

Bioart Coven—Co-creating community at the intersection of contemporary witchcraft and biotechnologies

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Abstract

Bioart Coven is an intersectional feminist collective of 75 international artists, makers, and activists, including cisgender, queer and nonbinary contemporary witches, witchcraft enthusiasts and occult-curious; we are technophiles, hackers, scientists, and healthcare workers as well as academic researchers and non/post-academic critical thinkers—all of whom have gathered around a powerful, niche set of sociopolitical interests. These interests are encapsulated as a promiscuous interchange between witchcraft and TechnoFeminism, which I call TechnoFeminist Witchcraft. The Bioart Coven name gives an appreciative nod to, and adapts of the title of the book, *Bioart Kitchen; Art, Feminism and Technoscience* by Lindsay Kelley. In Bioart Kitchen, Kelley investigates the history of domestic labour and its role in sci-tech development, revisited through a feminist lens. Important to note is that she refrains from mentioning or alluding to witches, though many of us have worked from our kitchens. Bioart Coven initiates from a feminist historiography of the figure of the witch as intimately linked with the birth, development, and socioeconomic expansion of industrial technologies—including biotechnologies. As a coven, we look at how working with vital materiality, technoscientific and communal ritual processes across digital space informs relational aspects of consumptive culture, through the lens of the witch.

Keywords

Contemporary witchcraft, Coven, Biotechnology, Bioart, DIY, Do-It-Together, TechnoFeminism, Magic, Collaboration, Anticapitalism

Introduction

The Bioart Coven is an intersectional feminist collective of 75 international artists, makers, and activists, including

¹ Bioart Coven members and co-authors of the *Bioart Coven Manifesto* include Yris Apsit, Maren Becker, Bethan Burnside, Ellie Bush, Ana Sofia Camarga, Nadia Campo Woytuk, Claire Cassidy, Cherry Cheng, Giorgia Chiarion, Laura Cincera, Kelsey Chen, Klau Chinche, Elly Cho, Cristina Dezi, Kasey Edgerton, Stephanie Farah, Isabel Farina, Frog the Parhelion, Cassidy Fuller, Juliet Gentile, John Girgis, Mara Goldwyn, Dorota Grajewska, Tanja Hernandez, WhiteFeather Hunter, Su Kim, Eleonore Kuen-Belasi, Johanna Kleinen, Tessa Kugel, Gwen Liu, Becky Lyon, Josee Marchand, Giulia Mattera, Blanca Martinez, Kirstie McCallum, Molly McKinney, Ira Melkonyan, Nathalie Miebach, Phillip MM,

cisgender, queer and nonbinary contemporary witches, witchcraft enthusiasts and the occult-curious; we are technophiles, hackers, scientists, and healthcare workers, as well as academic researchers and non/post-academic critical thinkers—all of whom have gathered around a powerful, niche set of sociopolitical interests.¹ Those shared interests will guide a discussion of our communally developed philosophies and methodological approaches that I present in this paper.

The Bioart Coven name gives an appreciative nod to, and adapts of the title of the book, *Bioart Kitchen; Art, Feminism and Technoscience* by Lindsay Kelley [1]. In her book, Kelley examines some key interrelated sociocultural aspects that our coven focuses on and draws from: the history of domestic labour, home economics and their roles in industrial sci-tech development, revisited through a feminist lens. Important to note is that Kelly refrains from mentioning or alluding to witches though many of us have worked from our kitchens, historically and contemporarily. This is perhaps because the timeline of the witch winds back further than the industrial era (the temporal parameters for Kelly's analysis), complicated across multiple geographies and cultural trends. However, the witch is intimately linked with the development and socioeconomic expansion of technologies that became industrialized; feminist social scientists have outlined this trajectory to provide critique that, "highlights the entanglements of patriarchy, capital, and technology in practices of exploitation and resistance." [2][3][4] New modes of resistance to patriarchal technocapitalism have arisen from these scholarly revisitations of witchcraft histories, which have in turn informed the ethos of our coven. From the development of domestic fermentation practices for beer production and water purification to reproductive

Kaajal Modi, Mona Nasser, Kath O'Donnell, Michelle O'Higgins, Tess O'Leary, Siryne Loued, Tiffany Otto, Carol Padberg, Liz Pagett, Hanna (Xyana) Paniutsich, Tara Pattenden, Iman Person, Laura Pföhler, Cathryn Ploehn, Ella Raetzer, Juliet Rania, Nadja Reifer, Babsi Riegler, Eliza Robertson, Kit Ondaatje Rolls, Natalia Sánchez Querubín, Marisa Satsia, Megan Scott, Miranda Shou, Leila Simonian, Marie Louise Juul Søndergaard, Sabine Steiger, Serina Tarkhanian, Christale Terris, Giulia Tomasello, Matteo Uguzzoni, Rachel Uwa, Puck Verkade, Tanya Vlach, Beatrice Zaidenberg, and Laura Zittrain.

health management, the shifting role of the ‘witch’ necessitates at least a chapter in the full story. [5][6]

This paper means to contribute one such chapter by focusing on the formation of our new collective of self-identifying witches. Like collectives before us, such as well-known GynePunk and Pechblenda Lab, we draw from the historical and/or speculative accounts of so-called or actual witches—as healers, scientists, and technologists—to bend technologies towards forming new care-based community ecologies. [7][8] To begin to identify ourselves,

...We claim the discursive space of the Witch as a useful location for building mycelial connections of solidarity and resistance, to imagine new ways of being, and to manifest our discoveries and creations with specific attention to dismantling systems of oppression. We problematize capitalist norms of production and derivation of value from its extractive potential in a parasitic system — one that is racist, patriarchal and built on foundations of consumerism and colonization... [9]

The overall intellectual and practical interests of the Bioart Coven are best encapsulated as a promiscuous interchange between witchcraft and TechnoFeminism, which in this paper, I call TechnoFeminist Witchcraft. By embracing the ‘promiscuous,’ I reclaim a derogatory term/concept regarding women’s sexuality and reproductive health that has been framed within accusations of witchy or untoward behaviour. I also indicate freedom of intellectual and creative play between disciplines, or what feminist social scientist and political theorist, Marysia Zalewski has identified as a necessary feminist betrayal of academic boundaries, as I later expand upon.

Further to this, to support an argument for our biopolitical activism towards an epistemic bleed-through, I take a methodological approach from Zalewski in *Feminist International Relations: ‘Exquisite Corpse’*. [10] Zalewski builds a feminist reframing of the global body politic by employing the concept of the ‘Exquisite Corpse’ technique that originates from collaborative wordplay and image-making. I introduced this technique to the coven as activist “agency through play” to foster a horizontally structured, co-creative approach to composing new narratives that serve as signposts for clarifying our values and guiding our activities. [11] These narratives comprise *The Bioart Coven Manifesto!*, a co-authored, living document, excerpts of which are included. This paper also highlights methodological approaches I/we have utilized towards object-based community knowledge-building within the coven; namely, *materializing* feminist science fictional perspectives through bioart and biodesign, which I detail further on.

² This PhD research has been conducted through SymbioticA International Centre of Excellence in Biological Art at The University of Western Australia (UWA).

In sections that follow, I provide the origin story of the Bioart Coven as a germ of feminist (bio)political action fostered through digital interfaces during the debilitating global crisis of COVID-19. Following this, I explain how various feminisms under the umbrella of TechnoFeminism served as scaffolds upon which we constructed our narratives. This has been to empower ourselves and each other through collective, deeply experiential knowledge-building with a view towards more equitable and emancipatory social ecologies within biomedical science fields.

Conjuring a Coven

Bioart Coven was soft launched as a social media profile in early 2019 after I established a small feminist bioart research group at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada. [12] The move to social media coincided with my relocation to Perth, Western Australia; I was interested in gathering like-minded practitioners and researchers together as part of my PhD project entitled, *The Witch in the Lab Coat—Doubling, Doubling, Toiling and Troubling the Narratives and Methodologies of Standard Scientific Research Practices*.² The impetus to forge a broader international community arose from a desire to overcome the geographical isolation of Perth, as well as lack of any witchy circles at UWA. This sense of distance presented as a practical and social handicap to my research progress since a community-oriented approach is key to my political positioning and methodology (including collaboration and open knowledge sharing).³

With the onset of the SARS Cov-2 pandemic and increased isolation, Bioart Coven evolved and expanded through a recurring five-week online course titled, *Bioart Coven: Surveying and creating at the intersection of contemporary witchcraft and biotechnologies*, throughout 2020 and 2021. [13] I designed the course to share my lab experiments with tissue engineering using menstrual fluid, contextualized within witchcraft; also, to engage with practices of other bioartists, biodesigners, and biohackers who work through critical, caring, and non-utopic ‘magic’ that appropriates the use of traditional and emergent technologies towards bodily emancipation.

Along with *Bioart Kitchen* as recommended reading, the course explored influential witchcraft histories as presented by feminist historiographers and social scientists, including Silvia Federici and Donna Haraway, among others. We considered contemporary recontextualizations of witchcraft as: posthuman interspecies relationships, trans-mogrification through tech, body materials as transgressive

³ This isolation was exacerbated by UWA’s decision to dismantle SymbioticA, a progenitor bioart facility with a 20+ year track record of world class research and international community building.

media, postnatural (re)constructions of bodies, gender and anti-corporation/institutional activism. Practical aspects of the course implemented Kelley’s perspective on bioart as that which, “emerges from feminist performance practice, food art, domestic computing and Home Economics.” [14]. Online workshop demonstrations and participatory hands-on activities included at-home fermentation techniques for biomaterials production, microbiology experiments utilizing kitchen ingredients (as well as vaginal fluids), and constructing DIY labware in our non-lab spaces during COVID-19 lockdowns (Figure 1).



Figure 1. DIY inoculation loops made with bamboo skewers, twist ties and electrical tape or Sugru. © WhiteFeather Hunter, 2021.

Crafting tools through careful hand production, such as cutting glass petri dishes from waste glass bottles and food jars was to place labour, intention and affect into the work—in other words, ritual magic. Other rituals included adding written and burned intentions for growth to our microbiome cultures (Figure 2). In addition to bioart activities, the course culminated in a collaboratively designed and co-performed closing ritual across the digital space of video conferencing software, again to generate group affect as a takeaway (Figure 3).



Figure 2. Ritual with microbes © WhiteFeather Hunter, 2021.



Figure 3. Screenshot of one of the Bioart Coven course closing rituals (participant names removed) © WhiteFeather Hunter, 2021.

The Bioart Coven course attracted arts practitioners and other professionals who had already been working with body materials and/or hyperlocal ecologies and communities; many were interested in further exploring the resource and relational potential of body/ecology/community for new creative projects and collaborations. In the event where artists whom I had designed content around participated in the course, I invited them to speak about their work during lectures. In the end, as I will return to, some of the ‘magic’ that occurred was in the generative relationships that formed amongst participants who brought niche knowledges to each other and imagined new TechnoFeminist hi-jinks together.

TechnoFeminist Witchcraft

Lindsay Kelly makes an important argument that, “domestic labour, Home Economics and feminist art” are areas, “usually overlooked in genealogies that position bioart as an extension of new media and digital art.” [15] To complement Kelley’s contribution towards addressing this gap, Bioart Coven explores the combination of feminist approaches to new media/ digital art through TechnoFeminism and witchcraft, or TechnoFeminist Witchcraft.

To unpack TechnoFeminist Witchcraft, I begin with the following explanation of the function of contemporary witchcraft within the science milieu:

The practice of witchcraft always... includes acknowledgment of material agencies that go beyond the human actor and beyond the human actor’s full control. I understand the term, “witchcraft” as a provocation which allows for alternative knowledge systems (such as feminist) into the space where science is produced... Witchcraft, as art/craft/culture, can be utilized to both disrupt and fertilize laboratory practice and scientific inquiry—by instigating counter-narratives and transformative approaches to dominantly-held views of bodies as controllable, quantifiable (and commodifiable) systems... Witchcraft involves the

creation of knowledge and knowledge-sharing practices that foster empathy and community care. Acknowledging the agency of unseen actors allows for expanded notions of community that include more-than-humans. By decentralizing human influence (e.g., Western capitalism), hierarchies of biopower are levelled into new, more potent fields of fertile ground and energetic forces. [16]

In TechnoFeminist Witchcraft, the above explanation is extended to incorporate a value system promulgated by TechnoFeminism. [17] With its critical questioning of the gendered power dynamics that typically characterize technological fields, TechnoFeminism is a core evaluation framework employed within the Bioart Coven towards re-thinking normative sci-tech narratives. TechnoFeminism(s) can include those found in overlapping science fiction genres and creative practices labelled Cyberfeminism/ Cyberpunk (including Biopunk) and Transhackfeminism. Each of these genres address the future-now of technological development and its societal implications, particularly for bodies, sex, and gender. Since, “the world has become science-fictional,” we engage with speculation via creative approaches, allowing any of the aforementioned feminisms to, “become not just a literary genre but a mode of response, almost an epistemological category...” [18] Media Studies theorist, Lars Schmeink identified that, “...cyberpunk claimed to be the literary incarnation of the new technoscientific developments, both informational and biological...” where technology is envisioned as visceral. [19] Artists and scholars, Ionat Zurr and Oron Catts described these kinds of engagements in terms of how we interrogate intellectual categorizations that no longer suffice:

Living in times of technological acceleration and unfolding ecological catastrophe, when fact and fiction are becoming indistinguishable, we face a poverty of available metaphors and, more importantly, a poverty of our language in relation to Life... Artists who are trained in more-than-human sensorial literacy are acting as the creators of a new “language,” developing new meanings for the concept of Life; exposing unintentional ontological breaches; relinquishing epistemological knowledge from its disciplining... This scrutiny goes beyond the human to involve non/more-than-human agents, through direct and experiential engagement. [20]

The Bioart Coven puts TechnoFeminism into creative laboratory and participatory practices to instigate divergent re-storying as a form of biopolitical knowledge generation. These new narratives are meant to challenge already-held taboo, superstitious or gender-prejudiced concepts that delimit women’s or nonhegemonic others’ participation in the formation of new technoscientific knowledge and language/narratives about their bodies.

Belief vs. Make-Believe

A recent example of an existing gender-prejudiced concept that has stifled valuable biotech research by women is found in a case presented by biomedical researcher, Federica Helena Marinaro. Marinaro received feedback from a Springer journal that her submitted manuscript, “about stem cell therapy using stromal cells from menstrual blood,” or cells known as MenSCs, was unpublished. Reasons for this, a reviewer stated, were that,

...almost all articles in the scientific literature reported the severe undesirable and toxic effects of menstrual blood and all its constituents (including MenSCs) on the human body. Even in all religions, it is known that menstrual blood and its MenSCs are extremely very toxic and of very low quality. This blood contains the destructed metabolic constituents with very potent cytotoxic activities, thus in toxicological criminology, some women in some cultures, use very few drops of its potent toxic extract to secretly kill their husbands... This idea/matter also is not practically interesting/favorable since it has significant privacy in females... [21]

Marinaro posted a photo of the above text to her (then) Twitter account, stating that claims made in the review stem from archaic publications dating back to 1451. An incredulous commenter added, “...he’s using a husband-killing magical ritual from Papua New Guinea to claim that menstrual blood-derived stem cells (MenSCs) are toxic?” [22]. Marinaro’s case is an extreme example of how present scientific understandings continue to reflect non-scientific cultural beliefs and practices, and how a paternalistic medical gaze is enshrined in authoritative, supposedly scientific accounts that ‘other’ women. Consequences of perpetuating these beliefs can be exceedingly harmful or even fatal—not directly to husbands—but to women subjected to inappropriate controls based on falsehoods, often associated with negative witchcraft beliefs. [23][24] Beyond this, it targets women and their technoscientific research as uninteresting and unfavourable based solely on social biases around sex. [25]

Through TechnoFeminist Witchcraft, we may utilize creative practices to claim space to adjust the goals, outcomes and agency implicated in being the ones who tell the story, about research and medicalized standards that concern our othered bodies. Incorporating imaginative strategies, including bioart practices in self-exploration towards “biology as a situated knowledge” can demonstrate unconventional methodologies that challenge disciplinary boundaries and outdated information within those disciplines. [26] These strategies may include speculative experimentation that borders on or embraces science fiction concepts.

Science fictional approaches to constructing new narratives have been explained as examination of, “Firstly, the historical dimension of possibility – are we at this point

in our technoscientific progress able to actually do this? ...And secondly, the ethical dimension of consequence – if we do this, what would the repercussions be and how would things change in accordance?” [27] Some feminist science fictions present warnings with an ambiguous ending, such as Margaret Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale*. [28] However, Atwood’s dystopia of total patriarchal control over women’s bodies through forced reproduction threatens to become reality in the US: medically safe abortion pills, which place reproductive care into women’s hands at home, could become criminalized. [29] On the other hand, some feminist cyberpunk stories, such as the comic book adaptation film, *Tank Girl* empower promiscuous troublemakers. The anarchic heroine, Tank Girl, gangs up with genetically engineered military humanimal (kangaroo) hybrids gone rogue, to combat fascists who control scarce natural resources in post-apocalyptic Australia. [30] By romantically mingling with a lab-created mutant, Tank Girl violates taboos around normative relationships tied to notions of biotech and reproductive purity.

Within the Bioart Coven, our goal is to subvert capitalist control of natural resources by confounding and reappropriating controls around the biologically female reproductive body as a ‘resource’—including purity controls instituted through taboos. To start, we rewrite taboo as a boundary of our own making:

...We recognize processes like purification as problematic and segregationist, already infected with Western-centric colonizing and exploitative values...

We reject the taboo around our bodies, smells, and secretions, yet we recognize that taboo casts its own spell of protection... If our bodies are taboo, it’s because they are sacred... [31]

Though still rare, scientists have begun to explore utilizing (taboo) menstrual stem cells for biomedical applications. [32][33] In cases like Marinaro’s, one ‘repercussion’ is the requirement for science research fields to adjust masculinist perspectives to allow for more inclusive possibilities. However, more possibilities may mean more economic opportunities since the tech space is a burgeoning industry within capitalist society. In this, we come full circle: another (false) repercussion, pervasive in toxic masculinist imaginaries since the time of the witch hunts, is the possibility for a global takeover by ‘greedy’ (or otherwise immoral) women who embody marketable knowledge, particularly around reproduction. This story colours the space of technocapitalist venture in its quest to make human reproduction tied to biologically female bodies obsolete.

Zurr and Catts pointed out that, “As humans engineer living systems, life forms are isolated and reduced to their component parts...” and that such projects, “[reflect] a male, human anxiety in regard to their contribution to

procreation...” since, “the female... provides the cell (ovum) with all of its “machinery,” as well as the milieu in which the embryo and fetus develop.” [34] That rich milieu, leaking away every month that impregnation doesn’t occur, includes other valuable resources as well (stem cells). It follows, then, that masculinist technoscientific spaces are invested in maintaining *author*-ity on research around reproductive bodies and their material resources, including using false narratives to alienate.

Institutional hegemonic controls that waylay necessary ideological adjustments while maintaining a stranglehold on which stories gain currency, are principal concerns of the Bioart Coven. If, “...scientists are imagined to be ‘discovering how things work,’ or coming up with ‘new inventions’ which will be of (real) help in the (real) world,” then our creative strategies mean to rupture economic fixation on utilitarian boundaries around what constitutes ‘real’. [35]

Re-storying as Remedy

...Language is often a system of oppression, but can also be a medium for liberation... In our DIY labs, we use different language to describe things, instead of words that are charged with violence, harm or oppressive and xenophobic values... In doing so, we cast perpetual spells on patriarchal systems; every time we change a word in our speech, magic happens and a piece of oppression is dismantled... [36]

The Bioart Coven has bolstered a targeted feminist biopolitical community and strengthened my resolve to create disruptive narratives within technoscientific research spaces; we have done this together by working to flatten hierarchies in biotech knowledge-making and sharing, across international borders. There can be no doubt that institutions of ‘higher’ learning operate with globalist capitalist goals that include, “an inexorable drive toward boxing knowledge tightly into sealed containers ready to ship out to the highest bidder.” This is an educational model in which, “...imagination is something to be removed. Remove the imagination and we can be left with the cold beauty of pristine, atomised facts.” [37] These atomised facts become parceled epistemic commodities. Adjacent and alternative to this approach, the Bioart Coven conjures imagination towards co-creating new, openly shared, feminist-oriented futures through science and tech-based re-storying, including the way we tell stories about our bodies through bioart and biodesign projects.

...We reject the presumption of expertise as an external condition, while we also acknowledge that multiple forms of expertise exist; we hold a willingness to engage in collaborations of care, outside of imposed hierarchies of knowledge...

...We give power to subjectivity, as a producer of valid knowledge, and give power to intention,

imagination, and everything that can't be measured, or that slips through the heteronormative binary body matrix... [38]

The desire to transcend international borders to engage collectively with intersectional feminist topics led to our work being positioned within the realm of Feminist International Relations—we are particularly interested in biomedical perspectives of reproductive bodies and the knowledge and cultural dialogues generated about them within globalized technocapitalism. Media and communications scholar, Gillian Youngs described that,

...feminist International Relations has expanded, and built on, the work of feminist political and economic theory to examine the masculinist framing of politics and economics and associated institutions... as well as the discourses through which these institutions operate and are reproduced over time. [39]

If the wider goals of Feminist International Relations are to inform political policymaking on a global scale, Bioart Coven works to build a collective voice that delineates a feminist politics of human and more-than-human relations. We aim to infiltrate institutions where policies around bodies/care are negotiated and renegotiated; an example of how we do this is through overt use of personal (intimate, taboo) body materials in research, challenging regulatory procedures that rely on depersonalization.

Zalewski has explained that as a divergent field, Feminist International Relations functions as a transgression of academic, disciplinary, and methodological boundaries, where insistence on invoking the uncomfortable and the personal meet a feminist necessity for “indelicate betrayals of propriety.” She highlighted that, “Being improper, to be ‘unbecoming’, refusing the normative and material pleasures of collaboration... have been significant political/ theoretical activities within feminism.” [40] As I previously showed, it is this transgressive nature in academic research on which the formation of the Bioart Coven was premised.

Bioart Coven Manifesto!

The *Bioart Coven Manifesto!* articulates our TechnoFeminist ethos of contemporary witchcraft—towards intersectional, anti-capitalist and non-anthropocentric world (re)buildings, in a speculative future of magical and scientific interspecies relationships. We work to break down frozen concepts, reliquefying them into nutrient fluid that feeds our provocations. When considering philosophical and/or methodological promiscuity, Zalewski first poses that, “One can't simply make frames up. Or do we?” She cautions that in this endeavour, we, “...require signposts to guide us through the inevitably circuitous routes and pathways which ensue from eclectic choices.” [41] Within the Bioart Coven, we generated signposts collectively across three separate iterations of the course, through co-authoring the *Bioart Coven Manifesto!* In the paragraphs that follow, I outline the

unique way in which this manifesto comprised autonomous group efforts over an extended period, in a seemingly disjointed, overlaid manner but with uniquely cohesive results.

The overall ethos and actionable vision statements contained in the manifesto were shaped using the Exquisite Corpse method that allowed for shared and individual expressions together. Exquisite Corpse is an artistic composition technique popularized by the Surrealists, where illustrations of body parts are drawn blindly connected to each other by members of a group: after each body segment is drawn, the paper is folded over so as to be invisible to the next illustrator, and so forth. [42] In the Surrealist approach, mixed pictorial *or word* compositions are produced by being built upon each other. The non-hierarchical approach of the Exquisite Corpse mirrors not only general principles of feminist community building but also what Zalewski described as, “the production of a composite image through collective means” through an enactment of performative production where, “the folds of the narrative, the tantalising links left by the trace of the previous mark(er) and the ensuing contingency of connections is richly methodological.” [43] This ‘composite image’ becomes a picture of shared possibility.

Zalewski adopted Exquisite Corpse structuring in her political philosophical story-making, since the method lends an ‘anarchic’ and ‘disquieting’ approach to formulating text. For the Bioart Coven manifesto building exercise, the blind aspect of Exquisite Corpse composition was adapted methodologically to incorporate use of video conferencing breakout rooms. Instead of building story through a linear process, we worked in a rhizomatic way, as with an underlying horizontal root structure that surfaced in multiple emergences of expression. This was accomplished through organization of smaller groups within the larger group, with each group composing their own value statements. These statements were recorded and added to a shared (online) manifesto document by whomever chose to do so, at any point. The process was repeated in each iteration of the course, with participants adding to or removing text from the manifesto over the period of a year and a half. In this way, the manifesto has allowed for the enduring development of a diverse shared vision and call to action.

The *Bioart Coven Manifesto* is a perpetually shapeshifting document housed permanently in the cloud and accessible to all coven members. Various iterations present snapshots in time—much like tree rings, or the organic, autobiographical growth patterning of any living symbiotic entity. Through the body as a location for the conceptual and material development of our activism, we actualize the Exquisite Corpse as not only as method but also as a performative, embodied framework:

We acknowledge the inherent fluidity and cyclical nature of all processes and meet at the truth that nothing is ever finished, yet always and constantly evolving into and out of itself in infinite cycles of

(re)production. Our production is a process of becoming, one which has no inherent moral tone...

...We see this practice as fuzzy, entangled, incomplete, and therefore transformative. We celebrate imperfection, not because it is opposed to perfection, but because it is the only true state of things. Biological, technological and social reproduction feed into each other in a kind of holy trinity of unreliability, imagination, and improvisation...

...We celebrate porosity, movement and contamination... Life contaminates. Our perspectives contaminate our thinking. Other perspectives contaminate our thinking. We contaminate other people. Our words, thoughts, biases, judgments, ideas leak into each other's... [44]

Conclusion: A Leaky Continuity

The Bioart Coven continues to meet monthly, on new or full moons, converging digitally across global time zones. Meetings are organized through rotating leadership within the coven; these meetings have become less structured over time, as the alienating circumstances of a global pandemic taper off and people return to in-person activities. Like similar autonomous collectives before it, the Bioart Coven has seen a morphological progression towards daughter groups, projects, and other research outputs—initiated by members who live in closer proximity to each other and can overlap geographically.

One such daughter group of the Bioart Coven includes Bruixes Lab, a “nomadic lab of biohacking, sextech and witchcraft rituals,” organized by Giulia Tomasello and Cristina Desi. [45] With Bruixes Lab, Tomasello and Desi combined their independent practices and projects with a new focus that includes TechnoFeminist Witchcraft. Bioart Coven also bled into the academic research of Nadia Campo Woytuk and Marie Louise Juul Søndergaard who co-authored, *Biomenstrual: More-than-Human Design of Menstrual Care Practices*. [46] In other instances, I have continued in various mentorship relationships, such as with Giulia Tomasello and Isabel Farina for their ALMA Toolkit Project as part of Ars Electronica’s S+T+ARTS Cross-fertilization Program. [47] In each case, research outputs and hyperlocal efforts have methodologically and philosophically embraced approaches promoted within the coven, particularly around feminine reproductive healthcare towards bodily autonomy through witchcraft-infused technologies.

It may be a usual matter of course for anarchic-minded collectives, and more generally, self-organized (women’s) movements to eventually disperse into more improvisational projects, or to *leak apart*. When positioned in liminal space around authoritative, formally structured organizations, such dispersal may be our strength; this could

help avoid subsummation by the status quo we seek to disrupt, through our leaky continuity.

With this paper, I have presented the Bioart Coven as a case study, with the intention of adding to important research authored by Lindsay Kelley in *Bioart Kitchen*. This has been offered through a contemporary reassessment of how witchcraft, (bio)technologies and feminist international relations can converge in kitchens, through digital interfaces, to disrupt harmful or limiting hegemonic science narratives around bodies. To re-story (restore) our worlds using magical and science fiction precepts, we embrace co-creation of *revolt*-ing new narratives by incorporating taboo body materials and (re)personalized methods into our work.

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