple Communities in a Heterolocus,” *Theatre Journal* 53 (2001): 448.
  31. *Ibid.*
  32. For an earlier study on Highways, see Linda Frye Burnham, “Getting on the Highways: Taking Responsibility for the Culture in the ’90s,” *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism* (1990): 265–78.
  33. SanSan Kwan. “Dan Kwong,” *Asian American Playwrights*, p. 164.
  34. Jana J. Monji, “All ‘Roads’ Lead Home: Gary San Angel and Fellow Performance Artists Ponder Asian American Identity,” *Los Angeles Times*, 6 Jul 2000, calendar sec., p. 38.
  35. T. H. McCulloh, writing for *Los Angeles Times*, describes the show as “decidedly early-’70s in tone, with ritual lighting of candles” and “as varied as the intentions and personalities of each of the members.” T. H. McCulloh, “Grief in ‘Asian Men’ Occurs by Occident,” *Los Angeles Times*, 13 Mar 1995, calendar sec., p. 2. Also, see Robert H. Vorlicky, who has done extensive studies on Kwong’s solo performance: Robert H. Vorlicky, “Marking Change, Marking America: Contemporary Performance and Men’s Autobiographical Selves,” *Performing America: Cultural Nationalism in American Theater*, eds. Jeffrey D. Mason and Ellen Gainor. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 193–209. Vorlicky has examined Dan Kwong in the context of autobiography and the concept of masculinity in America. He posits that Kwong is “marking the change in the ‘architects of American character’—in the storytellers of American male characters” and is telling stories that challenge the “myth of a monolithic American male ethos.” He also correctly points out that Kwong’s work follows on the “heels of feminist performance art that has subverted gender myths through its dramatization of female subjectivities.”
  36. The members of *Peeling the Banana* specialize in autobiographical writing and performance and have included many talented artists, including Dan Bacalzo, Ed Lin, Aileen Cho, Calvin Lom, Michel Ng, Margarita Alcantara-Tan, Gita Reddy, Bertrand Wang, Ching-Ching Ni, and numerous others. San Angel also formed workshop groups in Philadelphia: *Gener-Asian Next* for teens and *Something to Say for Asian American Men and Women*. Alex Luu, an original member of Dan Kwong’s workshop, also formed his own workshop in Boston, where he taught Asian American teenagers to voice their thoughts and feelings through autobiographical writing and performance. For an article on Alex Luu’s workshop, see Sandy Coleman’s “Theater Class Acts Out Against Stereotypes,” *The Boston Globe*, 5 Mar 2002, p. B11.
  37. The originality and creativity of these solo performers are extensive, and an accurate examination of their works would require a truly interdisciplinary study. Dan Bacalzo’s study of Muna Tseng, in “Portraits of Self and Other: *SlutForArt* and the Photographs of Tseng Kwong Chi,” is an example of such



- study. It examines the complex autobiographical elements in Muna Tseng's solo performance, as well as her collaboration with Ping Chong and memories of her deceased brother, Tseng Kwong Chi, and his photographs. We can imagine and anticipate similar studies on, for example, Marcus Quiniones and Hawaiian dance; Maura Nguyen Donohue and modern dance and choreography; lê thi diem thúy and poetry; and other solo performers too many to mention. As a group, these artists seem to be taking Asian American theatre and performance to another level in terms of creativity, diversity, and quality. See Dan Bacalzo, "Portraits of Self and Other: *SlutForArt* and the Photographs of Tseng Kwong Chi," *Theatre Journal* 53 (2001): 73–94.
38. Denise Uyehara, "Hello (Sex) Kitty: Mad Asian Bitch on Wheels," *O Solo Homo: The New Queer Performance*, eds. Holly Hughes and David Román (New York: Grove Press, 1998), 377.
  39. *Ibid.*
  40. David Eng and Alice Hom note that this traditional conception of race assumed the Asian American subject as "male, heterosexual, working class, American born, and English speaking." They also describe the decade of the 1990s as "a fertile historical moment to witness the emergence of a distinct and visible queer Asian American identity. We are queer, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered Asian Americans who are willing to engage actively in the discourses of both Asian American and queer politics but unwilling to bifurcate our identities into the racial and the sexual." See David L. Eng and Alice Y. Hom, eds., "Introduction." *Q & A: Queer in Asian America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998), 3–4.
  41. F. Kathleen Foley, "Sacred Naked Nature Girls Offer a Quest for 'Home,'" *Los Angeles Times*, 31 Aug 1996, calendar sec., 3.
  42. Kariann Yokota, "Speaking the Unspeakable," *Rafu Shimpo*, 30 June 1994.
  43. *Ibid.*
  44. Uyehara, "Hello (Sex) Kitty," 407.
  45. *Ibid.*, 377.
  46. Denise Uyehara, *Maps of City and Body*, unpublished script, p.12.
  47. Erika Fischer-Lichte, *The Show and the Gaze of Theatre: A European Perspective*, (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1997), 27.