

# SHAPESHIFTING FOR EARTHLY SURVIVAL

## **A brief and incomplete set of notes from part ii of Shapeshifting for Earthly Survival :**

- We talked about ways we personally view shapeshifting: As a means of survival/ as a punishment/ as a power strategy/ as an empathy tool/ as something 'real' or something 'in the mind'
- Becoming different beings, being in a constant state of flux and what the idea of shapeshifting does to destabilise notions of a static identity, as well as other binary structures.
- We talked about transformation into mineral, such as the character of Lot's wife who turns into a pillar of salt. And thought through ways this could be re-interpreted as a positive shift rather than that of a punishment.
- Transformation into the fly in 'The Fly' perhaps giving access to more 'honest' ways of being, or different ways of being.
- What is the ethics of transformation and how does that change when the person is able to change back to their 'original' state?
- Larping as a potential empathy tool, and the slippery terrain of role playing traumatic and/ or oppressive structures.
- Psychedelics and the transformative states from certain 'plant teachers'
- We talked about relationship with the human body as a collaboration between a multitude of life forms, and ways of negotiating that body in sickness and/or in the ageing body. How do these thoughts create a way of thinking about intimacy, and loneliness.

## **Link for the playlist of collectively curated youtube clips:**

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLWzfiKTORO16E1ObIQxW0U6YB4tCmKM\\_G](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLWzfiKTORO16E1ObIQxW0U6YB4tCmKM_G)

# REFERENCES

## **DANCE / CHOREOGRAPHY:**

**Trish Brown**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3FALHd5Viz4&t=268s>

**Michael Clark**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=91JaPamKBXo>

**Merce Cunningham**

## MYTHS AND THEIR INTERPRETATIONS:

### **Metamorphoses - myth of Apollo and Daphne**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0yK7x9ju1ZU>

### **Myth of Tirezias**

### **Crown of Laurel - Ursula Le Guin**

<http://www.ursulakleguinarchive.com/Poetry-CrownOfLaurel.html>

**Jjin** in New delhi

**Morgan le fay** (extract in SHAPESHIFTING TOOLKIT)

**Lot's wife** transforming into a pillar of salt

**Cornish stones** turning into women so they can dance

[https://www.cornwalls.co.uk/history/sites/merry\\_maidens.htm](https://www.cornwalls.co.uk/history/sites/merry_maidens.htm)

## FILMS

***The fly* - Chronenberg**

***Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992)**

**Texts (fiction)**

***The Passion According To GH* - Clarice Lispector (extract attached)**

***The Patternist Series* - Octavia Butler**

*Wild seed* (extract in SHAPESHIFTING TOOLKIT)

*Mind of my Mind*

*Clay's ark*

***Lagoon* - Nnedi Okorafor**

***If wishes were horses* (short story about a woman who chooses to turn into a horse) <https://www.thisamericanlife.org/631/so-a-monkey-and-a-horse-walk-into-a-bar/act-two-0>**

***The doll's alphabet* - Camilla Grudova**

***The Wife's Story* - Ursula le Guin (short story: an inversion of the classic werewolf tale) <https://frielingretc.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/the-wifes-story-ursula-k.pdf>**

## TEXTS (THEORY)

**From the enemy's point of view**

***A Cyborg Manifesto*- Donna Haraway**

[https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/english/currentstudents/undergraduate/modules/fictionnarrativemediaandtheoryinthe21stcentury/manifestly\\_haraway\\_----\\_a\\_cyborg\\_manifesto\\_science\\_technology\\_and\\_socialist-feminism\\_in\\_the\\_...pdf](https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/english/currentstudents/undergraduate/modules/fictionnarrativemediaandtheoryinthe21stcentury/manifestly_haraway_----_a_cyborg_manifesto_science_technology_and_socialist-feminism_in_the_...pdf)

**The Companion Species Manifesto - Donna Haraway**

**The Enchantment of Modern Life - Jane Bennet**

<https://press.princeton.edu/books/paperback/9780691088136/the-enchantment-of-modern-life>

*"Crossings enchant - but what is responsible for this. The Magic resides in the movement, capacity to fly, travel or transform themselves - primate to other primate, terrestrial to solar, silicon to carbon, living to dead.*

*'Metamorphosing creatures enact the very possibility of change; their presence carries with it the trace of dangerous but also exciting and exhilarating migrations. To live among or as a crossing is to have motion called to mind, and this reminding is also a somatic event. My hunch is this: hybrids enchant for the same reason that moving one's body in space can carry one away—think of dancing or the quick intake of breath and the rush after a hard push on the swing.<sup>2</sup> Some of the political potency of the term freedom might be traced to its association with the pleasure of bodily mobility. It seems to me, for example, that the extraordinary popularity of Haraway's cyborg stems in part from its evocation of the free movements of a child at play: walking around like a robot, crawling into the playground tube and becoming concrete, barking like a dog, jumping like a kangaroo"*

*(quote sent in by George, from The Enchantment of Modern Life)*

**"If a lion could speak we could not understand him" Wittgenstein**

<https://existentialcomics.com/comic/245#:~:text=In%20Philosophical%20Investigations%20Wittgenstein%20famously,we%20could%20not%20understand%20him%22.&text=But%20for%20Wittgenstein%2C%20the%20words,our%20shared%20culture%20and%20experience.>

[245#:~:text=In%20Philosophical%20Investigations%20Wittgenstein%20famously,we%20could%20not%20understand%20him%22.&text=But%20for%20Wittgenstein%2C%20the%20words,our%20shared%20culture%20and%20experience.](https://existentialcomics.com/comic/245#:~:text=In%20Philosophical%20Investigations%20Wittgenstein%20famously,we%20could%20not%20understand%20him%22.&text=But%20for%20Wittgenstein%2C%20the%20words,our%20shared%20culture%20and%20experience.)

**OTHER REFS:**

**Maria Sabina - plant teaching. psychedelics**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6X2HhwOWoA&list=PLWzfikTOROI6E1ObIQxW0U6YB4tCmKM_G&index=9&t=0s)

[v=-6X2HhwOWoA&list=PLWzfikTOROI6E1ObIQxW0U6YB4tCmKM\\_G&index=9&t=0s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6X2HhwOWoA&list=PLWzfikTOROI6E1ObIQxW0U6YB4tCmKM_G&index=9&t=0s)

**Terrance McKenna - becoming a molecule of chlorophyll**

**Raymond Moody - astro projection**