

# MOURNING, YEARNING, CRUISING

## Ernesto Pujol's *Memorial Gestures*

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One of the most common forms of collective performance is the “Moment of Silence.” From small-scale enactments by a handful of mourners to coordinated city-wide events, the Moment of Silence establishes a bracketed time in which private emotions appear as performed absence. This act of voicing loss through the cessation of voice itself serves not just as a powerful act for participants but also as a reminder of the resonance of silence as a metaphoric zone in which the personal is made public.

The recent performance work of Ernesto Pujol extends not only the duration but also the transitional space of the Moment of Silence, deploying it as the time in which publics and privates meet. This silence is often ostensibly about mourning and loss, establishing both the public face of his work and the rationale used by institutions to endorse its low-drama, non-narrative form.<sup>1</sup> But his public performance itself becomes interrupted or inflected by moments in which other, non-authorized species of the private surface. That is, rather than simply being about mourning, Pujol’s silent walks open up to the larger issues surrounding the performance of the personal in public and the vulnerability of the body through which that performance occurs. This vulnerability of the personal made public is the basic condition of the mourner. It is imminent in the exposure of private loss to the social. This precarious state is also the condition of queer individuals’ entrances into sociality, and I will argue that Pujol’s work effectively imbricates these two vulnerabilities onto each other. The queer individual is compelled to negotiate the moments and the places where the private can become the social—from the intimate coupling to the public declaration. In coping with this ever-present negotiation of exposure, queer socialities have also found silence to be a cover under which outlaw desires can be signaled. Pujol’s works are not singularly about queer experience any more than they are singularly about public mourning. Rather, they address both while using the cover of silence the latter affords to make the former a possibility.

In making this case, my focus is on a recent performance by Pujol that took place over twelve hours in the Grand Army of the Republic Memorial Rotunda in the Chicago Cultural Center in October 2007. The work, *Memorial Gestures: Mourning and Yearning at the Rotunda*, comprised a troupe of performers engaged in a

collaborative and adaptive use of the highly ornate architectural space. This memorial hall, the Rotunda, had been dedicated as a memorial to fallen soldiers within the 1897 building that was once the City of Chicago's central public library. Explaining his choice to locate his performance there, Pujol wrote in the proposal to the Cultural Center:

Upon visiting the space for the first time, it immediately impressed me as providing a performer with everything, in terms of lighting (nine rectangular floor sources), suggested bodily movement (embedded floor design), and background (theatrical). The Rotunda provides a unique opportunity to reactivate memorial architecture as a contemplative place through metaphor, engaging in ritual gestures of loss, remembrance, and unfulfilled longings.

For the performance, Pujol remained silent and standing on one of nine squares of glass blocks embedded into the floor. These are one of the most notable features of the memorial hall. Their presence was especially dramatic because the light emanating from them provided the main source of illumination in the space. Five of the other eight squares were filled by Pujol's principal collaborators Maria Gaspar, Trevor Martin, Caleb Rexford, Clover Morell, and Joy Walen as well as a number of additional performers throughout the twelve-hour period. All performers were dressed entirely in white, with Pujol in a long white robe related to the white garments he has used in other recent performances. The white-clad performers in the Chicago work each held one of a small group of pre-determined gestures in silence for a period of fifteen minutes, at the end of which time a bell would be rung to signal them to change their positions with deliberate slowness.

Around the perimeter of the room were additional white-clad performers in the seats that were also used by viewers. They sat in silence in reserve until one of the five supporting performers chose to be replaced by them. At the bell, the performers would change their gestures and move to a different square. At times, one or more of the standing performers would leave her or his square, approach one of the seated performers in white, and lead them slowly back. Once the new performers were in place, the original occupant of the square left the performance space through heavy wooden doors.

Pujol referred to this event as the "Inheritance," and it had had the practical value of allowing the performers the opportunity to rest throughout the day. More importantly, however, it meant that the activity of public mourning in which these silent figures were engaged was constant while being made up of a shifting and evolving constituency. The exception to this was Pujol himself, who remained as one of the six at all times, moving from square to square at the intervals. In the proposal to the Cultural Center, Pujol wrote of the length of the performance and his act of commitment to it, remarking:

I seek not to be consumed, not to produce something that can easily be consumed. A twelve-hour performance is very hard to consume (if not to

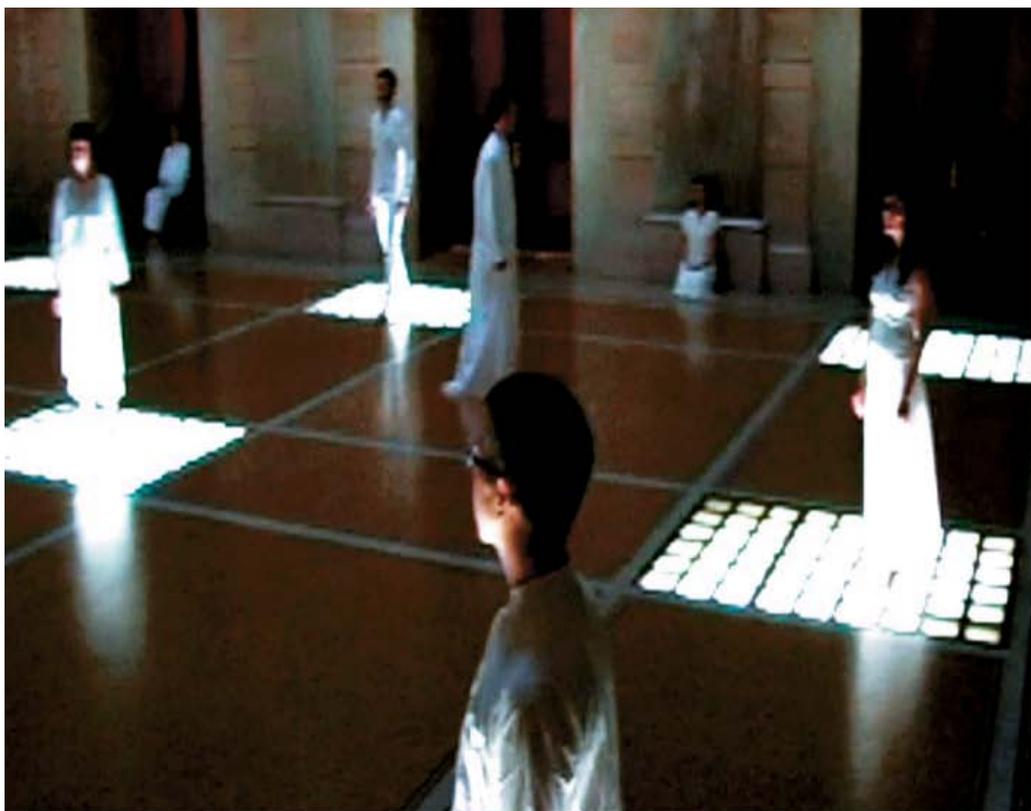
perform). A viewer would have to take the day off. In fact, s/he would have to disconnect from the rest of the world that day, without cellular and e-mail access, bring food, and try not to take bathroom breaks. So this is good, this inconsumable thing.

In practice, the performance itself evolved greatly over the course of the day, with variations emerging in the pre-determined vocabulary of gestures and with novel interactions between performers both standing and seated. The pre-determined gestural vocabulary of the piece started with the following: (a) holding both hands over the heart, (b) covering the heart with one hand while the other hangs at the performer's side, (c) holding hands at waist level with either fingers crossed or with one hand covering a fist made by the other, or (d) both arms at the performer's sides with palms open. Throughout the course of the twelve-hour performance, however, the repertoire of gestures became modified and augmented in the collaborative adaptation of the initial instructions.

That is, the private unspoken language agreed upon by the performers transformed and grew in complexity throughout the ten-hour period. This added to the level of engagement of the performers but also insured that the external viewers could never wholly comprehend what parts of these interactions were new, inconsequential, or recently invented. Even though the ostensible meaning of the gestures to the viewer was, simply, "mourning," they had a richer and more varied use within the closed network of the performers. This layered communication in which the specialized messages were exchanged beneath the generally available address is indicative of the larger pattern of the work and of its polyvalent transmissions of the private within the public performance.

The overt meaning for the work and its justification centered on the relation between the Rotunda—a memorial space dedicated to fallen soldiers—and the performance of mourning that the work enacted in silence in it. The Cultural Center advertised the performance with the explanation that "Six performance artists embody a sense of individual and communal loss by publicly sustaining the act of mourning for an entire day." Commissioned for the fledgling IN>TIME performance art series by the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, the work also had the support of an Illinois Arts Council grant. This involvement by municipal and state agencies attested to the accessibility of the theme of mourning in 2007—four years after the United States military invasion and on-going occupation of Iraq.

*Memorial Gestures* is one of a group of works in which Pujol has focused on memorial spaces and mourning. The first of these took place in Charleston, South Carolina, and was exhibited at the McNay Museum in San Antonio, and a future projected performance is projected for the Honolulu Memorial at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (2009). The greater context of war and mourning is the public and ostensive "meaning" of these works. Within this accessible public message related to war and mourning, however, Pujol's *Memorial Gestures* itself used the space





Stills from video documentation of *Memorial Gestures*. Photo: Courtesy of the artist.

opened up by silence to activate its own private meanings. For all its consistency and direct appeal to sympathy in the context of a war-weary America, “his inconsumable thing,” that is, worked on other levels through which it simultaneously gave voice to performances of the personal.

*Memorial Gestures* was almost entirely silent, save for the occasional rustle of long, white garments or the sound of the bell followed by the gentle tread of steps across the lighted floor. The slow unfolding of the duration of the performance, across twelve hours of a single day, required such moments of realignment during the “Inheritance.” Other than these events, there was only a minimal amount of movement, action, and inter-relational activity between the performers. It was, perhaps, because of the enveloping stillness and silence of the majority of the performance that these minor movements seemed especially complex and compelling. Whereas the performance proper was a space of static, meditative contemplation, these events broke through that stillness to offer interactions in which one, then two, or sometimes three performers would become closer in proximity and move as a group as they followed the protocols for performer replacement.

It was in these moments and movements that a different meaning to the performance began to complicate the straightforward staging of mourning. Despite their low level of action and the largely incomprehensible sign language between the performers, it was nevertheless apparent how easily they fell into unscripted unison in their movements and how their actions engendered local narratives of interaction, closeness, and eventual return to isolation. A performer would approach another and make a gesture to initiate the “Inheritance.” The second performer reciprocated with a gesture of their own indicating their willingness. This minor interaction, followed by a return to their monadic stances, would later be followed by others after more stillness and silence. These were engrossing moments in the performance, and all viewers I observed became intent on reading and following these events. In short, these functional moments punctuated the performance but were not ostensibly the main focus of the public or overt meaning of the work. The fleeting proximity of bodies, silently moving towards, away, and with each other, created covert meanings and engendered local, temporary dramas of closeness and separation, isolation and union that could not be reduced to mourning alone. That is, the “Inheritance” re-enacted, in microcosmic form, the larger context of achieving contact, rapport, and its inevitable cessation (whether by choice or by death). The overt theme of mourning performed in the piece was amplified and made immediate as the viewer experienced these momentary dramas of proximity and accord.

However, in this highly concentrated form, the dramas echoed not just lifelong histories of intersubjective relations but also another, similar kind of immediate and concentrated performance of connection. In their deployment of silent communication, pregnant waiting, purposeful walking masquerading as purposeless walking, and elaborately choreographed movements between proximity and aloneness, the events within the “Inheritance” were visually similar and structurally analogous to another performance of silent sociality—that of queer cruising. Cruising involves the subtle

broadcasting of low-intensity messages of desire—a wink, a tap of the foot, a way of standing—that are meant to be invisible to those who are not looking for them. Under the safety of a cover of silence, two individuals, rarely speaking, negotiate private meanings in public spaces as a means of sharing their prohibited desire and of establishing, even if for just a moment, the solidarity of recognizing another who, too, repudiates the expectations of the “normal.”<sup>2</sup> It is the immediate, local, and microcosmic enactment of connection, rapport and its cessation that the silent sign language and choreographed movement between individuals in *Memorial Gestures* shares with cruising. In both, monadic isolation is overcome, however fleetingly, through reciprocal silent gestures and their initiation of proximity followed by acts of coordinated walking around, walking from, and walking to.

Cruising’s brand of performance of the private in public is not new. It is, in fact, integral to the workings of non-normative desires and has been practiced in various forms throughout the modern era and earlier. That is, acts of cruising both pre-date the widespread modern construction of the identity category of “homosexual” and persist today even after decades of cultural activism aimed at securing the mainstream acceptance of that category. While it can involve opposite-sex pairings, cruising has been predominantly used by those interested in same-sex interactions precisely because it is these interactions that have been historically outlawed, marginalized, repressed, or marked as different. In this respect cruising is properly queer in that it is a resistant negation of normative sociality performed not just by self-identified homosexuals but by individuals from across a range of disallowed sexual and social self-identifications. This resistance is perpetrated through acts and desires that constitute the scene of cruising as a subversive appropriation of public and social space. Cruising’s momentary allegiances and private languages of silent gesture are the logical outcome of individuals’ negotiations of illicit or outlawed desires in public.

While it may also be a route toward establishing sodality, the individual act of cruising is stubbornly local, temporary, immediate, and nomadic. It repudiates not just the cultural prejudice against same-sex couplings but the policing of the sexual in public. In short, cruising makes space and sociality queer, turning a park, a library, or line at a coffee shop into a theatre of desire and connection. John Paul Ricco has argued that it is precisely that

queer forms of spatiality, sociality, and visuality are constituted through ‘local encounters’ and ‘passing intimacies’ that do not require any further development or recording for their full force to be felt. Such forms put into question the values that are ascribed to ‘long-term commitments’ and ‘unretractable social marks,’ and argue for the legitimacy of social, sexual, and visual promiscuities (the potential invested in the singular multiplicity of whomever, whatever, whenever), as modes of pleasure and survival, and the possible grounds for an ethics that operates without assured futures and codified parameters.<sup>3</sup>

The Danish sociologist Henning Bech has also discussed at length the poetics, ethics, and pragmatics of cruising in his arguments about the interdependence of modernity, homosexuality, and the social space of the city:

in these semi-anonymous one-night stands, or even in the pure eye contacts, a *being-together* is established, an overstepping the border between one and the other, or at least playing with it, balancing on it and swaying from side to side, opening and closing. There is an intensity between them that envelops them and occasionally transcends beyond them to others; an excitement or vibration beyond what is normal. Time stands still.<sup>4</sup>

Novelist John Rechy more directly, pointedly, and polemically referred to it as “the silently symphonic, intricate, instinctively choreographed beauty of the promiscuous sexhunt.”<sup>5</sup>

The sharing that cruising affords is only sometimes sexual, and I am using the term broadly even though it most often calls to mind furtive public sexual acts. The practice can also be extended to encompass all the moments of subtle and momentary accord by queer individuals moving through public space who find mutual recognition in those who signal that they share one or more of their erotic desires. At the cruising ground or in the cruising moment, the activity can be either telic (that is, having a specific goal as endpoint, such as love or connection) or paratelic (having process and its continuation be the aim). All in all, cruising itself can be understood as a synecdoche of a larger, life-long process of looking for, finding, losing, and looking again for intersubjective connections, be they based in eroticism, in identification with a community, in love, or in comradeship.

As Pujol himself wrote in his proposal for the project, *Memorial Gestures* was not just about mourning and war but about “engaging in ritual gestures of loss, remembrance, and unfulfilled longings.” It is precisely this invocation of larger histories and dramas of connection and loss through the concentrated and microcosmic performance of finding and losing that *Memorial Gestures* shares with cruising and that allows it to evoke, so powerfully, the reflective act of mourning the cessation of those connections. In short, while *Memorial Gestures* was ostensibly about war—the War—it addressed this specific historical context by speeding up, like cruising, the dramas of connection, accord, separation, and loss.

Pujol’s Chicago performance was neither erotic nor sexual. Rather, within its solemnity it inadvertently offered a schematic replay of the dramas of the cruising ground, which is, itself, a microcosm for the dramas, perils, and joy of finding commonality, sociality, or even love. Significantly, the performance’s full subtitle was “Mourning and *Yearning* at the Rotunda.” If one suspended or forgot the ostensible context of mourning (as a viewer watching the performance over time would eventually do, even briefly), Pujol’s *Memorial Gestures* began to appear, for all intents and purposes, as a performance or a ballet about something like Rechy’s “silently symphonic, intricate, instinctively choreographed beauty.”

The queer reading of these events within *Memorial Gestures* is not dependent on the genders of the performers. It is, in fact, willfully negligent of gender difference (unlike actual cruising), looking instead to the polymorphous couplings that occurred, however fleetingly, in and amongst all those times of silence and stillness. The public message of the work as about mourning and war was, in fact, supported by this more fundamental but covert re-enactment of searching, finding, losing, and searching again—that is, of yearning. Both these levels, the mourning and the yearning, were facilitated by the porous boundary between the personal and the public on which the Moment of Silence is predicated.

For all its various cultural meanings and metaphoric potential, cruising itself should not be mistaken for a *general* or *generic* ritual of loves found and lost. Rather, its meanings, pleasures, and dangers (both as a literal activity and as a metaphoric ritual) are produced as registrations or resistances to the silencing, oppression, and reprisal enacted upon non-normative sexualities. It gains its synecdochical charge precisely because of its outlaw, queer valence. Cruising is not just an instantiation of a moment of connection, however fleeting or enduring. It is also—at that moment—an urgent and defiant *creation* of queer, new, proscribed, and particular bonds. This forging of potentialities and the concomitant negating of normativity can explain why the subtle and perilous means of finding like-mindedness that cruising represents in concentrated form has been a major subject for so many writers who either identify as queer or with whom queer readers have identified strongly and repeatedly.<sup>6</sup> In sum, I am arguing that cruising offers the densest analogy for a larger set of conditions of queer experiences in which the possibility for connection, for intimacy, can never be assumed but must always be established and negotiated in public under fear of reprisal.

Cruising is both a pragmatic and a ritual act in that it serves the practical needs of queer subjects (be they “homosexual” or otherwise searching for non-normative ways of intimacy) as well as offers a profound metaphoric and performative act of resistance, of the pursuit of intersubjective connection, and of self-determination. The “choreographed beauty” of the covert connections operating beneath the public solemnity of Pujol’s *Memorial Gestures* does resemble a schematic replaying of the dramas of the cruising ground, but this resemblance points to the larger issues of silence and of the possibilities of proximity that make the cruising ground a space for queer sociality—and that make Pujol’s performance of the personal in public extend from the specific case of mourning to the general problematics of non-authorized desires for connection.

In *Memorial Gestures*, this covert layer of meaning, present in the relentless repetition of these minor narratives of silent gestures and proximities—always the same but always different—operated within but not against the overt public performance about mourning and the war. Both mourning and cruising find in silence a space in which the intimate is produced in and as public. However, to perform the intimate is to be vulnerable, and it is through the theme of vulnerability that we can connect the overt and covert meanings of *Memorial Gestures*.

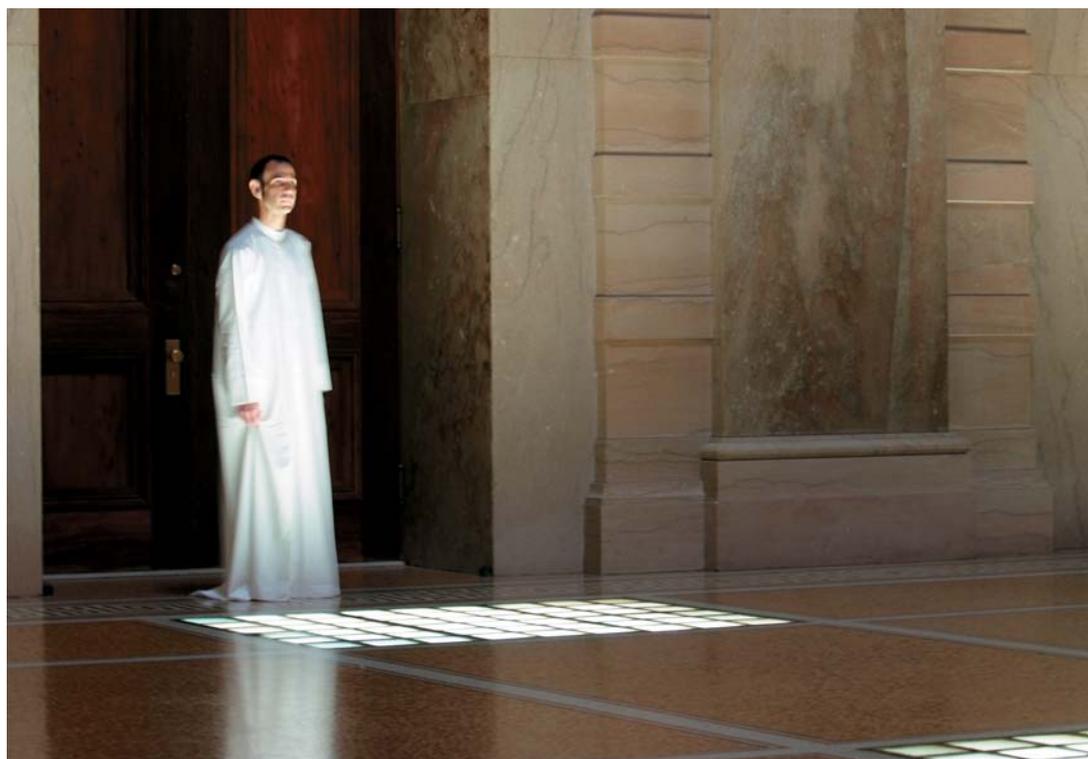
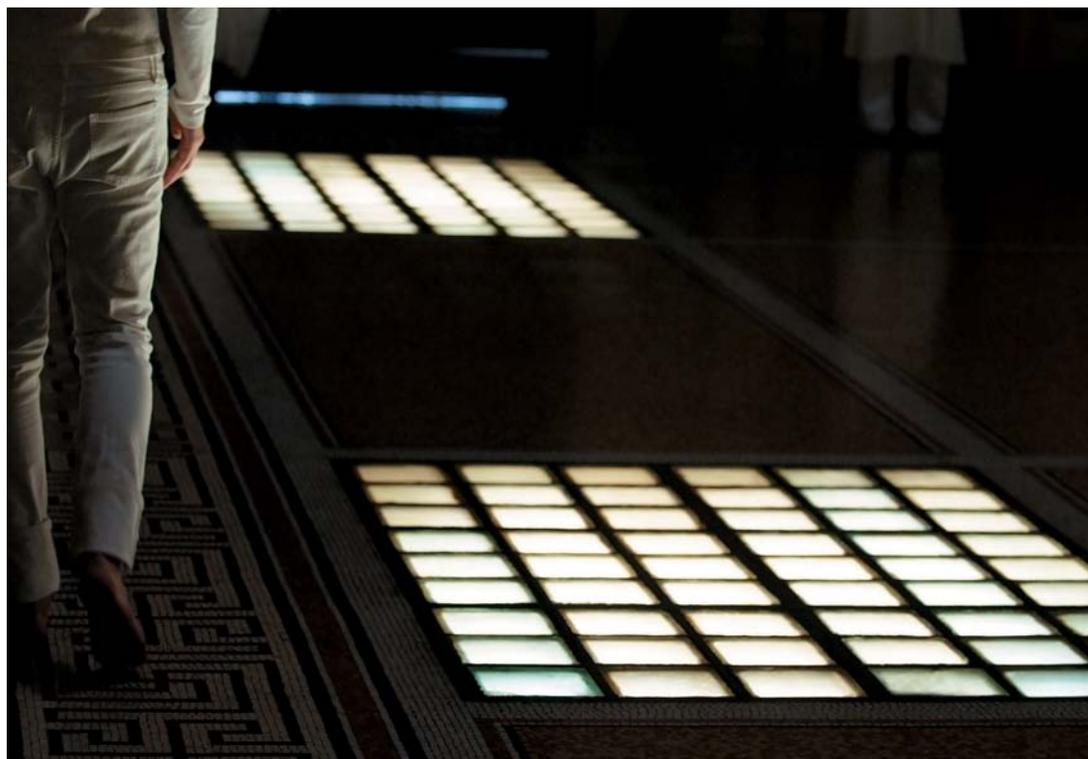
Pujol's performance work, as a whole, explores the vulnerability of the performer who places himself under public scrutiny. A common theme of his works is how he ritualistically offers the performing body as a site of exposure and vulnerability, trusting viewers and communities to protect or at least not hinder it. His walk performances involve a meticulous attention to costuming, in part, in order to mark *his* body as *the* performing body and set him against others walking near or with him. This was the case with the 2007 *Water Carrier* works on Boston's Harbor Islands. Walking slowly and along a pre-determined route, carrying water, Pujol was in white makeup and a comparable white garment—this time an all-white suit, the inspiration for which came from various sources including Herman Melville's *Billy Budd*. As in Chicago, his movements were slow and deliberate, but in Boston viewers accompanied him on parts of his walks (some for the entire duration of a performance). The *Water Cycle* performances were intended as an ecological and experiential remapping of the Boston harbor through the minor displacing of its defining (and abundant) material—that is, water.

In these works that blurred the boundaries between the safe places of art (the museum) and other public spaces (the parks and historic sites through which he circulated), Pujol was—for all the solemnity of his actions—a spectacle to behold. Even though he, and others accompanying him, understood the gravity of the work, the appearance of the white-clad figure in white makeup being followed by a group, large or small, of adults and children must have appeared strange to many park-goers. By making his sincere performance into an incursion into the public space as such, Pujol's self-effacement effectively positioned himself as the object of others' gaze in which he could be nothing other than vulnerable, not-normal, and queerly positioned. In short, Pujol inverted the protective urge to hide and to be one of the crowd, marking his body and his presence in a ritualistic enactment of the one who stands out and is subject to others because of it. This, like his work in *Memorial Gestures*, tackles queer experience as the raw material and the starting point for works that attempt to speak, generally, to larger social concerns (war, mourning, sustainability, environment, community, and so on).

In the Chicago performance, the vulnerability of the performance artist in public (here municipal) space resonated directly with the ostensible theme of mourning. One of Pujol's collaborators for *Memorial Gestures*, Trevor Martin, recounted his experience of the work, alluding to the vulnerability and precariousness of the performance:

I think, perhaps, the 12 hours of actual performance represented our “liminal” period . . . the in-between, magical, powerful, even “dangerous” space. Here, the danger was kept in check by our mutual presence, the performance parameters that Ernesto established throughout our rehearsals, and our continual watchfulness and care for each other throughout the day.<sup>7</sup>

The danger that Martin discusses points to the precariousness of the performer in public space, the trust in the audience, and the commitment to others who share the ritual aims of the activity of the performance. Pujol's work engages as one of its



Top: *Memorial Gestures* collaborator walking next to lighted floor of the Rotunda; Bottom: Still from video documentation of *Memorial Gestures* showing Ernesto Pujol at conclusion of performance. Photos: Courtesy of the artist.

central elements with the danger and trust that result from negotiating the vulnerability of exposure.

It is not surprising that Pujol has been drawn to mourning as a central theme. Mourning is, in the end, a lament about the body's vulnerability. This is nowhere more poignant than in the case of the soldier who places her or his body into harms way because of deeply-rooted identifications with country, with duty, with family, and with their understanding of the social itself. As we are to understand the logic of the war memorial, generally, soldiers are believed to have sincere personal reasons for being in war and for putting themselves at risk. In performing those personal commitments as public acts, the soldier becomes vulnerable as an object, a target, a statistic. That is, s/he becomes the figure of vulnerability just as s/he becomes the figure of virtue, duty, commitment, honor, and courage.

This exposure to vulnerability is the lot of the soldiers, and we mourn them for it. It is also the lot of the performance artist, who becomes for viewers an image, a symbol, an idea, an object. It is also the lot of queer cruisers, who place themselves in danger of legislation and of real violence for their expressions of desire and of their longing for connection. Obviously, the conditions and constraints of each of these categories are vastly different. Nevertheless, each becomes exposed as he translates subjective passions (patriotism, duty, art, lust, love, rapport) into public acts. All three offer sites at which the intermingling of agent and target and the relationship between the individual and the social are activated and amplified. That is, each exposes or reveals himself/herself as an act of commitment to the idea of human sociality from a scale as grand as that of civilization itself to the humble engagement of two individuals.

Pujol's act of faith in his performances is to use one figure of vulnerability, the lost soldier, to stand for a deeper consideration of the dangers and rewards of the finding and losing connection and of the ways in which such personal and intimate themes are performed in public. This is not to discredit the role of the soldier or the sincerity of mourning. Rather, it is to extend the contemplation of vulnerability to other zones in which the private, the personal, and the subjective are acted out as public commitments to sociality. The metalepsis that occurred between the mourning of the lost soldier's vulnerability and the choreography of cruising in *Memorial Gestures* points to the larger issue for both—how to negotiate connection and loss, individuality and collectivity, and the role of performance and of acts in making the personal connect to the social.

The cruiser's precarious, earnest, and harried search for and achievement of accord in the defiance of isolation and of reprisal is a poignant—and poetic—metaphor for the larger struggle to achieve the bonds (momentary or life-long) among individuals. The event of losing such a bond is the precondition for mourning. Pujol's work drew upon the experience of vulnerability that comes with the yearning for (and achieving) those bonds queer individuals experience as more urgent and treacherous. It is those micro-dramas of finding and losing that punctuated *Memorial Gestures*

to which I compare cruising as a means to point to the queer engagement with vulnerability and connection that underwrite the work. The public performance of mourning the dead soldiers was, in sum, all the more effective for its relation to and dependence on those sped-up, fleeting, and ever-reshuffling acts of rapport and loss that occurred in silence during the Inheritance.

What I find most compelling about the work was how Pujol engaged in an exploration of the emotions of public mourning through a performance that nevertheless seemed to speak directly to and draw from the queer experience of policed desire.<sup>8</sup> The conditions of silence and connection that Pujol made central are not just the key conditions for mourning but also for the queer engagements that engender cruising (and give it its enduring appeal). In short, he arrived at the schematic replaying of the cruising ground not through any sort of intentional staging of it but through a deep understanding of the outlaw longing for connection, rapport, like-mindedness, and intersubjectivity that it represents. The anxieties of exposing the personal to the public are fundamental to queer lives, and Pujol used that understanding to say something profound about mourning and loss for all. Discerning the imagery of cruising in the performance reveals how Pujol transformed the particularities of a queer experience into public, reparative ritual.

## NOTES

1. Pujol's conceptual practice has oriented itself increasingly toward performance in recent years, though this was also an important component of the installations and photographs which first brought him to public attention. On Pujol's earlier work, see Edward J. Sullivan, "The Sacred and the Profane," *ARTnews* (March 2000): 122–25. Pujol's turn to performance draws, in particular, on his experience as a Catholic monk, and this remains an important visual and conceptual source. See *Ernesto Pujol: Hagiography*, New York: Galería Ramis Barquet in collaboration with Linda Kirkland Gallery, 1999.

2. For a compelling analysis of cruising and its relation to urban space, see Mark Turner, *Backward Glances: Cruising the Queer Streets of New York and London*, London: Reaktion Books, 2003. For a partial account of cruising's shared non-verbal codes, see Richard Tewksbury, "Cruising for Sex in Public Places: The Structure and Language of Men's Hidden, Erotic Worlds," *Deviant Behavior: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 17, no. 1 (1996): 1–19.

3. John Paul Ricco, *The Logic of the Lure*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002, 95.

4. Henning Bech, *When Men Meet: Homosexuality and Modernity* [1987], trans. Teresa Mesquit and Tim Davies, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997, 113ff.

5. John Rechy, *The Sexual Outlaw: A Documentary* [1977], New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1984, 196.

6. For discussions of the literary representations of cruising, see Ben Gove, *Cruising Culture: Promiscuity, Desire and American Literature*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press: 2000; Turner, *Backward Glances*, as at n.2; Bersani, *Homos*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995, 113–81; Scott Herring, *Queering the Underworld: Slumming, Literature, and the Undoing of Lesbian and Gay History*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007; Jennifer Moon,

“Cruising and Queer Counterpublics: Theories and Fictions,” Ph.D. dissertation, American Culture, University of Michigan, 2006. The imagery of cruising has been particularly featured by male-identified writers such as Walt Whitman, André Gide, Thomas Mann, Jean Genet, James Baldwin, Christopher Isherwood, Frank O’Hara, Carl Ginsburg, and Edmund White. There are analogous, but significantly different, engagements with the problem of finding like-mindedness in public in the work of women and trans authors. A concise discussion of this issue, with reference to recent artistic practice, can be found in Liz Rosenfeld, “My Kind of Cruising,” in Mattilda a.k.a. Matt Bernstein Sycamore, ed., *Nobody Passes: Rejecting the Rules of Gender Conformity*, Emeryville, California: Seal Press, 2006, 149–58. See further Denise Bullock, “Lesbian Cruising: An Examination of the Concept and Methods,” *Journal of Homosexuality* 47, no. 2 (2004): 1–31.

7. Trevor Martin, e-mail to members of *Memorial Gestures* collaborative, October 2007.

8. Queer themes have been significant if subtle components of his previous work, as in his 2002 *Bathers* series, 1999 *Hagiography* series, or the 2002 work *Bandaging*. On *Bandaging*, see Richard Meyer, “Slasher Story,” *Art Journal* 64, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 32–41 (35).

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