Performance Art in Process, Continued:

It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head in the Realm of Banff's Acoustic Ecologies

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Abstract for Masters

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Margaret Lapp

Considering its role in the development of Canada, its iconic landscapes and the extensive art production at the Banff Centre, Banff is a significant site of Canadian visual culture requiring further analysis. Technological innovations, grappled with by artists during the latter half of the twentieth century (Michael Century), featured in exhibitions, residencies and on-site DIY radio stations at the Banff Centre in the Eighties and Nineties, culminating in the exhibition, *Radio Rethink* (1992) at the Walter Phillips Gallery. This thesis challenges how art history incorporates, remembers and contends with ephemeral performance artworks involving live radio transmissions and public interventions. The analysis focuses on an interview between Daina Augaitis, the curator of *Radio Rethink* (1992), and participating artist, Colette Urban, as regards Urban's multi-day, performance art walk, *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head* (1992). Archives of Banff Centre exhibitions, such as, *Between Views and Points of View* (1991) and *As Public As Race* (1992), and performance artworks by Cheryl L'Hirondelle, Rebecca Belmore, Margo Kane, Camille Turner and Diana Burgoyne, contextualize Urban's work within the milieu of art production at the Banff Centre and public performance art in Canada around the turn of the twentieth century. By attempting to intercept, collaborate and respond to the archival interview through site-writing (Jane Rendell) and an interdisciplinary methodology (Katherine McKittrick), this thesis enacts the archive to reconceptualize the way we write about ephemeral works in Canada, and the parameters of artistic and spatial agency in commercially constructed and federally implicated public spaces.

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Table of Contents

List of Figures

Preface

> "Century after century the rugged Rocky Mountains sat there in majesty, and nature seemed to say: 'Your thoughts must be as firm as these mountains, if you are to walk the straight path. Your patience and kindness must be as solid as these mountains, if you are to acquire understanding and wisdom.'" – Chief John Snow[1]

I first arrived in Banff as a researcher looking at the work of artist Colette Urban in August 2023. Banff had a profound effect on me during this visit, particularly due to the vastness of the Rocky Mountains and the phenomena of moving between archival holdings and swaths of forest, rivers, lakes and hot springs. Being there provoked new trajectories and questions in my research, and it was in Banff that I found my place as a researcher. I grew up with family stories of Banff and my great-grandmother hiking the mountains with her friends on short stays away from her home in Drumheller, Alberta. Such settler stories of Banff are common. In Banff, I felt the stark and disjointed contrast between a spectacular environment and a commercial spectacle. Having grown up as a white settler in Lekwungen territory, I grappled with the effects of tourism on daily life, and the need to unsettle tourism's settler stories and culture, which had dispossessed Indigenous peoples from their territories. I searched for acknowledgement of Indigenous culture and history in Banff's architecture, public sculpture and shops. I found information in archival records, through conversations with archivists at the Whyte Museum and the Paul D. Fleck Library, in books and online publications by the Stoney Nakoda, and in a brief conversation with a woman of Stoney Nation at the Upper Canada Hot Springs. Intriguingly, when looking through a magnifying glass, I also noticed Colette Urban wearing Indigenous beadwork on her jacket for the duration of *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head* that I had come to Banff to research. I contemplated the presence and necessary opacity of Indigenous culture throughout this process.

[1] Chief John Snow, *These Mountains are our Sacred Places: The Story of the Stoney Indians* (Toronto: Samuel Stevens, 1977), 12.

Introduction

The Artwork

In 1992, for the exhibition *Radio Rethink: Art, Sound and Transmission* (January 17 to March 13, 1992) at the Walter Phillips Gallery, Colette Urban created *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head*, a group performance art walk that continued a legacy of technology in body art, radio art and soundwalks developed at the Banff Centre since the mid-Eighties. Urban coordinated a public intervention into the soundscape and historic places of Banff. The group of artists in the performance (referred to as "performers" or "the group" throughout the thesis) included Allison Cameron, Neil MacInnis, Sheilagh O'Leary, Rita McKeough, Jocelyn Robert and Tim V. S. Westbury (figure 1).[2] The group wore winter hats with small radio clocks in pockets sewn at the front, with radio antennae fully extended during the walk. They went to a different location each day for seven consecutive days: the liquor store, the Rundle Restaurant, the Canada Post office, the Safeway Supermarket, Banff Avenue between Buffalo Street and Cariboo Street, Banff Upper Canada Hot Springs, and the miniature golf course inside the Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel. While the rest of the group advanced to the day's location, one performer remained behind at the Walter Phillips Gallery to broadcast a one-minute monologue directly to the group's headsets from the exhibition's temporary radio station (figure 2). Each day the transmission would be longer in duration, as the initial one-minute broadcast from the previous day was layered upon the next, so that the final six minutes of the seventh day's broadcast was a crescendo of cacophonous sounds.

[2] Daina Augaitis and Dan Lander commissioned original radio works and live radio broadcasts by visiting artists for the exhibition, *Radio Rethink* (1992). Artists included Leonard Fisher, Archer Pechawis, Rita McKeough, Christof Migone, Patrick Ready, Hildegard Westerkamp, Rober Racine, Hank Bull and Colette Urban.

Though Urban experimented with sound and audience participation in other performances she had never created anything quite as durational or mobile as *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head*. Her previous performance artworks focused on interactive encounters, elaborate costumes, audio sculptures and feminist confrontations. In *I Feel Faint* (1985), Urban prefaced the performance with a recording about the Apollo mission's lunar rover, then wore a sheet metal headpiece and shoes made from two halves of a motorbike tire while reading aloud an allegory of female/male archetypes (figure 3).[3] She provoked patriarchal tropes again in *a song to sing, a tale to tell, a point to make* (1989) when she pushed a small globe past the audience with long, white gloves, while a man's voice read from a book *Hundreds of Things a Girl Can Make* and two collaborators played the *Wonder Woman* soundtrack (figure 4). In *Orchestrina* (1989), Urban invited audience members to push a wheelbarrow apparatus around the room, though in the place of the cart was a turntable, playing as the wheel spun at the speed of the participant's movement (figure 5; figure 6). Urban moved to Canada from Colorado and lived across the country working as a professor, artist, performer, student, administrator, farmer, vintage seller, and entrepreneur. These pluralities of her personhood were reflected in the various facets of her art practice. Urban arrived in Banff at the start of the Nineties for *Radio Rethink* after studying and teaching in Halifax (NSCAD), Victoria (UVic), Vancouver (Emily Carr; Simon Fraser University), Saskatoon (University of Saskatchewan) and Toronto (University of Toronto) throughout the 1980s. Being a hub of art production, mingling the creative practices of artists from across the country, the Banff Centre was a fitting site for Urban's diverse art practice and career.

[3] A13-044-010, box 25, Performance Descriptions, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON; A13-044-010, box 25, Faint, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.

The Site

At the end of the twentieth century, Banff was a site of significant creative experimentations with technology in art practice at the Banff Centre. Arriving in Banff and entering into the experimental domain of cultural production of the Banff Centre at this time in history makes Urban's performance for *Radio Rethink* significant to the discourse of Canadian art history and in need of further analysis. Banff or Minhrpa, known as *the waterfalls* in Stoney/Îyârhe Nakoda, is a meeting place of many First Nations located on the side of Sacred Buffalo Guardian Mountain in Treaty 7 territory.[4] The Town of Banff is at the centre of Mînî Rhpa Mâkoche, also known as Banff National Park. The Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks gained world heritage status from The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1984. As a fixture of this status: "World Heritage sites belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located."[5] Over one hundred years after the park was established in 1885, the Town of Banff became an official municipality in 1990.[6] The Town of Banff leases its land for $1 from the Canadian Government

[4] Town of Banff, "Land Acknowledgement," *Town of Banff*, accessed July 15, 2024, https://banff.ca/1259/Land-Acknowledgement. "[T]he townsite of Banff is located on traditional Treaty 7 territory. These sacred lands are a gathering place for the Niitsitapi from the Blackfoot Confederacy, of whom the Siksika, Kainai, and Piikani First Nations are part; the Îyârhe Nakoda of the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations; the Tsuut'ina First Nation; the Métis Nation of Alberta, Region III within the historical Northwest Métis Homeland, and many others whose histories, languages, and cultures continue to enrich our vibrant community"; Town of Banff, "Indigenous Peoples," *Town of Banff*, accessed July 15, 2024, https://banff.ca/indigenouspeoples; Îyârhe Nakoda/Stoney Nakoda Nations, "About," *Stoney Nakoda Nations*, https://stoneynakodanations.com/about-us/; Stoney Tribal Administration, "Enhancing the Reintroduction of Plains Bison in Banff National Park Through Cultural Monitoring and Traditional Knowledge: Final Report and Recommendations," April 4, 2022, https://a.storyblok.com/f/112697/x/d0b9253d5a/stoney_bison_report_final_rev2.pdf.

[5] "World Heritage," UNESCO: World Heritage Convention, accessed July 15, 2024, https://whc.unesco.org/en/about/; In the Rocky Mountain Parks, "[t]he Burgess Shale Cambrian fossil sites and nearby Precambrian sites contain important information about the earth's evolution." "Canadian Rocky Mountain Parks," UNESCO: World Heritage Convention, accessed July 15, 2024, https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/304/.

[6] Town of Banff, "Learn About Banff," *About Banff*, accessed July 15, 2024, https://banff.ca/252/Learn-About-Banff.

that expects the municipality to promote and maintain the region for tourism. Under section 4.3 of the *Town of Banff Incorporation and Agreement*, the primary objective of the town must be to provide visitors with necessary amenities and resources to maintain Banff as a centre for visitors to the region.[7] Hence, despite gaining the seeming independence of municipal status in 1990, the Town of Banff must, first and foremost, abide by the overarching needs of the national park.

One year before *Radio Rethink*, the exhibition *Between Views and Points of View* (1991) examined the aura of Banff as a tourist destination, alongside the phenomena of travelling in general and tourism's connection to social change. As noted in the exhibition catalogue: "Banff's primary *raison* d'être, the booming economy of leisure and vacation, warrants analysis for its role in packaging and distributing culture."[8] Historically, Banff Avenue had an array of businesses, including a hair salon, hardware store, liquor store, bakery, laundry, butcher shop, lumber yard, drug store and photography studio.[9] When I visited in 2023, I mostly noticed a plethora of gift shops and restaurants, though there remained several historic buildings, a community centre and high school hidden in view. Through its many objectives, *Between Views and Points of View* also confronted Banff identity as primarily white and English-speaking.[10] These stereotypes of Banff erase the presence and contributions of racialized and Indigenous communities, harkening to *terra nullius*: the imperial concept that land in areas of Canada was vacant and obtainable for development.[11] This concept particularly effaces thousands of years of

[7] The Government of Canada and the Government of Alberta, *Town of Banff Incorporation and Agreement Consolidated: With amendments up to and including 2022 July 20* (Government of Canada, 1989), 6.
[8] Daina Augaitis and Sylvie Gilbert, *Between Views* (Banff: Walter Philipps Gallery, 1991), 3. Augaitis and Gilbert co-curated this exhibition in which artists created work outside the gallery and all the sites "ranging from commercial venues to public spaces…allowed for art to be encountered in a casual, undetermined way."
[9] I retrieved these archival details from the "Lot and Block" files at the Whyte Museum Archive.
[10] Augaitis and Gilbert, 6. Exhibiting artist, Jin-Me Yoon, posed the question: "how do you actually recognize a tourist or a foreigner?" Historically, the exhibition notes the significance of Chinese labourers in the region who built the Canadian Pacific Railway.
[11] Glen Sean Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 175.

Indigenous stewardship and sovereignty of the land.[12] Marshall McLuhan posited that technology would assist in overcoming these hostile landscapes. Curiously, he pointed to Indigenous temporality for his ontology of new media, though he ultimately reverted to a Western structure to frame his analysis.[13] Even though *Radio Rethink* did not address these issues specifically, the effects of tourism, settler-colonialism, and the concept of *terra nullius* had its effects on locational art projects in Banff National Park, within *Radio Rethink,* and on Urban's site-based work. When Urban and the group of performers walked down Banff Avenue, manufactured for tourism as it was, it must have been unusual for passersby to hear the artists' voices, disembodied, drifting and intervening in the historical Banff townscape. Urban chose settler sites and exposed the power structures in those spaces throughout the town. As well, she used embodiment, relationality, and site-based practice, which are tactics used in Indigenous land-based media arts to oppose possessive colonial attitudes to land by locating instances of settler-colonial mythologies.[14] Urban's project continued a line of thought initially pursued in the project preceding hers. As the curators for *Between Views and Points of View* had pointed out, "tourist sites are an appropriate place for locating the broad debate of 'self and society.'"[15]

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[12] Theodore Binemma and Melanie Niemi, "'Let the Line Be Drawn Now': Wilderness, Conservation, and the Exclusion of Aboriginal People from Banff National Park in Canada," *Environmental History* 11, no. 4 (October 2006): 740. "'[T]he main objective behind Park management was to 'improve' the Park and make it a more attractive place for the tourist.'/ Our ideas of wilderness and nature are socially constructed…[Indigenous] people were not removed to create uninhabited landscapes, but in the service of efforts to create landscapes abundant in wild game."

[13] Jessica Jacobson-Konefall, May Chew, and Daina Warren, "Songlines, not Stupor: Cheryl L'Hirondelle's *nikamon ohci aski: songs because of the land* as Technologically citizenship on the Lands Currently Called 'Canada'," *Imaginations* 8:3 (2017), 80. McLuhan could be rebutted through Indigenous new media ecologies and concepts of "cyberspace," as suggested by Mohawk scholar, Steven Loft. Steve Loft and Kerry Swanson, eds. *Coded Territories: Tracing Indigenous Pathways in New Media Art* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2014), 171-172.

[14] Jacboson-Konefall, Chew and Warren, 74.

[15] WPG02.221, folder 1, Between Views and Points of View, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archive, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

By becoming a municipality in 1990, Banff's history connected to a web of national and international events occurring in that same year, including the demolition of the Berlin Wall, the Kanehsatà:ke Resistance, the start of the Gulf War, the instigation of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), the launch of the Hubble Space Telescope, and first web page on the Internet. It also aligned with an evocative period of technological production in Canada and at the Banff Centre, of which *Radio Rethink* and Colette Urban's performance are included. The early 1990s marked the end of a period of "techno-aesthetic innovation" in Canada called the *episode of light*.[16] Beginning with Expo '67 and Canada's centenary, this period encapsulated fervent experimentation in reimagining Canada and its creative and technological output. According to media art historian, Michael Century, who was Artistic Director of the Inter-Arts Program at the Banff Centre from 1982 to 1988, artistic research informed government policy interconnecting artmaking and science in technological advancements. Canadian communications became defined by a collaboration of art and science that was process-driven, flexible, and in flux.[17] Yet, early technology's scope for creative experimentation was overtaken by its eventual commodification as digital culture and mass access rapidly expanded in the 1990s. Century stated the "attempt at merging culture and communications, content and carrier, or software and hardware, did not endure after 1993."[18] By 1993, Kim Campbell's conservative government dissolved the Department of Communications which oversaw technology and culture together. After this point, the two industries were

[16] Michael Century, *Northern Sparks: Innovation, Technology Policy, and the Arts in Canada from Expo 67 to the Internet Age,* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2022), 2-3. This spur of innovation could also be understood in response to Marshall McLuhan's "the medium is the message." Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (Corte Madera: Gingko Press, 2003), 1. Prolific dancer and choreographer Silvy Panet-Raymond said: "A lot of the performance art today is trying to make some impact on what's going on…In my own work, technology has affected my use of time. With basic knowledge I can vary the spatial environment, the sound textures." Chantal Pontbriand, *Three in Performance,* (Saskatoon: Mendel Art Gallery, 1983), 15.
[17] Century, 184-185.
[18] Century, 10.

separated: technology was allocated to Industry, while culture was placed within the Heritage sector. Intriguingly, *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head* took place at the end (or culmination) of this *episode of light.* Urban's work, and others made in Banff around this time, need to be contextualized within this important moment in Canadian technology and communications history and the coincidental timing with extraordinary worldwide events leading up to the turn of the millennium. Urban's work must be considered within the milieu of Banff's acoustic experimentations to further the discussion of Banff as a site where technological art seemed to effloresce within a remote yet highly active, artistic enclave. My research begins to question the significance of Banff heritage and the Banff Centre on artmaking in Canada, particularly sound and performance art at the end of the twentieth century.

Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity

The Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity established a context of experimentation for media studies, radio artworks and sound arts to flourish as it urged diverse experimentations with residents in the various departments on campus. Banff Centre projects such as *Audio by Artists / Radio by Artists* (1981-1983), *Siting Technology* (1987), *RADIA 89.9* (1989), *As Told To: Structures for Conversation* (1987-1989), and *Body and Technology* performance series (1991-1992), elicited the use of indoor and outdoor art installations, disembodied sound, interactive technologies, and DIY radio stations. The campus facilities provided sanctioned and unsanctioned sites of experimentation essential to invoking the unrestricted potential of what artists could consider and create with sound media. As found in the file for *As Told To* (1990), the overall mandate for the Walter Phillips Gallery at the time was to incorporate experimental

media in its programming.[19] The emphasis on sound, performance art and electronic arts achieved particular support at the Banff Centre in the 1980s through the influence of Michael Century. He established the Media Arts program in 1988, later led by sound artist Claude Schryer from 1988 to 1990.[20] In 1988, interim Artist Director Al Mattes started RADIA FM at the Banff Centre which offered a space for live-to-air broadcasts, performances, pre-recorded works and sound installations. The Paul D. Fleck Library and Archive of the Banff Centre maintains a rich array of materials from this moment in history that offers important insights into the context of institutional leadership, exhibitions occurring before *Radio Rethink* (1992), and the overall history of radio art on the Banff Centre's campus. The holdings support the sense that electronic arts, sound art, technology and performance were hugely significant in defining what radio art was becoming at the Banff Centre at the time.

In keeping with the general interest in radio at the Banff Centre, Daina Augaitis and Dan Lander curated *Radio Rethink* to explore the topic of radio art and its need for further definition. In describing radio art for media releases, Augaitis wrote: "as an art form, 'radio art' is still a fledgling…it is one of the goals of the project to come closer to measuring its boundaries."[21] A handwritten list of keywords in the files at the Paul D. Fleck Library conceptualized those parameters: "pirate radio–unaccessed unrestricted," "in situationist terms," "acoustification of the gallery," "cultural agenda," "art versus social," "deconstruction versus reconstruction,"

[19] P. J. Henderson, "As Told To: Myriad of sense experiences," *Canmore Leader*, July 21, 1988, WPG02.184, folder 9, As Told To, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.
[20] Banff Centre, "A Guide to records of the Inter-Arts program at The Banff Centre 1979-1990," May 2003, CA pfla pfla-2088, Banff Centre Inter-Arts Department fonds, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB; Daina Augaitis and Dan Lander, eds., *Radio Rethink: Art, Sound and Transmission* (Banff: Walter Phillips Gallery, 1994), 38-39.
[21] WPG02.227, folder 3, Radio Rethink, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB. Several documents in this folder refer to radio-related proposals at the Banff Centre, especially regarding the continuation of the on-campus radio station, RADIA 89.9, and the proposal for a residency titled, "Radiophonics."

"audio versus radio," "pirate versus commercial," "science versus art."[22] Radio art was an art practice where through the medium of radio the artist "blur[ed] the lines between documentary and drama, actuality and art, objectivity and subjectivity, reportage and composition."[23] Augaitis and Lander aimed to provoke dialogues about radio art's (untapped) social and artistic capabilities.

Sourcing a definition for radio art was further aided by the media and visual art studio residency "Rhetoric, Utopia and Technology," taking place simultaneously with *Radio Rethink* from the fifth of January to fourteenth of March 1992. The residency, organized by Jeanne Randolph and Bernie Miller, questioned the rhetoric of technology, technology's impact on self and society, and the narrative of body and technology in a modernist utopia.[24] In the archival file on the residency, Randolph and Miller put together a series of phrases coalescing their ideas:

> rhetoric and the Unconscious
> metaphor as methodology
> ficto-criticism
> theory as found object
> technology and the reality principle
> the technological ethos
> technology as amenable object
> technology as representation
> the ideological uses of utopia
> the distinction between utopia as impulse from
> utopia as built place (scientific utopias)
> the recuperation of the utopian moment from
> historical avant-garde practices
> the future as antique
> critical utopia[25]

[22] WPG02.227, folder 3, Radio Rethink, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.
[23] Augaitis and Lander, 2; Attention: Art, Radio, Entertainment, WPG02.227, folder 4, Radio Rethink, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.
[24] A Residency on Rhetoric, Utopia and Technology, 1990-2003 Media and Visual Arts Art Studio/Thematic Residency Biographies, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB; WPG02.227, folder 8, Radio Rethink, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff AB; WPG02.227, folder 3, Radio Rethink, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.
[25] WPG02.227, folder 8, Radio Rethink, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

The concept of utopia focused radio art's discourse around radio as a communications technology and away from a focus on the commercial output of radio broadcasting. Therefore, radio art reformatted radio technology as a "transmission of sound objects, freely given and received."[26] In a letter to Jeanne Randolph on November 14, 1991, Augaitis suggested a collaboration between programming for *Radio Rethink* and that of the Rhetoric, Utopia and Technology residency due to the complementary themes in the two projects.[27] Ultimately, *Radio Rethink* formulated much of its programming in response to the residency, including a symposium involving its exhibiting artists from the sixth to the twelfth of February 1992. This coordination between Augaitis, Lander, Randolph and Miller, and their departments, faculty, curators, participating artists and staff evidences the success of the Banff Centre's mission that various departments advance interdisciplinary programming together.

Performance Art and the Archive—Methodological Approaches

In her notes for an artist talk, Urban wrote "[performance art] is a format for presenting ideas that have a variety of possibilities as far as crossing disciplines." What is performance art? asked Urban. A rhetorical question to which she replied: it is a process of discovery and experimentation. [28] This thesis aims to echo aspects of this experimental approach through an interdisciplinary methodology focused on "performing the archive" through method-making (McKittrick) and site-writing (Rendell). The reality of performance art is that, as a live event, it naturally differs from its archival records. Grappling with this dissonance influenced how I hoped to enact my research and structure my writing.

[26] WPG02.227, folder 4, Radio Rethink.
[27] WPG02.227, folder 8, Radio Rethink, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.
[28] A13-044-010, box 25, Performance Talk, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.

My methodology draws particularly on the writings of Katherine McKittrick and Jane Rendell. McKittrick is a professor and scholar of geography and planning at Queen's University Canada. Her book *Dear Science and other Stories* (2021) presents an interdisciplinary research methodology through Black studies scholarship that opposes insular and racist disciplinary categories. McKittrick says "[m]ethod-making is the generating and gathering of ideas—across-with-outside-within-against normative disciplines—that seek out liberation within our present system of knowledge."[29] Her methods gesture towards liberation through storytelling, shared resources and "rebellious methodological work."[30] I use McKittrick's anticolonial methods to underscore and unsettle my observations about settler Canadian geographies and a white settler artist. My thesis also incorporates Indigenous worldviews and examples of performance art by BIPOC artists, to disrupt my predominantly European and American-based theoretical framework.

McKittrick uses footnotes to unsettle, breach or reform the foundation of predominant academic discourse, to bend its parameters and disrupt the main arguments. She troubles expected terminology to reword the narrative. Performance art is an excellent case study to enact this methodology, as it is an interdisciplinary art practice that often utilizes various art forms, skills, media, technology, and theory.[31] My thesis draws insight from spatial theory, performance

[29] Katherine McKittrick, *Dear Science and Other Stories* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2021), 47.
[30] McKittrick, *Dear Science and Other Stories*, 7. "Black studies and anticolonial thought offer methodological practices wherein we read, live, hear, groove, create, and write across a range of temporalities, places, texts, and ideas that build on existing liberatory practices." McKittrick, *Dear Science and Other Stories*, 6. Rebellion is a legacy of Indigenization and Black praxis alongside rehumanizing, reinventing, recoding and revolting. McKittrick, *Dear Science and Other Stories*, 160.
[31] Heather Igloliorte, *Decolonize Me/Décolonisez-moi* (Ottawa: Ottawa Art Gallery, 2012), 25. Igloliorte talks about performance art's capacity to embody interstitial spaces in galleries, which confronts Western curatorial practices by blurring delineations of what is and is not exhibition space. Importantly, performance art, as a live art form, can mobilize methodologies. In the case of Igloliorte's exhibition, Jordan Bennett's performance enacted decolonial methodologies and the exhibition's aim to "indigenize the Western institutional framework of the art exhibition by incorporating song, movement, and performance."

studies, sociology, anthropology, movement studies, architectural theory, public history, sound studies, geography, phenomenology, land-based ecology and media art. These subjects introduce a unique lexicon for my art historical analysis. As inspired by McKittrick, I try to conceptualize the social, political, cultural and historical context of this artwork. I attempt to perform the work's interdisciplinary structure in my writing by interchanging one discipline's terminology with another to structure an interdisciplinary network of thought related to Urban's performance.[32] My writing aims to experiment with aligning the rhetorical interplay of these different disciplines.

Writing about the site of the artist's actions and my encounter with the Banff archives through personal field notes was a method of criticism meant to gather and incorporate the town's history and spatial qualities in my analysis. Architectural historian Jane Rendell situates site-writing or "critical spatial writing" at an "intersection between art and geography around spatial practice."[33] Rendall often accumulated her notes, facts, personal anecdotes, and oral history to create an armature of ideas that structured her writing. Following the lines of interdisciplinary analysis, she considers art as an "expanded and interdisciplinary field, where terms are not only defined through one discipline but by many simultaneously."[34] Throughout my thesis, I incorporate fieldnotes of my visit to the archival holdings and performance sites to situate my analysis within place; I do so as an onlooker and observer, recognizing I am a

[32] For example, I use radio terms, such as phrasing, relay and remix to describe the movement of the artists during the performance.
[33] Jane Rendell, "Site-Writing: She is Walking about in a Town Which She does not Know," in *Home Cultures* 4, no. 2 (2007): 177; Jane Rendell, *Art and Architecture: A Place Between* (New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 2006), 18.
[34] Jane Rendell, *Art and Architecture*, 43. Rendell's method recalls Henri Lefebvre's spatial analysis: "analyse not things in space but space itself, with a view to uncovering the social relationships embedded in it. The dominant tendency fragments space and cuts it up into pieces. Specializations divide space among them and act upon its truncated parts, setting up mental barriers and practico-social frontiers." Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Victoria: Blackwell Publishing, 1991), 89.

momentary visitor.[35] Site-writing outlines a spatiality of my relation to the work and its archival materials, and marks the points of engagement where the work takes effect in my experience.[36] In attempting to comprehend an ephemeral artwork premised on situated experience, site-writing became a useful method. In addressing the "double movement" in art criticism that traverses inside and outside subjective experience, "'site-writing' traces and constructs a series of interlocking sites that relate artist and critic, work and criticism."[37] In this thesis, I hope to push the parameters of my writing, to utilize footnotes and citations, interdisciplinary vocabulary, subjective authorial intervention, and the gentle probing of academic structures to open my perspective of the work at hand.

In seeking information across disciplines, spatial theory and visual analysis can be expanded upon, and even challenged, to address absences that reconstruct a more comprehensive perspective. I am curious about the transformative potential of disorienting and imagining realities. In *Ways of Walking*, Tim Ingold and Jo Lee Vergunst discuss the possibilities of outdoor variabilities to disrupt linear processes and temporal possibilities. They point out that the word landscape's suffix *-scape* "embodies this sense of creative shaping and carving."[38] While Tonkiss, in *Space, the City and Social Theory,* adds that "typology treats space as the product of practice, perception and imagination."[39] Rendell uses imagination within site-writing to comprehend places and artworks where she was not present which she must anticipate through "writing a narrative that presents the site as a remembered place."[40] However, I return in the end

[35] This is in part due to the limited time to produce this thesis. However, I have learned a wealth of information about Banff from my visits to The Paul D. Fleck Library and Whyte Museum.
[36] Rendell, "Site-Writing: She is Walking about in a Town Which She does not Know," 180.
[37] Rendell, "Site-Writing: She is Walking about in a Town Which She does not Know," 186.
[38] Tim Ingold and Jo Lee Vergunst, eds., *Ways of Walking* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2008), 82.
[39] Fran Tonkiss, *Space, the City and Social Theory* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), 3.
[40] Jane Rendell, *Site Writing* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2010), 186. Rendell asks the question: "What does it mean to meet [the artists] in a place that they once passed through?" Rendell, *Site Writing*, 187.

to McKittrick, who writes about imagination as an integral strategy to confronting racial and colonial myths.[41] Through tactics such as metaphor, method-making and the rhythm of musical grooves, McKittrick elucidates that within whatever story is told is the space to imagine what is untold.[42] This thesis only begins to look at how disorienting expectations of urban experience can be the start of more inclusive and social aesthetic experiences, experiences which can also enact decolonial perspectives and queer phenomenology as a means to reimagine urban domains.

Ephemerality in performance art makes recordkeeping an essential (if not fraught) enterprise integral to extending the "life" of the artwork's dynamic action. Instead of dwelling on ephemerality as a void in which the truth slipped through, I revel in it being a space to juxtapose unmatched edges of its varying fragments or artifacts—the photographs, media, documents and sketches Urban left behind.[43] During art historical analysis, the live event of the performance and its archival materials are "understood as equal elements" bound together in decibels across time and space.[44] Performance studies scholar, Diana Taylor, outlines the constructed layers of performance, using words such as framework, is/as, real, mutual, constructed, complicated, complex, furnish, artificiality, and referentiality.[45] This thesis choreographs my notes and reflections in concert with the archive's performance art fragments. My research hopes to situate Urban's work in Banff's historical context and to respond to the work's ephemerality by way of interdisciplinary scholarly engagement, coupled with my subjective reactions to Banff, to the artists' original performance locations, and to the documentary archives that each uniquely

[41] Katherine McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 106.
[42] McKittrick, *Dear Science*, 6, 10, 41, 164.
[43] Denis Lessard and Sylvie Tourangeau, *Performances and Artefacts*, (Longueuil, QB: Galerie d'art du Collège Édouard-Montpetit, 1989), 2.
[44] Barbara Clausen, "Performing Histories: Why the Point is Not to Make a Point…" trans. Margarethe Clausen, in *Afterall: A Journal of Art, Context and* Enquiry, no. 23 (2010): 40-42.
[45] Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 3-4.

surround and support Urban's legacy. Throughout my research I particularly searched for examples of performance art in public space by women in Canada prior to Urban's performance in 1992 and was surprised to discover only a few published examples.[46] I continue to learn more about the issues in categorizing and documenting works for archives and have developed a keener awareness of what is missing within the cultural record.[47]

Situating Archival Materials

To map out Urban's career within a history of Banff performance art, audio experimentation, and soundscape projects, I visited the Whyte Museum's archives in Banff, the Paul D. Fleck Library and Archive at the Banff Centre, the Western Archives at Western University, and Artexte in Montréal. These archival holdings informed me of Banff's history, significant activity at the Banff Centre, and pertinent details of relevant artistic experimentation in Canada during the 1980s and 1990s. Though the Whyte Museum became my primary source of historic town documents, there are more locations where files on Banff's history may be found such as in the Parks Canada fonds, Canadian Pacific Railway fonds, Fairmont Hotel fonds, and

[46] The examples I found: Francoise Sullivan, *Dance in the Snow* (1948); Sullivan, *Walk Through the Oil Refineries* (1973); Sullivan, *Choreography for Five Dancers and Five Automobiles* (1979); Anna Banana, *Town Fool* (1967, 1971-72); Kate Craig, *Flying Leopard* (1974); Elizabeth Chitty, *Drop* (1976); Rebecca Belmore, *Twelve Angry Crinolines* (1987). The following books are invaluable resources for finding examples of Canadian performance art: Barbara Clausen, Jade Boivin and Emmanuelle Choquette. *An Annotated Bibliography in Real Time: Performance Art in Quebec and Canada*. Montreal: Éditions Artexte, 2019; Tanya Mars and Johanna Householder, eds., *Caught in the Act: an anthology of performance art by Canadian women.* Toronto: YYZ Books, 2004; Alain-Martin Richard and Clive Robertson, eds., *Performance Art in Canada 1970-1990.* Québec: Éditions Intervention, 1991.

[47] There is a significant lack of records of performance art by BIPOC artists in Canada. Curator and professor, Andrea Fatona, joined artists DZI..AN and Mosa McNeilly to record a discussion on this topic at Artexte in 2023, in collaboration with Articule's exhibition *Practice as Ritual/Ritual as Practice* (2023). The discussion and exhibition centred upon the anniversary of *Black Wimmin: When and Where We Enter* (1989). Further sources: Dr. Joana Joachim's research and exhibition at Artexte, *Blackity* (2021); Seika Boye, "Ola Skanks: Delayed Recognition of a Dance Artist Ahead of Her Time," *Canadian Journal of History* 56, no. 3 (2021): 216–28; Charmaine Nelson, *Towards an African Canadian Art History: art, memory, and resistance.* Vaughan: Captus Press, 2018**;** Alice Ming Wai Jim, *Black women artists in Canada: a documentation and analysis of the 1989 exhibition Black Wimmin--When and Where We Enter,* Master's thesis, Concordia University, 1996.

the Municipality of Banff fonds. I often traveled across physical and archival landscapes to piece together Urban's performance, its intention, and reception. My itinerant investigations not only reveal the complexity of this type of site-based, performance-archive research, necessary to understanding an artist such as Urban, they also point to the fecundity of Banff as a larger site that was able to spur on a diversity of practices whose effects moved far beyond the Banff Centre.

The Whyte Museum's archival photographs were a particular inspiration as they revealed a way of conceptualizing documentation of Urban's performance within the town's historical context. Looking at these images, I understood Shana McDonald's interest in how performance art dwells in the process of performance-as-creation, in the "lived experience of space."[48] I began to compare the captured movement in archival photos with photographs of Urban and her performers. As MacDonald said, scholars must "consider the different practices which produce space, including its built structures, symbolic and discursive articulations, and live flows of bodies and social practices."[49] Figures in archival photographs often presaged or mirrored the ways Urban's group used and embodied those same spaces decades later. In the captured movement and juxtaposition of individuals within sites, the archival photographs relayed the use, history and temporality of the performance locations and the significant (often colonial) history of these places. Echoing each other, for example, are photographs I discovered in the Whyte Museum collection and the Fleck Library and Archives collection. At the Whyte Museum, a 1964 image shows Safeway patrons gathered around a gentleman making an in-store announcement (figure 7), while the Fleck files produced an image taken at the Safeway nearly

[48] Shana MacDonald, "The city (as) place: Performative remappings of urban space through artistic research." In *Performance as Research: Knowledge, Methods, Impact*, edited by Annette Arlander, Bruce Barton, Melanie Dreyer-Lude and Ben Spatz. (London: Routledge, 2018), 275.
[49] MacDonald, 275.

thirty years later showing store patrons listening to another kind of announcement (figure 8). Leaning close to the radio hats of the *It's on Your Head...* performers, store patrons now listen to the artist's broadcast audio message relayed from the radio booth situated at the Walter Phillips Gallery. At the Upper Canada Hot Springs, the group gathered in the pool for a group photograph while an archival photograph documents a group of bathers similarly clustered together for the camera (figure 9; figure 10). In another example, Urban and the participating artists climb the same stairs that people crowded around for the opening of the Banff post office in 1956 (figure 11; figure 12). Though Urban's activation of these spaces is not equivalent to the daily lived experience of Banff by its own residents, her performance is intriguingly, visually, akin. As seen in the archives, these spaces are sites of gathering, exchange and listening. In a fitting description by urban historian, Dolores Hayden, "[a] world of shared meanings builds up, couched in the language of small semiprivate and semipublic territories between the dwelling and the street that support certain kinds of typical public behavior."[50] As an intervention in the built environment, Urban's performance engaged the "social, historical, and aesthetic imagination to locate where narratives of cultural identity, embedded in the historic urban landscape, [could] be interpreted."[51] Performance art uniquely supports the understanding and recognition of creative acts and their visuality within life and its everyday processes.[52] These photographs act as a counterpoint to reflect aspects of everyday life and convey meaning as to the work's ephemeral quality of movement. Furthermore, the structure of Urban's performance offers a way to revisit movement in these archival photographs allowing us to imagine how quotidian actions form and shape historical narratives of particular sites.

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[50] Dolores Hayden, *Power of Place* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1995), 35.
[51] Hayden, 13.
[52] Jeff Dirkson, ed., *Glenn Lewis: Utopiary, Metaphorest and Bewilderness* (Burnaby: Burnaby Art Gallery, 1993), 21.

Urban entered Banff's historic narrative to disrupt the spatial boundaries where art making could take place and within which discursive frameworks it could be conceptualized. The field recordings, photographs, and film footage of the group talking with passersby represent moments when the group created "common points" between themselves and residents.[53] The group's interactions with strangers suggest Urban and her collaborators generated a space for dialogue by positioning themselves within the dynamics of Banff's urban landscape. As Urban notes in her archives, "[l]ocation of performances in public sites – offers an opportunity for an audience exchange."[54] Performance art in public space is an "act (in a situation) rather than final product," a process "simultaneously 'real and 'constructed.'"[55] It is in movement, reacting to its context and process, driven in the variability of its encounter with, in this case, an unsuspecting audience. The potential of performance art is in its dynamism, resisting fixity. Understanding the variability of the context in which artists such as Urban worked—in this case in the Town of Banff and at the Banff Centre—can help further define and "place" the works in time and space even within their ephemerality and historicity.

Performing Inquiry: *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head*

In Conversation with Augaitis and Urban

The series of files related to my research at the Banff Centre's Paul D. Fleck Library and Archive contains extensive materials from project development, correspondences, curatorial

[53] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 127. De Certeau discusses the presupposition and articulation of frontiers where they come into contact at "common points."
[54] A13-044-010, box 25, Rethinking Radio - Banff Centre, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.
[55] Gunhild Borggreen and Rune Gade, eds., *Performing Archives/Archives of Performance* (Copenhagen: Narayana Press, 2013), 58. Amelia Jones' chapter, "Unpredictable Temporalities: The Body and Performance in (Art) History," in *Performing Archives/Archives of Performance* (2013), challenges art historians: "How can an artist…retain the potential of performance to make people think, if art historians and critics simply 'freeze' the work by establishing its meaning and value as final?" Borggreen and Gade, 66; Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 3.

research, negotiations, newspaper articles, photographs, handwritten notes, media releases, internal newsletters, faxes, event pamphlets, posters, maps, books, VHS and cassettes. From the Fleck reading room I could see the peak of Rundle Mountain to my left and the ridge of Sulphur Mountain straight ahead. I imagined the radio transmissions of Urban's performance permeating the soundscape and stillness of the mountains. From the reading room, I could see other buildings on the campus and the road that leads back to the town along the mountainside. With each pause taken during my research I looked out to the mountains, and so neither the documentary records nor the surrounding environment were isolated from the other in my experience. When I looked up, I saw mountains and the action of the Banff Centre campus; when I looked back at the desk, I met the Centre's rich history through its archival materials. This was an important reminder of the significance of context in the artwork and research done here.

In this room, looking out onto this scene, I listened through headphones to an interview between Augaitis and Urban. The interview took place on February 11, 1992, two days after the completion of Urban's performance. The interview involved a series of questions and answers in a casual, conversational style recorded on cassette. At times, Urban's voice trailed off as she contemplated her answer, and Augaitis seemed to be formulating the questions as she spoke. At one point, the phone rang in the room, and near the end, the interview cut out abruptly because the tape ran out on the first side; however, regardless of the informality of its structure, sentiments towards the performance emerged in Augaitis and Urban's discussion that addressed certain speculations of mine. In addition, Augaitis and Urban discussed feedback from participating artists and passersby, offering me the chance to consider those perspectives as well. From this interview, I could tether my theoretical and visual analysis to a discussion directly

related to the performance.[56] In my writing, I drift in and out of Augaitis and Urban's conversation so that the ideas put forward in the interview form the thematic structure to my observations. Their conversation appears as indented block quotes like the dialogue of a play. I intervene in their discussion with my research and site-based reflections, and their voices interject my analysis in return, to bring the reader back to the archival source. In a way, though it is in archival form, their participation in *Radio Rethink* continues through my research.

So, as Augaitis begins: "let's talk about *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head*."[57] My thesis follows the main topics of the interview as outlined through direct quotes: "taking it outside" to shift the exhibition context, "rituals of social interaction," becoming "sensitive to…that sound environment you're in," contemplating what is "so-called public space," sound as "a filler and atmosphere," and the disembodied effects in what is meant "talking through your hat."

"Taking It Outside"

Radio Rethink called for a shift in the context of radio art. Urban reacted by taking *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head* (1992) to specific sites in the Town of Banff over several days to facilitate interactions only possible outside the gallery space.

> Augaitis: "Maybe we can start by talking about what your—how you were trying to change the context of radio with that piece, or the social space of radio?"
> Urban: "Well by taking it outside…changing it from a gallery setting."[58]

[56] Oral history interviews are an integral methodology to fill gaps in art historical records. A future iteration of my thesis research could be to interview the participating artists, gallery technicians, curators and others involved in *Radio Rethink*. Interviews were not the primary task of this thesis; thankfully, Colette Urban's performance was well documented, and Daina Augaitis conducted the interview, which covered the scope of my project.
[57] Augaitis and Urban interview, 00:00:29-00:00:33.
[58] Augaitis and Urban interview, 00:00:57-00:01:14.

Urban stepped out of the enclosures of the Banff Centre's visual arts buildings and connected *Radio Rethink* with activities in town.[59] Bringing the performance outside the framework of the gallery meant going from the predictability of the gallery's structure to a space of unpredictability in both aesthetic qualities and audience. Urban configured a viewpoint where the variability of Banff's exterior spaces formed an antithesis to the Walter Phillips Gallery's controlled interiors. This inside/outside dynamic was not simply spatial or from a need for a new spatial structure; more so, it proposed that being *outside* activated new social capabilities for the work. Miwon Kwon delves into the ethical conjunctions of community in public art. As can be understood with site-specific artworks "the site itself is here conceived as a social entity, a 'community,' and not simply in terms of environmental or architectural design."[60] In locating the work outside there was also a physical manifestation of radio art in, and across, specific places. In the gallery, the meaning of the work was determined by the gallery's context and the exhibition's curatorial message, whereas the space outside the gallery extends from these controls.

At the Whyte Museum, I looked through what are called the "Lot and Block" records, which contain handwritten documents, maps, and photographs of building use. At the site of the Rundle Restaurant, and what was then a sporting and hardware shop in the three-storey Standish and Sons building, a photograph from September 30, 1937 captured a series of timber framed

[59] Gu Xiong, "Enclosures: Banff Center for the Arts, 1987," Public Art, accessed July 15, 2024, http://guxiong.ca/en/public-art/enclosures-banff-center-for-the-arts/. In 1987, Gu Xiong created a mural surrounding the main grass lawn at the Banff Centre. He hand-painted a chain-link fence over a white wood backdrop and stated in his artist statement, "I hope that one day people can discard these 'Enclosures'– the ones that are inside and outside – to better comprehend and to awaken the links between humanity and nature, one person and another, the person and his or her self." The late Eighties must have been haunted by the physical, not simply proverbial, walls in urban spaces, most especially with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Urban took the group of artists beyond the parameters of the Banff Centre as urged by Xiong 5 years earlier.

[60] Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2002), 95.

facades and a woman walking briskly in a long, belted coat (figure 13).[61] This photograph opened up a way for me to visualize the historicity and temporality in Urban's performance. When Urban and the group walked along Banff Avenue, the performance juxtaposed the past and present coming-and-going action of the street as it had been navigated, designed, and oriented for decades. Yet, to a certain extent, in presenting the performance two years after Banff received municipal status, Urban's performance spliced together an array of sites within an only recently unified town. Ten years before the performance, Urban lived and worked in Banff and felt a different sense of community at that time from that which she encountered later as a visiting artist at the Banff Centre. With her performance for *Radio Rethink*, she used her artwork to facilitate engagement between the community in the Town of Banff and artists from the Banff Centre:

> Urban: "The division between those two communities seemed to be something that was very strong; I mean, it was there, was obviously there. There was a lack of communication between the two, so that was one of the things too that I was thinking through when I initially set out to do this."[62]

When visiting Banff in August 2023, I followed Urban's route as part of my research (figure 14). The Rundle Restaurant on Banff Avenue and the mini golf course at the Banff Springs Hotel are no longer there, though the rest of the performance sites remain. The site where the Rundle Restaurant used to be at 321 Banff Avenue was especially prominent as a place of confluence in town. The high school across the road has a large field that poses a calm

[61] Long Mayell & Associates, Architects and Environmental Planners, Parks Canada, *Banff Townsite Architectural & Environmental Guidelines*, Parks Canada, 1977. According to a 1977 publication by Parks Canada pertaining to architectural development in Banff, the use of natural materials in the façades of buildings, such as stone, milled timber, logs or cement, is preferential to outsourced or imported materials, and constitutes Banff's specific mountain vernacular. Earlier in the decade, the Stoney Tribal Council completed construction of their administration buildings which was symbolically important as the first decision of the council upon the initiation of self-government in 1969. More nuanced than the timber and stone format, the building was a modern design in a teepee style, "a unique landmark commemorating our mingling of the best in new and old traditions." Chief Snow, 139.
[62] Augaitis and Urban, 00:01:55-00:02:01.

expanse juxtaposed with the frenzied intersection of cars, bikes, transit buses, diagonal crossings, and long lines along the sidewalks for tours to Lake Louise and Cave and Basin (figure 15). Similarly, Safeway is one block away at the edge of a residential neighbourhood. Being the largest grocery store in town, the shop services visitors and residents alike. While I stood taking notes at the edge of the parking lot, carts clattered and announcements could be heard through the store's periodic opening doors. The mountains formed the panoramic background of my view. In contrast, the liquor store is on a tranquil side street; its entrance looks out to a row of historic houses (figure 16). The Banff Springs Hotel, the Upper Canada Hot Springs and the Post Office are also nearer to the town's periphery, and more embedded in the residential or natural landscape than the convergence on Banff Avenue.

There is a certain trajectory of Banff Avenue that directs pedestrians the length of town between mountain valleys. A photograph in the Whyte archive captured three people walking along the sidewalk and a person sitting, shaded by the awning of a confectionery on Banff Avenue in 1937 (figure 17). While observing the street during my visit in August, the scene was not unlike this archival photograph. A woman sat on a bench while groups walked by her (figure 18). People passed in seemingly continuous motion on the same course and paused occasionally along the road's meridian for their photograph with Cascade Mountain in the distance. In 2023 the street was a constant conjunction of languages interrupted by the ding of the transit bell. At this same section in the street on the seventh of February 1992, Urban's group paused on the sidewalk for the broadcast. That day, it was Urban's monologue projecting from the gallery radio station:

> "Hi! How are you? How are things? Any news? Excuse me, do you have the time? Pardon? Thanks. How *are* you? I'm so nervous. Are you confused? What are the issues? Yes, indeed. [?] Sorry, what was your name? I'm a little confused. Where am I? What direction is North? How do I get to Grizzly Street? Hello? How do you do? I think we've

> met before. Do you have the same problem? I feel strange. Please slow down. I still feel nervous. Do you feel okay? Could you wait a minute while I tie my shoe? Slow down. I wonder where Otter Street is? Do you feel okay? I'm so confused. Do you feel funny? Thanks for the tip. Do you have the correct time? I feel great. Thanks, you too? It's nerves. You too? Things are fine. I need some. Try not to think about it. You'll find it. How do you spell your name? This is *so* complicated. I— I— I'm feeling out of control. Where's the Banff Springs Hotel from here? Am I getting closer to the truth? What are you doing here? Wait a minute! I can identify with that. Hi, how are you? Seems real. Hello! Hi! Hello? Hi! Hello? Hi! Hello? Hi! Hi there! Hello? Hi! How are you? Hello? Hi! Hello? Hi there! Hello? Hi! Hi! Hello? Hi! How are you? How are you doin? Hi! Hello? Hi! Hello? How are you doin? Everything okay? Hi! Hello? Nice day! Hi! What time is it? Hello! How are you? Hiiiii. Hello? Hi!"[63]

Each word created a site of engagement; each word was an intervention and temporal pause in the historical past and present action of the street. Unlike the other monologues, Urban's created prompts and questions to provoke conversations with the listener or passersby. While one group of townsfolk continued past looking unsure of what was happening, another group seemed eager to stop and listen, leaning toward the performers on the sidewalk during the broadcast, amused by Urban's monologue (figures 19-21).

> Urban: "And the interaction with the public was very social in terms of the engagement that went on there…"
> Augaitis: "That seems to be the richest part of it in a way."
> Urban: "Yeah, it was just extending it out there."[64]

"Rituals of Social Interaction"

Urban and her group walked like most people do; however, they wore radio hats that projected astonishing sounds into the environment which caused passersby, staff, and store patrons to pause what they were doing and listen, as captured in the work's documentation (figure 8; figure 19; figure 20; figure 21; figure 28). Performance artists who intervene in public

[63] Daina Augaitis and Colette Urban, WPG03.227.3.v5A, Radio Rethink, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB, 00:02:23-00:08:00.
[64] Augaitis and Urban, 00:44:04-00:44:19.

sites often interrupt prescribed architectural patterns with their unique movements, costumes, conversations, and sonic disruptions. The built environment represents an architect or urban planner's concept of movement and an intention to structure how bodies will navigate those spaces in a particular order; however, in practice, urban spaces echo the "materiality of bodies—the relations of exchange and production, habit, conformity, breakdown, and upheaval."[65] The feminist philosopher, Elizabeth Grosz, discusses the traces of corporeality in architecture. In her text, she confronts architecture's guise of embodied neutrality as a collective fantasy which feminist theorists must uncover.[66] In connection, Diana Taylor offers an integral perspective on the practice of performance as an embodied repertoire which: "[p]erformance—as reiterated corporeal behaviors—functions within a system of codes and conventions in which behaviors are reiterated, re-acted, reinvented, or relived."[67] Rendell also suggested that sites are defined by their "relation to cultural and spatial practices that produce them, including the actions of those who investigate them."[68] Durational works of art in public space connect and uncover newfound orientations between settings and people.[69] Through the coordination of spectacle, soundscape and costume, Urban's performance inverted daily life in Banff with the overt actions of Banff Centre artists.

> Augaitis: "Is there some kind of ideal that you're trying to strive for in renegotiating those rituals of social interaction?"

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[65] Elizabeth Grosz, *Architecture from the Outside: Essays on Virtual and Real Space* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001), 49.
[66] Grosz, 47.
[67] Taylor, *The Archive and the* Repertoire, 26; Diana Taylor, *Performance* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 26.
[68] Rendell, *Art and Architecture: A Place Between*, 15.
[69] Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 54-55. Ahmed's thoughts on nearness and body image inspired my analysis. To find meaning in her performance subject, Urban felt compelled to orient closer to the object, that is, the audience of Banff residents. "The nearness of the philosopher to his paper, his ink, and his table is not simply about 'where' he does his work and the spaces he inhabits…The nearness of such objects is required by his work." Body image as the true or false perception of self becomes nuanced in the context of performance art's live body-making visuals. If thought of as body image in its self-reflexive connotation, the work's shift in context was for Urban's sense of self as an artist whose needs could not be met in the gallery space as it was orientated.

> Urban: "That definitely was an element of it—that I wanted to try to kind of have a viewer aware of something else, just sort of that they would be jolted out of what their normal routine would be. And so it becomes this intervention into their normal pace, daily paces and then you know there's this kind of thing that may be refreshing or puzzling or just as a way of questioning what they are doing."[70]

Bringing radio outside the gallery through the movement of the artists brought artmaking and radio experiments at the Banff Centre into the lived experience of the town. It oriented the group to an "acoustic horizon" of the everyday.[71] By moving through town, they were immersed in the features of the place "reorganizing space to ease [their] movements, [and in their movement,] confronting and living within its design."[72] Art performed outdoors must contend with and find its meaning within the lived realities of the audience it encounters. While outdoors, the artist's work is not only to communicate a message but also to engage in a dialogue with what sonic, environmental, and material contexts already exist.

The capacity to engage with the outdoor environment in the performance was realized through walking as its mechanism, with walking being a multi-sensory experience in and of itself. In walking, the landscape's surface is like a "woven material created through the merging of body and senses."[73] As the group walked, their movement diffused the radio transmissions into the built environment, mixing "an assortment of otherwise disparate narratives into a manifestation of unison and harmony."[74] For Urban, the act of moving through Banff facilitated a "world-in-formation…with the movements of others."[75] Walking embedded the work in the context of the site so that the site positioned the artwork first and foremost. The group walked

[70] Augaitis and Urban, 00:03:40-00:04:40.
[71] Brandon LaBelle, *Background noise: perspectives on sound ar*t (New York: Continuum International, 2006), 203.
[72] Brandon LaBelle and Steve Roden, eds., *Site of Sound: Of Architecture and the Ear* (Santa Monica: Smart Art Press), 49.
[73] Ingold and Vergunst, 84.
[74] Ingold and Vergunst, 98.
[75] Ingold and Vergunst, 2. In his chapter, Endensor stated that "[w]alking is suffused with a kaleidoscope of intermingling thoughts, experiences and sensations, so that the character of the walk is continually shifting"; Ingold and Vergunst, 136.

together, formulating the work in relation to each other, to the place, and to those whose paths they crossed.[76] Through movement, the site became the work's locus of intervention and interaction.

In her proposal, Urban stated her interest "in taking sound for a walk."[77] If walking is a "kaleidoscope of intermingling thoughts, experiences and sensations," those sensations effect "feelings of belonging, of country, of border and ultimately of world."[78] The performers looked up, down, and forward, across demarcations of campus, trail, sidewalk, and street, wearing their unusual hats to transmit messages from the Banff Centre to town. In the early twentieth century, many artists felt the need to walk out from their studios or gallery spaces to engage with "real space" in the "performed quotidian" of the city.[79] In particular, the Situationist International (SI) collaged and reconstructed maps of city spaces in the 1960s, pointing to the history of collective, experimental and confrontational aspects in walking-as-art-making.[80] Dissonant and discontinuous noise encountered through the SI's dériving movements activated "urban design [as] a permeable structure which individuals collectively determine and shape…for creative

[76] Ingold and Vergunst, 97-98. This paragraph is inspired by Ingold and Vergunst's discussion of synchronized walking and considering pilgrimages and ancient ceremonies in which walking bonded participants together in time and space. Walking has an ancient connection to belonging to place. In terms of walking and spirituality in Mînî Rhpa Mâkoche, the Stoney Nakoda were a nomadic community moving across the territory seasonally and walking in the mountains for prayer, gathering medicine, or healing purposes. "A person would journey to the sacred waters [of the mountains] at the direction of a medicine man or woman and use them with suitable preparation and prayer." Chief John Snow, 6.

[77] WPG02.227, folder 23, Radio Rethink, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archive, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

[78] Ingold and Vergunst, 136; Astrid Von Rosen and Viveka Kjelmmer, eds., *Scenography and Art History: Performance Design and Visual Culture* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021), xvii; Chief John Snow, 12-13. The Stoney Nakoda enacted a sense of world through movement in the territory: "In our migrations, as in our vision quests, my people continued to observe the animals, plants, rocks, trees, streams, winds, sun, moon, stars, and all things. Our teaching has always been that everything was created for a purpose by the Great Spirit…The mountains are our temples, our sanctuaries, and our resting places. They are a place of hope, a place of vision, a place of refuge, a very special and holy place where the Great Spirit speaks with us."

[79] Jen Budney and Adrian Blackwell, eds., *UNBOXED: Engagements in Social Space* (Ottawa: Bonanza Printing Inc., 2005), 19; Budney and Blackwell, 24. Urban's work can be seen to carry on the legacy of avant-garde art traditions of European Happenings, such as that of Dadaists and Situationist International, also those artists working in New York with Allan Kaprow or in Canada with Mr. Peanut, Anna Banana, Kate Craig or other actions at Western Front in Vancouver, BC, where Urban had been living for some time during the 1980s.

[80] Karen O'Rourke, *Walking and Mapping: Artists as Cartographers* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2013), xviii.

living."[81] Dissonance was a guiding force to confuse their trajectories through public space as they walked at random through an "unpredictable 'confusion' of the senses."[82] Recent writings in queer phenomenology similarly reposition spatial trajectories away from the norm. Sarah Ahmed deconstructs spatial terms such orientate, traverse, and horizon to disorient from normative ways of thinking. In using Ahmed's queer phenomenology through these spatial terms, Urban's aim of walking sound out of the gallery into quotidian spaces can be seen as a "disorientation device" that made familiar movement strange.[83] With their radio hat antennas angled upwards, forwards, sideways, and backward depending on the tilt of their heads, the performers' movement of antennae drew new spatial geographies. From an Indigenous perspective, this act of directing back and forth toward the audience and the environment points to "akinoomaage" from Nishnaabeg land-based ecology. "'Aki' means earth and 'noomage' means to point towards and take direction from."[84] Hence, public space cannot be thought of as innately passive until the artist activates it; Urban and the group contributed to the canon of activity already in place.

"Sensitive to…that Sound Environment You're In"

Reciprocity in public performance art demonstrates the "performative capacity of the artist to become one with the community."[85] The viewer "has many possible positions, made evident by the many words that exist to designate this role: participant, witness, onlooker,

[81] LaBelle and Roden, 51.
[82] Rebecca Duclos, "Reconaissance/Méconaissance: The Work of Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller," in *Articulate Objects: Voice Sculpture and Performance*, edited by Aura Satz and Jon Wood (Bern: Peter Lang AG, International Academic Book Publishers, 2009), 226.
[83] Ahmed, 177.
[84] Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 161. Akinoomage is from Nishnaabeg land-based ecology. I acknowledge the fact that I did not receive this information from the community. Simpson talks about consent and the ways of "coming to know" in her text, thus I question how best to include Nishnaabeg, Cree, Stoney Nakoda, or other Indigenous worldviews within my text. Ultimately, it feels important to mention Indigenous ways of knowing when talking about heritage and art made on Indigenous lands.
[85] Kwan, 95.

audience…spectator, voyeur, critic, observer, bystander."[86] To a certain extent, the meaning of Urban's performance came from integrating herself within the everyday activities of residents as much as it came from the words being broadcast. When asked her thoughts on the performance, a Canada Post worker remarked: "I'm not quite sure. It was a nice break in the morning that's for sure. I would have liked to see them come a little closer so that we could actually hear what the performance was because all we could hear was static…but it was fun anyways!"[87] Urban and other performers expressed the inability to hear in the moment. Urban said, "'cause I didn't hear…in fact, I think I wore my flaps down which didn't help."[88] Hence, perhaps more so than the transmissions, the group achieved engagement through the work's "participatory and process-oriented activity" that brought the work into the realm of society, into the process of daily life, and into the nuances of buildings and their use.[89] Urban's work in such spaces enacted what art historian, Claire Bishop, would later describe as an "open-ended, post-studio, research-based, social process, extending over time and mutable in form."[90] Bishop underscored the generative potential in site-specific artmaking. Artmaking in a social and collective context becomes a project in process. Archival photographs and recorded conversations with the performers explain certain interactions that occurred between the artists and passersby. In considering Bishop's text and Urban's aim to bring the work to the audience in town, these interactions were "collectively-driven" collaborations in creation of the work.[91] The radio

[86] Taylor, *Performance*, 61.
[87] CBC News Segment on *Radio Rethink*, 1992, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.
[88] Augaitis and Urban, 00:44:20-00:44:28.
[89] Augaitis and Lander, 4.
[90] Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (New York: Verso Books, 2012), 194. Bishop suggests using the term project as a way to resituate work in the realm of the artistic process and artist's practice.
[91] Bishop, 195.

transmissions acted as a communication device between the artist speaking from the Banff Centre to the people in town who encountered her disembodied voice.

Yet despite eliciting engagement, Urban's work did not suggest a way to restructure the community division or address specific issues in its sound content. Rendell's query about public art is significant in this regard: "If art is placed outside a gallery, why should it be more accessible, how and to whom?"[92] Indeed, according to Urban's comments, the performance often left the audience more uncertain than captivated.

> Augaitis: "Do you think that somehow it/your project began to bridge those communities?"
> Urban: "It probably alienated them even more."[93]

By imposing her work and radio transmissions on the audience, Urban risked speaking for, or at, communities instead of integrating the performance into the process of community-making already in place.[94] If the initial impetus for the performance was to bridge two communities, it may have been more effective to create content related specifically to the community.[95] Public performances that do so may reconstitute unknown or untold histories. A few months after Urban's performance, Margo Kane created a public performance piece at the Banff Centre for the Walter Phillips Gallery's exhibition *As Public As Race* (1992). Her performance focused primarily on collaboration with local Indigenous communities to honour "those people who lived on the land, and still live on the land."[96] Kane used a process of rebuilding in her art practice, and

[92] Rendell, *Art and Architecture*, 31.
[93] Augaitis and Urban, 00:02:15-00:02:25.
[94] Kwan, 95.
[95] Moving Mountains Initiative, "Mînî hrpa: Overview," Moving Mountains, accessed July 15, 2024, https://movingmountainsinitiative.ca/minihrpa/. This reference refers to a contemporary Stoney Nakoda perspective regarding cultural production and collaboration in the territory. In the current process of developing an Indigenous Cultural Centre in Banff, the *Moving Mountains Initiative*, with language council from Travis Rider and Cory Beaver, put forward a series of Stoney Nakoda words: "Oyade (building of intentional relationships in this place, town), Gitchi (partner), Yabi (going, doing) and Ti (house) to describe the Indigenous Cultural Centre in Banff."
[96] Cardinal-Schubert and Gilbert, 20; WPG02.228, folder 3, As Public As Race, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB. In the program pamphlet for Kane's performance, Kane notes "[o]n my arrival in Banff, I

performed at a forest location near the Banff Centre (figure 22). In another example, Camille Turner, in her persona as Miss Canadiana, acted as a tour guide of Black community sites in the Grange neighbourhood of Toronto in *Miss Canadiana Heritage and Culture Walking Tour* (2011). Turner led participants to the homes, churches, and workplaces of Black historical figures such as James Mink, Peggy Pompadour and William Payton Hubbard to challenge who and what constitutes cultural heritage in "Canadian mythology" (figure 23).[97] Kane and Turner made direct connections with the community history of their performance sites. If Urban's performance had chosen to broadcast stories about Banff's history and residents, it may have enhanced the social and heritage value of the performance by linking the work directly, not just relationally, to the community.

In Urban's performance, the decision for what to say was left to the creative discretion of the participating artists. For example, Sheilagh O'Leary decided to avoid obvious references to food production for her broadcast at Safeway because to her it seemed too contrived.[98] McKittrick says stories prompt or "offer an aesthetic relationality that relies on the dynamics of creating-narrating-listening-hearing-reading-and-sometimes-unhearing."[99] Yet, perhaps leaning into relationality was insufficient, in this case, and the monologues required more reciprocity with the audience and clarity as to the artists' purpose in being disruptively present. Broadcasting from the gallery distinguished the distance and difference between activities at the Banff Centre

began to walk the land, becoming reacquainted with mountains and pathways…I remember and honour the Stoneys and other Aboriginal people who came to heal in mountain hot springs and renew their relationship with 'all our relations.'"

[97] Camille Turner, "Miss Canadiana (2001-2019)," Camille Turner, accessed July 15, 2024, https://www.camilleturner.com/miss-canadiana.

[98] A13-044-015, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.

[99] McKittrick, *Dear Science*, 6-7. McKittrick speaks of storytelling as it relates to Black life. Perhaps storytelling of white settler artists requires a different perspective that can be derived from McKittrick's methods. For white settler artists, where truth, stories and land are seen as a given, and historically taken without consent, it then becomes especially important, for ethical practices, that these artists express clarity in their intentions for further interventions on Indigenous lands.

from those in town, in a way that emphasized the overall division between the two that Urban's performance aimed to scrutinize. However, from another perspective, Urban's performance isolated the production of sound content within the gallery space, with the entirety of audio emissions coming from the radio booth in the gallery. In this way, the piece can be seen to continue the artist's and gallery's authority rather than engage reciprocally with the listeners at each site. Perhaps, as a way to demonstrate sensitivity to the underlying issues raised by choices made by the performers, Augaitis and Urban facilitated a follow-up discussion with residency participants after the performance. During that discussion, a fellow participant commented on the lack of reciprocal exchange:

> "In the beginning before I saw how it worked, I thought the people would be talking back. You know, [the group] would go there with microphones also. Also, that something would come back. And not only taking the radio out which basically is already there—in that it is forced to be on in that location but basically, it's always there anyway, which is a point one can make."[100]

It is possible to hear audience voices in the background of the field recordings; yet, what if Urban had asked those passersby to speak back to the radio hats and thus, to the gallery? Urban hoped to undermine radio's authority and bring the communities into conversation, yet she neglected to record the audience's side of the conversation for the broadcast or the archive. Augaitis and Urban explain in the debrief discussion that the focus was not on enacting conversations through the radios, instead, it was to focus on the agency of the performers in orchestrating interactions with passersby. However, that decision fundamentally relegated the radio broadcasts to a subsidiary role in the work's effect and outcome, neglecting radio as the

[100] A13-044-015, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives. Due to Westerkamp's participation in the residency, the sound of the speaker's voice and subject of her comment, I believe the speaker is Hildegard Westerkamp; however, the speaker is not named during the recording.

readymade tool to enact those conversations. Another participant at the debrief responded to Urban:

> "I think that the broadcasts were addressing the sites, but not the audience. The audience was the unpredictable variable and I'd be interested in if you could address the site and a specific audience. I don't know how you'd do that, but it seemed like the audience was secondary, yet they were crucial to the piece."[101]

Without recording the audience interactions in full, the audience ultimately became an auxiliary observer in the performance outcome though they were meant to be the object of the performance.

Just before *Radio Rethink*, Rebecca Belmore created the performance artwork, *Ayum-ee-awach Oomama-Mowan* (1991) for the exhibition *Between Views and Points of View* at the Walter Phillips Gallery from June to September 1991. In the performance, Belmore similarly intervened in the Banff landscape with sound and walking though, in her performance, she invited Indigenous representatives and artists to create the sound content.[102] Each presenter spoke through a megaphone attached to a large-scale plywood cone fabricated at the Banff Centre (figure 24; figure 25). In video documentation of the performance, Belmore, the participants, technicians, and the audience gathered in the parking lot at Johnson Lake then proceeded to walk together, single file, along the trail toward the performance site carrying the plywood cone in parts to assemble in situ.[103] Once at the site, the audience expanded across the grassy meadow reaching outward from the forested trail towards the mountains (figure 26). Belmore described *Ayum-ee-awach Oomama-Mowan* as a gathering and form of protest. It was

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[101] A13-044-015, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives.
[102] WPG02.221, folder 4, Between Views and Points of View, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archive, Banff Centre, Banff, AB. According to this document, the speakers were: Chief of Wesley First Nation, Chief John Snow, Greg Younging, Florence Belmore, Leonnie Iron, Lyle Morriseau, Sheila Sanderson, Toby (Elizabeth) Burning, Bill Cohen, Sophie Merasty, Mark Belmont, Bradlee Larocque, Bernard Ominayak and Rebecca Belmore. This document also identifies that Belmore recorded the performance over three cassette tapes.
[103] WPG03.221.9, tape 1, Between Views and Points of View, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archive, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

an "attempt to redefine protest as a positive affirmation of one's position, to shift the meaning of the word into a realm of empowerment and celebration."[104] McKittrick describes sound interventions as relational to resistance: "waveforms are reparative rebellious inventions" troubling the note in sonic norms.[105] As explained in a Banff Centre press release from July 19, 1991, Belmore's work addressed "issues of voice and ask[s] 'who speaks for who in our society?'"[106] The work amplified the personal sentiments of several Indigenous voices in response.

Both Urban and Belmore emphasized the importance of listening as much as speaking. In her closing remarks, Belmore said: "speaking and listening are equal things. You must know how to listen as well as speak."[107] In the debrief of Urban's performance, Jocelyn Robert critiqued the work for not being clearly defined in its terms of engagement with the audience and what it opposed exactly in the public soundscape. Urban argued, "it was more about just being sensitive to…that sound environment you're in."[108]

> Augaitis: "So it seems like that was the beauty of the piece that it does make two very different worlds come together, and I think, a lot of artists, and certainly, the way I think a lot of art is about trying to engage those issues with the broader public, and so, your work becomes a perfect vehicle to do that, through the performers, and how they're capable of dealing with it and how creative they are in working through that on an individual basis with the audience."[109]

Though she did not incorporate community voices in the radio content, Urban was careful not to speak *for* the community. Her work activated engagement relationally, physically, and sonically,

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[104] WPG02.221, folder 4, Between Views and Points of View, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archive, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.
[105] McKittrick, *Dear Science*, 164-166.
[106] WPG02.221, folder 4, Between Views and Points of View, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archive, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.
[107] WPG02.221, folder 4, Between Views and Points of View, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archive, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.
[108] Augaitis and Urban, 00:43:43-00:43:48.
[109] Augaitis and Urban, 00:09:41-00:10:17.

with the radio hats as the sites of both speaking and listening. In her recollections for a future radio artwork, Urban explained her interest in the indeterminate factors: "I am intrigued by radio, the power of the speaker, the unknown or mysterious listener, and the site of sound."[110] The radio broadcast activated a space of listening in the vicinity that connected the listener to the performers, their actions in the space, and the mix of soundscapes at the site.

"So-Called Public Space"

> Augaitis: "We've been talking about responsibility to the audience and what do you think you or your performers' responsibility is to an audience if they don't want this in their so-called public space?"[111]

For Urban, sound was on your head, in your head, all around you, surrounding you in its environment. She was aware of the issues in disrupting daily life and so chose a short duration for the performance. As she said, "If it had been longer, it might have irritated more people."[112] Urban's work wound a web of "sociable free space" or a "space of objective experience" in Banff's otherwise rigid commercial apparatus.[113] This built environment had social and political implications in its role in public spatial production to the extent that buildings can be thought to impose, rather than support, the functioning of daily life.[114] "[B]uildings can be understood in terms of power or authority—as efforts to assume, extend, resist, or accommodate it."[115] Artists who create in public spaces, like Urban, can be thought of as "spatial agents" intervening in

[110] A13-044-010, box 25, Performance Photos, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.
[111] Augaitis and Urban, 00:08:39-00:08:50.
[112] Augaitis and Urban, 00:30:50-00:30:55.
[113] Warren and Mosley, 85; Warren and Mosley, 85.
[114] LaBelle and Roden, 54. "Architectural conventions come to impose upon the body a very strict vocabulary of movements, a kind of language of possible interaction and organization."
[115] Hayden, 30.

architecture's hegemonic controls.[116] Urban's performance revealed the limits of spatial agency. Spaces exterior to, or between, buildings seemed to offer more spaces of agency throughout the performance, as opposed to interior building spaces that were under the auspices of an individual or institution.

Urban's performance met with resistance in certain commercial locations as it interrupted the building's operations, particularly at the Safeway supermarket.

> Augaitis: "It points out some interesting notions about what public space actually is, and we always talk about it, but does it really exist?"[117]

In the discussion, Augaitis calls these commercial spaces "some kind of public space" though ultimately, as privately owned and operated businesses, they were not entirely public. Perhaps, Augaitis chose those words because the Safeway was a place of encounters with the public, what could potentially be more fittingly described as a "space of commoning."[118] When I visited the former Safeway site in 2023 (now an IGA), I felt wary of making explicit observations or taking photographs because of Urban's experience. I only documented food displays, the view of Cascade Mountain through the upper windows and the parking lot, to match and compare with photographs in the archives. On this same site years before, Urban and the performers were accompanied by a CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) Television crew. In the VHS of the performance, the camera captured rows of cans and cartons, candy bars, fruits and

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[116] Nishat Awan, Tatjana Schneider and Jeremy Till, *Spatial agency: other ways of doing architecture* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 38. Public space can be thought of as the agential domain of citizens, users and consumers in a social encounter. My understanding of the spatial theory of public space stems in part from Griselda Pollock's feminist analysis of public/private space, whereby the social system delineated gendered divisions of an "intimate or private inside and a public or social outside." Griselda Pollock, "The politics of theory: generations and geographies in feminist theory and the histories of art histories," in *Generations and Geographies in the Visual Arts: Feminist Readings*," ed. Griselda Pollock (London: Routledge, 1996), 7.

[117] Augaitis and Urban, 00:10:53-00:11:04.

[118] Annette Baldauf, Stefan Gruber, Moira Hille, Annette Krauss, Vladimir Miller, Mara Verlič, Hong-Kai Wang and Julia Wieger, eds., *Spaces of Commoning: Artistic Research and the Utopia of the Everyday* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2016), 21. "Spaces of commoning, then, are a set of spatial relations produced by practices that arise from coming together."

vegetables, and the performers passing between the aisles picking up items to bring to the till (figure 27).[119] CBC's sound personnel sidled between performers (figure 28). They pointed a silver gooseneck microphone at the radio hat antennas and toward the faces of nearby listeners for their reactions until, eventually, the Safeway manager intervened.

> Augaitis: "Especially in the case of the supermarket where we do think of those places still as some kind of public space, but it becomes clear, immediately, that there's this whole superstructure in place above it and if anything happens to somehow get in the way of somebody's shopping and spending money—"
> Urban: "Or jeopardize somebody's job—"
> Augaitis: "—then it really becomes a threat. It's interesting how that's so ingrained in people."
> Urban: "I didn't realize that that would happen in that space and that they would be so protective and upset about it."[120]

In considering spatial theory, the group's "social delinquency" could be seen as a threat to Safeway's rules and "spatial logic."[121] The presence of photographers, videographers, performers and the radio transmission tested the grocery store's code of conduct. The outcome of Urban's work points to the logistics required to negotiate the regulative norms of these spaces which Urban acknowledged was "a big responsibility for the performers."[122] Yet, on the other hand, Urban's performance (and similar artistic interventions in such spaces), could be seen to frame delinquency in these circumstances as a playful and creative act. In these circumstances, humour became the useful catalyst in the group's investigation.[123] A participant in the debrief remarked that humour was what created the link between the audience and the performers on site for the broadcast.[124]

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[119] A13-044-015, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.
[120] Augaitis and Urban, 00:11:19-00:12:00.
[121] de Certeau, 130. "[T]his challenging mobility that does not respect places, is alternately playful and threatening, and extends from the microbe-like forms of everyday narration to the carnivalesque celebrations of earlier days"; Fran Tonkiss, *Space, the City and Social Theory* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), 133.
[122] Augaitis and Urban, 00:10:20-00:10:23.
[123] Augaitis and Urban, 00:06:24-00:06:31.
[124] A13-044-015, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.

> Augaitis: "You speak about humour on the one hand and on the other hand you use words like intervention and a burr…How do you work with those two elements together? Is that conscious on your part to try and maybe to diffuse the intervention with humour, or is the humorous element a way for people to begin to engage?" Urban: "Well I think it's both of those. So that they start, they start to talk, and you know, converse about it but that they also—I know that there's always that element there that kind of edge that could turn it the other direction. I mean, it happened in each, well not each situation but, you know, that there was somebody that was kind of not ready to accept, you know, what was happening there, or was really annoyed by it…I wasn't doing it specifically to cause that irritation or that anxiety there. I didn't want that, but I was, you know, I was aware that it could happen."[125]

Altogether, Urban's work stirred the spatial authority governing the actions and use of space at the performance locations by walking through and remixing the soundscape through live transmissions put forth by the portable radios and easing or deterring provocations with humour.

Some sound theorists argue that sound amplifies the artist's self in the environment and invokes the artist's personality, perspective, and presence.[126] Though the overarching authority of certain locations directly affected the performers on-site, the performer, separate in the Gallery's radio station creating the transmission, could be thought to have maintained subjective agency in the disembodied transmission of sound. It was important for Urban that the performers controlled the content of their monologues, and that the content be unrehearsed and revealed only as the performance was happening. Decisions for what to broadcast changed as the performance went on within the process of the work. Some of the artists read found texts, others wrote texts. Urban noted several possibilities for what the sound content could be:

> "To address issues related to the site. Talk about the act of performing as a hat wearer and related experiences to that activity. To address this activity at the broadcast voice and dislocation of body and words – the authority or power of the voice of the speaker. Personal interpretation of activity etc. etc. Could talk directly to situation. Notion of time."[127]

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[125] Augaitis and Urban, 00:07:06-00:08:35.
[126] Brandon LaBelle, *Background noise: perspectives on sound art* (New York: Continuum International, 2006), 207.
[127] A13-044-010, box 25, Rethinking Radio - Banff Centre, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.

At the liquor store, Neil MacInnis recited an excerpt from a Dylan Thomas story about a couple who were drunk in the bath. Jocelyn Robert recited geometric sequences for the mini golf broadcast, and Tim Westbury called for "opening your ears and listening" during the broadcast at the Rundle Restaurant.[128] Allison Cameron played the sound of sheep when the group was at the post office, which Urban said felt fitting "in terms of that location and the lineups, and the people working there in kind-of a production atmosphere."[129] Similarly fitting, Sheilagh O'Leary told a story about a midwife while the group walked around Safeway, which Urban said related "it to the environment—being in this grocery store in this area that you know is nurturing—I mean it's got all this substance that we need; the necessities of life."[130] In contrast, Rita McKeough's discussion of sweat, piss, and pubic hair startled the audience at the Upper Canada Hot Springs so much so that one woman, after complaining to the performers and pool staff, eventually left. Urban reflected with Augaitis on the experience of hearing the unplanned broadcast for the first time publicly with the audience:

> Urban: "All the sudden you're aware of the language and how the language would affect people around us. Titties was used in Sheilagh's thing and just being in a public situation and running into people that, you know, you normally would not say things like that, or the piss and pubic hair of Rita's—I mean, those are kind-of shocking terms in terms of public areas, and not something one frequently hears. So that was interesting. So there was always that element of, you know, what *is* going to happen, which I really think was important that we didn't discuss that beforehand or have anything scripted."[131]

Urban's performance took radio into public space in a way that challenged the expectations of radio and Banff's sound environment. In the *Selected Survey of Radio Art in Canada 1967-1992*, Dan Lander discusses the desire of radio artists "to reinvent the medium

[128] Augaitis and Urban, 00:23:49-00:23:51.
[129] Augaitis and Urban, 00:25:14-00:25:22.
[130] Augaitis and Urban, 00:25:58-00:26:33.
[131] Augaitis and Urban, 00:29:36-00:30:22.

through deconstruction and/or reconstruction…and a refusal to produce works that easily fit into the categories of sanctioned radio broadcast."[132] At times, the sound in Urban's performance distorted itself, becoming eventually inaudible as one broadcast layered atop the next. It was not to cause confusion intentionally, but to make people aware of their environment. Urban hoped the intervention would "be refreshing or puzzling [for the audience], or just as a way of questioning what they are doing."[133] She hoped the sounds and performers' presence would cause people to pause and notice a difference in their surroundings. Whether that elicited a positive or negative response from them or not, Urban hoped the performance would stimulate creative interactions or a questioning, rethinking, and reinhabiting of daily spaces and activities.

> Urban: "There is a lack of creativity quite often in people's lives and I think by just throwing something at them and in a way like this that maybe that'll help them…even question what it is that we're doing or…having a different relationship to that environment that they're in. So that they I mean so they communicate with other people about what they saw or what they did so it extends itself."[134]

In Urban's artist proposal for *Radio Rethink,* she said the performance would aim to "prompt an examination of the assumed authority of radio and the dependent or often subordinate role of the listener."[135] Urban's work challenged the relationship between sound and listener under radio's authority by remixing the typical sound environment. A "predominant feature of radio art is a resistance against state regulation of the airwaves and the many subtle and overt levels of control that have resulted."[136] The discourse around nation-building and radio

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[132] Dan Lander, ed. *Selected Survey of Radio Art in Canada 1967-1992.* (Banff: Walter Phillips Gallery, 1992), 1. This publication is in folder 35 of the Radio Rethink series at the Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff, AB.
[133] Augaitis and Urban, 00:04:27-00:04:33.
[134] Augaitis and Urban, 00:05:17-00:05:57.
[135] WPG02.227, folder 23, Radio Rethink, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.
[136] Augaitis and Lander, 1; WPG02.227, folder 17, Radio Rethink, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB. Radio has a ubiquitous quality that signals a colonial and authoritative history. Yet within that, it found its space in anarchy and reclamation in Canadian history. When radio was brought to the North, Inuit took over control of its signal seeing its potential use in local communications and resisting Canadian authority to regulate the airwaves.

is especially pertinent in Urban's work due to Banff's role in shaping aspects of Canadian identity through its focus on tourism, the Canadian railway system, and national parks. Also, the Banff Centre or the Banff School as it was initially called, was "an engine of nation building and tourism development… mesh[ing] an array of interests and agendas ranging from the artistic to the political, economic, and ideological."[137] Glenn Gould's radio documentary *The Idea of North* (1967) encapsulated the "centrality of technology as both the object of the national imaginary [in Canada], as well as the nation's hallowed medium of transfer."[138] Urban's work has certain similarities to Gould's documentary, though she does not mention nation-building or Gould specifically in the interview with Augaitis or elsewhere in her records. Both artists aimed to bridge the community with radio through versions of sound cacophony. The use of radio in Canadian performance art has many of the markers of Gould's work which had entered Canada's radio consciousness by the time of Urban's performance.

Canada's national radio station, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), aired Gould's program to bridge Canadian communities through a sonic narrative for radio; Urban's soundscape mimicked Gould's sonic style yet upended it to confront radio's authority. Perhaps more important to the intent to dismantle radio's authority, is to foreground artworks grounded in Indigenous methodologies of confrontation such as Cheryl L'Hirondelle's work, *awa-ka-amaciwet piwapisko waciya/climbing the iron mountain* (2004). L'Hirondelle used radio to

[137] Pearlann Reichwein and Karen Wall. *Uplift: Visual Culture at the Banff School of Fine Arts.* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2020), 6; Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*, 50. The question is put forward by Diana Taylor, who analyses performance history, definition and purpose in the Americas and influence of colonialism—with the questions: "How does performance participate in acts of transfer, transmitting memories and social identity? How does the scenario of discovery continue to haunt the Americas, trapping even those who attempt to dismantle it?"
[138] May Chew, "Sounding Nation – Sons et nation," *Journal of Canadian Art History* 37, no. 1 (2016): 51. "[N]ation is congealed through technological intervention, how bodies are ushered into its fabric." Chew, 50; Lander, *Selected Survey of Radio Art in Canada 1967-1992*, 1. Dan Lander links Gould's documentary to Radio Rethink through the catalogue's appendix, Selected Survey of Radio Art in Canada 1967-1992. Lander considers Gould's work the first example of radio art in Canada and the first artist to face the authoritative voice of radio by positing alternative sound structures besides the common voice-over techniques custom to "industrialized radio production techniques."

confront the socioeconomic and political conditions of Canada's acoustic environment. In the work, L'Hirondelle ascended and descended a building's stairwell while intermittently broadcasting stories and songs to radio (figure 29-31). In a panel discussion for 7a*11d International Festival of Performance Art in Toronto, L'Hirondelle spoke of the performance within socio-political constructs of capitalism and *Indian anarchy*, saying, "I've been trying to work within a Cree worldview, Nêhiyawêwin…and it's very philosophical, very conceptual, and it's very rooted in the laws of nature and not man-made laws."[139] To L'Hirondelle, "buildings are abstract constructs on the landscape."[140] Air is not a non-space but a controlled space in our built environment that affects nonhuman as well as human. Similarly conveyed in the article, "Making Kin with the Machines," "Blackfoot philosopher Leroy Little Bear observe[s], 'the human brain is a station on the radio dial; parked in one spot, it is deaf to all the other stations […] the animals, rocks, trees, simultaneously broadcasting across the whole spectrum of sentience.'"[141] Through Indigenous worldviews, radio can be thought to abstract the air and reclaim its authority. As a "confederation of human and nonhuman elements," the context of the artwork becomes paramount, especially in a site like Banff where the environment imposes its presence so ubiquitously.[142] L'Hirondelle's performance places Urban's work within radio's authority,

[139] 7A*11d International Performance Festival, "2004 5th 7a*11d Festival Éminence Grise," *Cheryl L'Hirondelle*, accessed July 15, 2024, https://7a-11d.ca/festival_artist/lhirondelle-cheryl/. In video documentation of 7a*11d's "Infiltration Panel" discussion with artists Mideo M. Cruz, Glenda León, Esther Ferrer and Cheryl L'Hirondelle, moderated by Joanna Householder in 2004, L'Hirondelle states: "I've been trying to work within a Cree worldview…buildings are really abstract constructs on the landscape. They're foreign, and so it's sort of, you know, just by nature because they're there; they're part of that whole manmade order so if you're moving beyond that then you should be able to move through those, and it's a symbolic reclamation."
[140] 7A*11d International Performance Festival, "2004 5th 7a*11d Festival Éminence Grise." For L'Hirondelle, this work was for the birds, as she says: "it is still their domain!"
[141] Jason Edward Lewis, Noelani Arista, Archer Pechawis and Suzanne Kite, "Making Kin with the Machines," Journal of Design and Science, July 16, 2018, https://jods.mitpress.mit.edu/pub/lewis-arista-pechawis-kite/release/1.
[142] Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: a political ecology of things* (Durham: Duke University Press), 21.

and in consideration of relationality to the environment bound by Indigenous worldviews in a land-based ecology.

If the built environment can be seen as a series of diverging and converging thresholds one orients toward or away from, Urban's group of artists, walking with unusual headsets emitting a layer of sounds, "'point[ed] toward different worlds."[143] Queer phenomenology is augmented by Rachel Hann's sense of worlding in performance studies, which repositions the site's myriad of possibilities and orientations, or its scenographics, through "place-orientating techniques...that culturally position bodies." Urban scenography engenders new social ecologies that intervene, reposition, "unsettle and expose the ideologies and normativities at play" and the "felt relational interdependencies of material circumstances within and beyond."[144] In the capacity of artmaking and art history, worlding or world-making is a situated action, a process unraveling and entangling the "orderings of the world" through interventions of multiple perspectives.[145] These varied and interconnected formations that assemble nonhuman and human forces in threshold space may be comprehended through Indigenous worldviews, vital materialism, urban scenography, and worlding's decolonial methods so that altogether these theories infiltrate an understanding of the so-called *space* of Urban's performance with the political, social and racial implications of Banff's environment. In doing so, metaphors like space, location, scenographics, position and so forth, are not simply a "'floating world of ideas'" but involved in the social implications of the site.[146] As Doreen Massey also conceptualized,

[143] Ahmed, 176. Queer phenomenology offers language to disorient from normative ways of thinking to help comprehend the effect of public interventions.
[144] Von Rosen and Kjelmmer, 4.
[145] Brigit Hopfener, Heather Igloliorte, Ruth Phillips, Carmen Robertson and Ming Tiampo, "World-Making: Indigenous Art and Worlding the Global," in *Àbadakone*, eds. Rachelle Dickenson, Greg A. Hill and Christine Lalonde (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2020), 115-116.
[146] McKittrick, *Dear Science*, 10. In this sentence, McKittrick references Neil Smith and Cindi Katz, "Grounding Metaphor: Towards a Spatialized Politics," in *Place and the Politics of Identity*, eds. Michael Keith and Steve Pile (New York: Routledge, 1993), 80.

place is bound by a set of social relations articulating spatial form.[147] Urban's performance provoked questions for what bound the place of the performance, how and with whom. The dynamic actions occurring in the context of the performance reimagined a way of comprehending public space in Banff. The qualities of public space that surround the nodes of action, bring forward people, objects, buildings and sounds, though as "only a semblance, a seeming, a projection effect of interest in a thing we are trying to stabilize."[148] Ultimately, structures and systems are not static. They are porous and shifting, formed in social networks in relation to the public's patterns of movement.[149] Thus the supposed permanence of infrastructure (involving its socioeconomics, history and materiality) is in fact in parts malleable to what users make of it.

"A Filler and Atmosphere"

What constitutes the barrier between us, between each other and buildings and the materiality of sound's atmosphere with which Urban enveloped the audience? The built environment can be thought to encapsulate a myriad of participatory particles in a "web of agentic capacities."[150] Architectural theorist, Michelle Addington, wrote that "the boundary of

[147] Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 120-121. Rendell discussed Massey's theory of place as being "unfixed, contested and multiple.' Rendell, *Art and Architecture*, 19.
[148] Lauren Berlant, "The commons: Infrastructures for troubling times," in *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 34, no. 3 (2016): 394.
[149] Berlant, 394. This sentence intertwines Berlant, Massey and Simpson's spatial theories. Structures are "really a convergence of force and value in patterns of movement that's only solid when seen from a distance." Hence, seemingly intractable structures can be destabilized. They are transitional, provisional, in constant potential movement in relation to use. Berlant's concept of moving structures returns me to Simpson's text and Nishnaabeg land-based ecology wherein "[a]nswers to how to rebuild and how to resurge are therefore derived from a web of consensual relationships that is infused with movement (kinetic) through lived experience and embodiment." Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 162.
[150] Bennett, 38.

interest is not the wall as a discontinuity, but the moving layer that emerges between the wall and the adjacent environment."[151] These qualities of threshold space further nuance contemplations of the air, public space, atmosphere, and sounds the group walked through in Banff. Tim Westbury, wrote that the work was primarily a sensorial engagement with the environment, that "the relationship between the aural and visual senses has not likely ever been a static one…new methods of interaction seems to be necessary for continued communication in mediated environments."[152] The site of significance precipitated in the air, in the space between and around people and buildings.

> Augaitis: "What role does audio play in your work generally sometimes you use it, sometimes you don't… what does it bring to work do you think?"
> Urban: "The sound becomes a filler and atmosphere, creates an atmosphere for the piece."[153]

Urban drew several sketches of the performer in *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head*. I encountered the sketches in files and slide preservers at the Western Archive. In one sketch, Urban traced a thin, perambulating line above a figure's face, and within that line, having held the pen for a longer duration against the paper surface, formed black dots in varying sizes with the pen tip (figure 32). The larger the mark of ink, the greater the aura from the reaction of ink and paper—a fuzzed and buzzing reverberation that lifted the dots above the page as though they might at once float and hover around my head also. Was she representing a hat or a sound cloud? The figure's head was fully swathed in this form. This drawing invoked a visualization of the radio hat's soundscape. In the image, I imagined the sound reduced to its molecular parts—a whole sound object dissolved and surrounding the performers. The penpoints of information in this sketch emitted outward from the wearable sculpture as particles of sound.

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[151] Sean Lally and Jessica Young, eds., *Softspace* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 41.
[152] Augaitis and Lander, 199.
[153] Augaitis and Urban, 00:15:38-00:15:46.

Of the locations the group walked to, the documentation of the final day's recording at the hot springs evoked the wonder and discord that moving the radio to this multisensory site invited. The Banff Centre made a field recording of the hot springs broadcast. The benefit of the field recording is the opportunity to hear the sound environment of the broadcast and the reaction of the performers, yet even more so, for the way the sound scripted a playful visuality.[154] At the start of the tape, lapping water, the ambient hum of the pool filter and echoing voices were audible. Urban can be heard laughing at the intonation and vocal theatricality of McKeough's broadcast. As the transmission started, the recording of sheep sounds from day two surfaced from below the sound layers as though a sheep were standing at the pool's edge peering toward the performers through the rising steam (figure 33). Mystifying the scene even more, a chorus of voices became louder as the other monologues faded. The broadcast began to break apart, becoming foggier. It sank beneath murky layers, as though the performers in their sound hats suddenly slipped down below the surface steam. Likely incited by my site-visits and seeing the archival documentation amidst the views of the Paul D. Fleck reading room, I imagined the recorded sound evaporating into droplets and rising into the atmosphere of the mountain range. Most of the documentation I saw of this site was as photocopies or black-and-white negatives (figure 34-37).[155] Staging cues in its archival forms, the performance continued to effect evocative images. The dissipation of colour in the black-and-white hues, and light's over- or under-exposure depending on the document, dissolved the images into reducible, soluble forms, that augmented my visualization.

[154] A13-044-015, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.
[155] Clausen, "Performing Histories," 37. Photography is integral to conveying the atmosphere and experience of the performance. Art historian, Barbara Clausen, explains the opposing desires for invisibility and discovery in new fields of art in the 1970s, including performance art. Black-and-white photography encapsulated (or made tangible) that visual tension "between the immediate presence of the performers in the highly contrasted depth of the image, and their gradual disappearance in the hazy light of that summer day."

The sound of Urban's transmissions networked vibrations and particles in the air with "the air waves as public connector."[156] In conceptualizing a sonic wilderness, this interaction of body, sound, text and public space can be surveyed as a "multiple body problem: resonance, source, vibration, relation."[157] The jumble of artist voices transmitted from the radio hats polluted the air with new particles, not floating passively but actively, as intervening agents. "The human body has been converted into a project to be realized…within a system of representations mediated by new digital technologies."[158] The radio frequencies became extensions of the artists, micro aspects of their voices drifting, transformed in its element toward the audience. Each monologue replayed, repeated, recycled day-to-day, and overlapped to reimagine the previous day's sound. Urban described enveloping an audience in sound for a previous work: "the sound moved around them so that they became the sculptural element in the installation."[159] For Urban, manipulating the sound environment was sculptural.[160] The voices transmitted through the air became sound in dynamic, collective action in the materiality of sound in the air. Spatial materiality may be thought of architecturally as *softspace*, as having "endless qualities, behaviours, and effects, whether intentional or not—air, gas, fire, sound, odors, magnetic forces, electricity and electronics to name a few—which are…distinctly material in nature."[161] Similarly, the way the body functions, with its emotional and physical output, in

[156] Linda O Keefe and Isabel Nogueira, eds., *The Body in Sound, Music and Performance: Studies in Audio and Sonic Arts* (New York: Routledge, 2023), 128. "[L]ooking into audio as material. a bodily material self as sonic-corporeality as in fluid zoning between human resonance and the world we inhabit…audio permaculture"; A13-044-010, box 25, Performance Photos, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.
[157] O Keefe and Nogueira, 128. This concept is from Antye Greie-Ripatti's chapter, "Our Body in #sonicwilderness & #soundasgrowing."
[158] Taylor, *Performance*, 102.
[159] Augaitis and Urban, 14:26-14:44.
[160] Augaitis and Lander, 5.
[161] Lally and Young, viii.

convergence with the history of Banff, the day's weather, the soundscape, the lighting and smells, these factors all impress upon the environment of the performance.

The acoustician, Hildegard Westerkamp, who also participated in *Radio Rethink*, explored acoustic ecologies in what soundscape ecology describes as the "spatial-temporal patterns" of landscape: the spatial-characteristics of sounds as they form a fundamental aspect of the environment.[162] The capacity for acoustic ecologies to provoke imagination, contemplation, and critique in the story of Banff's particular environment is significant to understanding Banff's artistic output. Westerkamp says of radio: "instead of merely broadcasting at us, we listen through it."[163] She explored the relationality of sound through sound walks which curated "a listening exercise that help[ed] [to] become aware of [the] immediate acoustic environment…listening for the unique 'voice' of a city."[164] Her aesthetic aim was to create radio that listened, as opposed to radio that imposed sound upon the listener. A listening radio implied that radio created space for the listener to experience the raw sound environment outside the radio station. For one of her more famous works, *Kits Beach Soundwalk* (1989), Westerkamp brought the listening radio to the edge of Vancouver to record effects of minor overlooked details, in this case, "the tiny acoustic realm of barnacles, the world of high frequencies, inner space and dreams."[165] She allowed the nonhuman environment to speak to radio and its audience

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[162] Bryan C. Pijanowski, Luis J. Villanueva-Rivera, Sarah L. Dumyahn, Almo Farina, Bernie L. Krause, Brian M. Napoletano, Stuart H. Gage, Nadia Pieretti, "Soundscape Ecology: The Science of Sound in the Landscape," *BioScience*, vol. 61, no. 3 (March 2011): 203.
[163] Augaitis and Lander, 89.
[164] Hildegard Westerkamp, "A Sound Walk is…" Hildegard Westerkamp: Inside the Soundscape, accessed July 15, 2024, https://www.hildegardwesterkamp.ca/sound/installations/Nada/soundwalk/. Alongside this definition, Westerkamp offers tips for soundwalking such as the pace of movement, eyes closed, an attention to quietness and loudness and types of sounds: sounds of buildings, commerce, footsteps and music. A sound walk is about attentiveness to the acoustic environment and an activation of participation to piece apart the audio of our environment, akin to sounds of each instrument that altogether create the symphony.
[165] Hildegard Westerkamp, "Türen der Wahrnehmung (Doors of Perception)," Sound Installations and Composed Environments, accessed July 15, 2024, https://www.hildegardwesterkamp.ca/sound/installations/turen/. Her artworks highlight the significance of broadcasting sound, explicitly radio, saying: "Radio can open many doors to new (and old) sound worlds…into the world of acoustic imagination"; see also, WPG02.227, folder 24, Radio

by overturning radio's authority and its usual intent; she facilitated an ecological consciousness that opposed a radio culture overloading the listener in repetitive broadcasts.

Westerkamp's listening radio intended to instill memories that could be recalled the next time the listener was in a place with similar sounds. This technique of "schizophonic perspective" relates to Janet Cardiff's seminal sound walk, *Forest Walk* (1991), created in Banff just one year prior to *Radio Rethink* during a photography residency at the Banff Centre (figure 38).[166] Cardiff performed her site-based recordings using a DAT recorder, mP3 files, portable player, and headphones.[167] She entangled present and past soundscapes to enmesh her reflections on a past walk with the listener's current circumstances thus forming a presence of possibilities or a "metaphysics of virtuality."[168] Cardiff's recording became a temporal exploration and a record, an artwork and a memory, an impulsive series of reflections and recollections repeatedly layered atop one another, while transmitted in the container of a sound file through headphones. In her work, deep listening spurred collaboration between the listener and environment through response to "salient acoustical characteristics."[169] Working within a similar timeframe as Urban,

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Rethink, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archive, Banff Centre, Banff, AB. In Westerkamp's folder there is a typed document describing the performance with handwritten notes by Westerkamp to accompany the works overall description and the audio file that initially accompanied the document.

[166] WPG02.227, folder 24, Radio Rethink, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archive, Banff Centre, Banff, AB. In Westerkamp's proposal for *Radio Rethink*, she defines schizophonic perspective: "the radio airwaves, by broadcasting the sounds of the environment within which the broadcast occurs, would ideally create a state of resonance within listeners where the sounds get stored within listeners' memory and are recalled as soon as they are encountered in the actual environment."

[167] Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, "A Brief History of Visual Arts," accessed July 15, 2024, https://www.banffcentre.ca/brief-history-visual-arts. Cardiff stumbled upon her signature audio technique by accidentally rewinding and listening to her voice recordings made in a previous site on a 4-track DAT recorder while walking the forest trails below the Banff Centre. Through the DAT recorder and wearable technology, Cardiff could chronicle her surroundings for later listening. This work is considered her "innovative piece…the first of what became an internationally regarded series of audio walks."

[168] O Keefe and Nogueira, 228. In her chapter, Sophie Knezic describes Cardiff's sensory perspective as "sonic presence and virtual embodiment."

[169] Pauline Oliveros, *Sounding the Margins: Collected Writings 1992-2009* (Kingston: Deep Listening Publications, 2010), 26-27, 165.

Cardiff said the "walks were the result of the new access to portable technology."[170] While Urban's performance drew upon the sonic alienation of wearable technology, particularly the Walkman, in Cardiff's case the pre-recorded audio acted as a constant in juxtaposition to the "real" sonic variability of the listener's external environment. The listener controlled Cardiff's soundscape in the acts of play and replay on the handheld device. In contrast, Urban pushed back against disconnected realities spurred on by these devices by projecting sound outwards from the radio hats. Rather than using technology to enclose sound, the hats projected it; rather than speaking back, the hats spoke to the audience to initiate listening in the environment.

> Urban: "The idea of the Walkman being this sound enclosure, this environment that one closes themselves off from that external sound environment…makes you totally antisocial and disconnects [you] from the world and I think with this piece reverses that for me."[171]

Urban took portable technology for a walk to enact embodiment with the environment through sound, whereas Cardiff mixed soundscapes for an individual listening through headphones. Urban migrated sound outwards at the public, integrating soundscapes within the environment, all at once, as live, intervening noise.

> Urban: "It can also be looked on as a contaminant in the environment, but I mean there's so much sound out there already."[172]

The built environment, though seemingly quiet, is constantly sounding at us. "Modern ventilation, lighting, elevators and heating systems create strong internal sounds; and fans and exhaust systems disgorge staggering amounts of noise."[173] Traditionally, noise was thought to be

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[170] Tobias Fischer and Lara Cory, "Janet Cardiff Talks Sound 'Our brains use our senses like a mixing board,'" "Fifteen" Questions, accessed July 15, 2024, https://15questions.net/interview/janet-cardiff-talks-sound/page-1/.

[171] Augaitis and Urban, 16:49-17:54; A13-044-010, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives. In the first meeting notes, Urban specifically mentions that the site of radio was intentionally *on* the body not internal: "by the site of radio/on the head and broadcasting from the body it reverses the Walkman with its internalized sound and projects sound out."

[172] Augaitis and Urban, 00:17:58-00:18:07.

[173] R. Murray Schafer, *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World* (Rochester: Destiny Books, 1993), 237.

in opposition to nature's supposed pure sound environment. According to R. Murray Schafer, an imbalance of sound in the environment led to a confused, erratic, lawless, recalcitrant and eccentric sonic landscape that "ultimately consume[ed] itself in cacophony."[174] Listening in a noisy environment became distracted and isolated, persistent and exclusive, experiential more than authorial, a counterpoint to social order.[175] Yet, on the other hand, the "repetition of a message by unchanneling auditory sensations frees the listener's imagination."[176] It prompts an improvisatory technique "of unloosing the body/mind from the ongoingness of our everyday habits of perception."[177] Consequently, noise could be seen to carry new information in its interference that more accurately reflects the sonic complexities of everyday experiences. Urban created a multilayered, mashed-up sound environment, remixing sound spaces in daily life that confronted an overarching and authoritative sound environment.[178]

> Augaitis: "When you break down that authoritative voice and have either a lot of conversations going on at the same time or a lot of layers, I think that that's an interesting mechanism."

Urban's work used the tactic of disembodied voices to mimic a social atmosphere or to integrate into the atmosphere already in place.[179] In doing so, Urban integrated her art within the sonic

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[174] Schafer, 237-239. Schafer lists the two sides of this balance: sound/not sound, technological sounds/human sounds, artificial sounds/ natural sounds/continuous sounds/discrete sounds, low-frequency sounds/mid- or high-frequency sounds.
[175] Salomé Voegelin, *Listening to noise and silence: towards a philosophy of sound art* (New York: Continuum, 2010), 43-48.
[176] Jacques Attali, *Noise: the political economy of music* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 33.
[177] Miranda Tufnell and Chris Crickmay, *Body Space Image: Notes towards improvisation and performance* (London: Dance Books, 1993), 1. The conjecture of listening, movement and improvisation are enlightened further throughout the chapter. In particular, a poem by Eva Karczag: "Listening/To myself, and/To my surroundings,/To the song that rises from this moment/in which I am contained…Available to constant flow and change,/I can balance/at the edge of the unknown." Tufnell and Crickmay, 48.
[178] McKittrick, *Dear Science*, 169. Remix and mash-up refer to Black methodologies that interrupt or wander from the limits of human geography, placemaking (as regards ownership), and the narrative on the page. "[B]lack cultural production is intellectual work that consists of layering, interrupting, fusing, and grooving to narratives that might otherwise be disconnected." Mashing up and remixing the normative soundscape could be seen as an anticolonial method.
[179] The effects of locative media, Artificial Intelligence and virtual reality mirror aspects of Urban's disembodied sound transmissions. Rhetoric of these technologies could develop analysis of past radio artworks further.

space of the community, undermining inherent authorities of sound and place, and allowing the performers to say what they wanted in situ. The structure and noisiness of the soundscape accommodated multiple artists' voices into the conversation.

> Urban: "It sounds like being in an environment where there are four or five conversations going on in this kind of a natural kind of layering process that happens regardless of where you are, but our focus becomes less pointed or something in that. You know, so it gels it in a way, that kind of talks about the complexity of that environment, of a sound environment with multiple voices. I think it makes us look at that."
> Augaitis: "Where radio in effect does become more of a reflection of the real world rather than that authoritative voice.[180]

Instead of sounding at the audience, Urban's transmissions can be thought to have joined the cacophony of human and nonhuman sounds in the environment.

"Talking Through Your Hat"

The radio hats enveloped the artist and the viewer in a mobile sound environment that augmented aural space. In another sketch of the radio hat, the performer wore a winter toque with a radio clock inset at the front (figure 39). Behind the figure is a line bent in triangular angles in resemblance to Banff mountain ridges or wavelengths emitted from the hat's antenna.

> Urban: "I wanted it to kind-of be like this weird voice that was coming out of the top of this hat but not really connected to the person."
> Augaitis: "Yeah, I think that's really interesting that disembodied voice.
> Urban: "Yes, that disembodied voice. There it comes again!"
> Augaitis: "It comes out of everywhere." [181]

Through the radio hats, the performers became "'radio (re)transmitters.'"[182] Each performer wore the others' voices and his or her own on consecutive days when the audio replayed.

[180] Augaitis and Urban, 00:18:10-00:18:54.
[181] Augaitis and Urban, 00:28:00-00:28:24.
[182] Augaitis and Lander, 5.

> Augaitis: "Having talked about the disembodied voices, it almost becomes like the embodying of that voice. Like here's this voice and you're with the body."
> Urban: "Yeah, I like that you said 'talking through your hat to' the other day, which was great. Yeah, and that becomes the body. So it's like the body of the performer, the voice. Well, in terms of the performance, the performer does in fact end-up wearing their own voice at the end [laughing]…What else were we saying earlier about the disembodied? oh, that it becomes body because—"
> Augaitis: "The disembodied becomes embodied—"
> Urban: "Embodied because of the presence—"
> Augaitis: "—in the body of the performer, and they become the physical body of that voice."[183]

The radio hat combined the artists' voices within a single material object or rather, the sounds were emitted outwards from the hat, which shaped and reshaped the artist's field. The hats situated a space for improvisation, as the main objects of the artwork for the performers to "dialogue with" other than themselves.[184] The hats, "like prepositions in language, allow[ed] connections to be made between people…[B]y listening to another, there is always the possibility we might change and rethink the position we occupy in the world."[185] The radio hats structured the sound and performers' embodiment as they walked to and from locations.

As a result, the radio hats, more so than the radio transmissions, became the signifiers of the performance. The broadcast lasted just one minute on the first day, while by the last, the timeframe was still less than ten minutes in duration. Hence, for most of the week, there was only a short span of time for the broadcast to be heard. It was also difficult to hear the broadcast at times depending on the strength of the radio signal according to Augaitis and Urban. Therefore, with the shortness and unreliability of the broadcast, the hat became the main point of engagement with passersby and what conveyed the occurrence of the performance event during the piece.[186]

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[183] Augaitis and Urban, 00:44:38-00:46:02.
[184] Tufnell and Crickmay, 121.
[185] Rendell, *Art and Architecture*, 167.
[186] Barbara Fischer and Colleen O'Neill, *Colette Urban* (Corner Brook: Sundog Printing Limited, 1993), 11.

> Urban: "The hats were the primary visual thing for people. I mean, we had comments from people in the street before we even—before any transmission happened. So it was more about, visually, what these things—how people were reacting to them." Augaitis: "Even in the gallery, they look great as sculptural objects."[187]

The hats were identical trapper hats, in which Urban sewed pockets at the front to hold the radios (figure 40). In considering public sculpture as "what [is] on or in front of a building that [is] not the building, or what [is] in the landscape that [is] not the landscape," the radio hats and their disembodied sounds were like public sculptures worn by the artists that were not exactly the artists. [188] Most often, the performers walked with the antennae extended, looking like mobile radio towers. They gesture towards the portable rooms, mind-expanding spaces, or environment transformers of Haus-Rucker Co.'s wearable sculptures from the late Sixties.[189] The radio hats were like wearable architectures or "body architectures" such as a marker or mobile structure augmenting infrastructure in the landscape that made the artist's body into "anticipatory sites" of engagement (figure 41).[190] In moving within Banff's built environment, *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head* can be understood to have harnessed technology to create "a more intimate and affective relationship between bodies and buildings."[191] Urban's work traversed the interstitial space between architecture, performance, and artmaking.

By creating "mobile sound units" Urban used audio uniforms to point to the spatial materialities of the artwork's environment.[192] The performers ambled through the town with antennae extended, looking insect-like, crossing between buildings, roads, trails, soil, air and cement. Their radio appendages responded to interstitial ecologies, wayfinding a course or re-

[187] Augaitis and Urban, 00:15:50-00:16:15.
[188] Budney and Blackwell, 19.
[189] Referring to: Haus-Rucker Co., *TV-Helmet (Portable living room),* 1967; *Mind Expander/Flyhead Helmet*, 1968.
[190] Budney and Blackwell, 53; Budney and Blackwell, 18.
[191] Charles Aubin and Carlos Minguez Carrasco, ed. *Bodybuilding: Architecture and Performance.* (New York: Performa, 2019), 73; Budney and Blackwell, 11.
[192] Benoît Maubrey, "Audio Jackets and Other Electroacoustic Clothes," *Leonardo* 28, no. 2 (1995): 93.

routing them from crevices and enclosures, physical and sonic, and site-specific. In Urban's file at the Paul D. Fleck Library, there is a photocopy from issue forty of the magazine, *High Performance*, profiling the performance artwork, *Audio Herd* (1985) by Berlin-based artist Benoît Maubrey and his performance group, Die Audio Gruppe (figure 42). Maubrey created "'Audio Uniforms'—clothes individually equipped with an amplifier…to create mobile and multi-acoustic sound environments in public places, independent of any power source."[193] In the article, Maubrey discussed the site-specific qualities of his costumes as a means to "blend into the environment like multimedia chameleons."[194] In another of Urban's sketches, the performer hovers in dynamics with strangers who listen attentively near and at a distance (figure 43). This time, the jacket and hat of the performer are painted green and brown, camouflaged against the background by whisps of white snow in a coldness gestured further by the performer's red cheeks. The familiarity of a winter hat and its site-specificity to Banff, counteracted the strangeness of the extended antennae and transmissions. Later in the year, Urban recreated *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head* for Open Space in Victoria, BC, titled *Making Waves* (1992). In that iteration she used yellow skipper hats in place of the winter hats to situate the work on the coast (figure 44). Though the radio antennae called attention to the performers more than camouflaged them, the winter hats resonated with Banff's seasonal environment.

Making technology appear familiar or playful was a tactic of engagement in wearable art. In the files of two exhibitions: *Siting Technology* (1987) and *Body and Technology* (1991), I encountered Diana Burgoyne's technology helmets in two untitled performances.[195] Burgoyne

[193] WPG02.227, folder 23, Radio Rethink, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archive, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.
[194] Maubrey, 93-94. Maubrey was inspired by artists working outside the gallery space such as Christo and Daniel Buren, as well as Fluxus actions and sound artists bringing speakers into their visual art practice in the burgeoning sound art scene of Berlin in the mid-1980s.
[195] The specific titles of the performances: *untitled performance* (1987) and *Untitled* (1991).

created these head pieces to embody and control an investigation of technology's effects, which she felt had enormous impact on culture and society (figure 45).[196] She examined the dynamics of technology in society because of the increasing influence of technology on daily life. Her technology helmets acted as a means for her to operate the technology, through frameworks of performance, installation and sound, and for the technology to mediate communication between herself and her audience.[197] As the meaning of the piece relied on the viewer interacting with the performer, Burgoyne intended for the helmets to look "'hand-made,' in hopes of humanizing [technology's] dehuman-izing material,"[198] which brings a newfound perspective to the visuality of Urban's simple, handsewn costumes:

> Urban: "Corny!"
> Augaitis: "Well, they're beyond corny, into something else."
> Urban: "I love that they're so low-tech."[199]

The simple, somewhat "corny" apparatus of the radio hats made the experience of the radio technology and the performance altogether possibly more accessible. In another of Urban's sketches, the brim of that hat sits tightly against the performer's forehead while the hat balloons into space (figure 46). In a promotional segment for *Radio Rethink* on CBC Television, Augaitis said to the audience "have your mind open and be prepared for the unexpected."[200] Similarly, in her notes for an artist talk, Urban wrote: "remember, minds are like parachutes they only

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[196] WPG02.223, folder 3, Body and Technology, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archive, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.
[197] WPG02.175, folder 11, Siting Technology, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archive, Banff Centre, Banff, AB; WPG02.223, folder 3, Body and Technology, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archive, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.
[198] WPG02.223, Body and Technology, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archive, Banff Centre, Banff, AB. I retrieved this quote from the following document in the file: Mattress Factory, *Four New Installations: Diana Burgoyne, Patty Martori, Bogdan Perzynski and Buzz Spector.* Pittsburgh: Mattress Factory, 1991-1992.
[199] Augaitis and Urban, 00:16:18-16:26.
[200] CBC Television Broadcast, February 7, 1992, WPG03.227.5 v.1, Radio Rethink, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB. During a segment for *Radio Rethink* on CBC television, Augaitis promoted the exhibition by saying: "have your mind open and be prepared for the unexpected and try to somehow relate that to your own life if you can and not be intimidated by it."

function when open."[201] Burgoyne also insisted on setting up the questions rather than relay her viewpoint outright.[202] Radio's process of opening, emitting and receiving relayed Urban's artistic methodology, actualized in wearable technology and the playful jest of the winter caps.

Opening and receiving also accumulated a layered soundscape and resulted in an archive of layered images. Urban's drawings of the radio hats offer a space for imagining, and a glimpse into the performance process. Without dates or specifiable information, the sketches might be prototypes or reflections during or after the performance. For researchers such as myself, the sketches in the files provoke inquiry and act as traces of the performance or of ideas that might never have made it into the performance. I came across figure 32 and figure 46 back-to-back in the archival file (figure 47). Through the paper's transparency, the eyes of one drawing slowly appeared from beneath the other. What could be imagined as the sound particles in one drawing appeared to emit from the hat of the other, and the slight change in perspective, apparent through the overlaid images, visualized the movement of the performance. It is as though the figure shifted to the right, turned her face, and walked one or two steps forward across the page. This layered motif reappeared when I watched the CBC segment on *Radio Rethink* in the Paul D. Fleck library. While Urban stood outside the post office during the segment, Rundle Mountain and Banff's buildings reflected in the window behind her, layering another set of images (figure 48).[203] Furthermore, shadows of the blinds at the library reflected on the television while I watched, layering in my own sense of place atop the archival footage.

[201] A13-044-012, Performance Talk, Western Archive, Western University, London, ON.
[202] WPG02.223, folder 3, Body and Technology, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archive, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.
[203] In previous works, Urban experimented with overlaying images of the audience itself through reflective materials in the costume, performer or installation, such as in the metal hat piece of *I Feel Faint* (1985) and the mirrors of *As Long as a Joke Lasts* (1989) at Eye Level Gallery, Halifax. Detailed sketches of both can be found in Urban's *fonds* at Western Archive, in the files "Faint" and "Eye level – show," respectively.

The temporality and shifting scope of the performance was constantly present in the archives. Even during the performance, the radio hats were taken outside and then brought back to the gallery to be displayed between performance times (figure 40). The hats acted as signifiers of the performance in process—its past and future interventions. The documentation or representation of the performance as an object, or archival remnant, was already taking place during the performance through the radio hats on display. The hats were the record keeper, the presence-making object. They translated the performance action into curatorial form.[204] Though disembodied from the performer when on display, they held the memory of being worn, having been in motion, and identified with a performer in the performance.[205] These concepts and sketches of the hat preface a way of seeing the performance, the performers walking through Banff, the sound and the encounter with the stationary hat on display, alongside the overall reception or outcome of the performance duration. Each aspect of the performance dynamic—its context in public space, the environment, the history—continuously acted upon the performance through its archives.

Performance Art-in-Process, Continued

While watching Urban's performance video in the Western Archives reading room, it was difficult to get a reproduction of the sound without also recording sounds in the room. Other

[204] Borggreen and Gade, 159-160. In Rachel Fensham's chapter, "Choreographic Archives: Towards an Ontology of Movement Images," she discusses the inter-mediality, challenges and purpose in archiving dance movements. In order to archive dance, dance practitioners must translate gesture into material form for curatorial activities and to continue agency of the gesture into the future.

[205] Fischer and O'Neill, 11. Urban investigated temporality in a previous work, titled, *Autoportrait 1996* (1986), which depicted a painting of a performer in a pointed straw hat that she dated ten years into the future. "Like Marcel Duchamp's *Readymades* and some of Meret Oppenheim's *Objects,* Colette Urban's objects are likely to be manufactured, then subtly or overtly manipulated by her in order to shift the objects from their original context to a context in which a new identity is created…the objects' new-found identities challenge the viewers' logical readings of their original functions, which in turn, challenges their original identities. These new objects become transitory objects found then remade."

researchers and staff frequently passed by, talked to each other or on the phone, opened doors, shifted chairs and moved boxes (figure 49). The room's soundscape collapsed with my observations of the performance so that I experienced a layered time through sound. It felt similar to the effect of schizophonic and disembodied sound appearing in Westerkamp, Cardiff and Urban's works. To record the cassettes of Urban's field recordings, I had to leave the quietude of the archival holding room to a basement section of Western's library where I could listen to the tapes out loud through the boombox speaker. While listening in my corner of the library, I heard the odd voices or shuffle of feet of students walking past; if I was too slow to press pause, a student passing by would have also heard Urban and her performers' voices in the library's halls. All those sounds layered upon my listening experience of Urban's performance which felt fitting as it added to Urban's intended cacophony and aim in projecting sound. My sound environment became yet another in which Urban's performance intervened. While watching the VHS of the performance, I felt compelled to project the sound for the other researchers to hear, to carry on the intervention. So, for a moment, I unplugged my headphones to play the sound aloud. *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head* brought technology into the soundscape of Banff's public spaces to trouble the use of radio along with the Walkman and personal headphones, the latter which now permeates daily life and separates individuals from the collective soundscape. In viewing the audiovisual archival materials, I felt a need and a desire to remove my own headphones, ending the isolation of my sonic environment, inspired by Urban's original intentions.

Despite the performative potential of archival inquiry, a study of performance art (unseen firsthand) means existing in the space of not ever knowing the work in its entirety. An investigation into performance artworks must contend with this limitlessness due to the

ephemerality of live action. Performance art requires a deep analysis of archival records whilst accepting that the records are not the work. Thus, what is meaningful for performance artworks and art history are not necessarily the same. The meaning of performance art is not, essentially, for it to be archived. The meaning is in the process of it happening and the experience for the artist and audience. Yet, for art history, the work must be documented to be researched and remembered. Perhaps, the art historian's task is to perform the archive, to enact the ephemerality of its overarching aesthetics.[206]

In my thesis, I considered the layers of materiality, sound, visuality, and archive. I considered the ephemeral, the captured, the unknowns, the assumed. Primarily, I considered the environment in terms of the sonic atmosphere and the scope of spatial materiality. As a scholarly experiment in sustaining the integrity of Urban's performance, I ventured to create and narrate my own performative encounter with the archival materials. I hoped to surround a past oral history record with my theoretical reflections, field writings, and archival analysis: to play with performance art's temporality and suggest ways for its continuation within my writing process instead of calcifying my research in its remnants. When I returned to Banff in January 2024 it was minus thirty degrees Celsius, just the opposite of when I arrived last August with the temperature above thirty degrees. Cloud-like white snow drifts hovered in the Bow River Valley and replaced the blue haze of forest fire smoke covering the region last summer. Through the white clouds, dark patches of forest appeared as abstract floating forms. I pieced together what I knew of the mountain valley from my memory. The sun shone through the window appearing

[206] Borggreen and Gade, 54. "In order to keep the disorienting pressures of performance 'alive,' allowing it to reanimate otherwise reified structures of meaning and value in the art context, the art historian can seek to reactivate the durationality of past live artworks, excavating and re-narrating their traces in creative and self-reflexive ways so as to attend to her own unease and lack of finality in positioning herself in relation to them. She can productively acknowledge the absolute impossibility of 'knowing' these works and of giving them final form or value through interpretation."

like a bright light without parameters, casting no glow, more a space of light permeating the white sky. Before arriving at the archives, I could only imagine so much from an archival file, the rest was uncovered on site. Seeing all the files together organized the scattered fragments of information. Each artist, each artwork, each exhibition, each activity was held in files one after the other. Knowing one artist led to another, which led to an exhibition, to an event and so forth. Each file illuminated an idea or set new trajectories for me locate to files that would widen my scope of comprehension. At my wooden desk in the Paul D. Fleck Library, in the windowed room surrounded by mountains appearing and disappearing within a white haze, I explored a performative encounter: entering with a question and allowing for more questions to emerge, reading for the answers in a sentence, or within an image or a word.

> Augaitis: "If we were to do it again, would you do anything differently other than the one day with the performers?"
> Urban: "Maybe the people that would be involved would be thinking more environmental about sound or address something like that."

I hope further research will examine environmental factors that contribute to the materiality of Banff's public spaces more in depth. By conceptualizing the materiality of sound and threshold spaces in the built environment, I hoped to reassess conventional spatial theory through an interdisciplinary methodology that also invoked queer phenomenology, walking-as-art practice and movement studies. McKittrick's method-making in science, storytelling and geography, Rendell's site-writing from art criticism and spatial theory, Ahmed's queer phenomenology, Taylor's concept of the repertoire in performance studies, Hann's urban scenography, and Indigenous worldviews in land-based ecology, sound studies and performance artmaking all cumulated to form a unique theoretical approach for this artwork. Through this research, I saw where the limits of spatial theory reside and where Indigenous land-based ecology could further the analysis, especially as regards to more discussion of place and

environment. Rather than court a kind of absoluteness, this thesis was an experimentation in orienting away from impartial observation towards a more vital collaboration with Colette Urban through her archival materials.[207] An interdisciplinary approach unsettled my theoretical inquiry and led me to rethink terminology, such as consent, dissipation, worlding, relationality, disembodied, queer, threshold, site-specific, enclosure, nonhuman, transmission, land, structure and public. In future research I hope to continue learning about these terms within transcultural, anticolonial and Indigenous methodologies to continue to understand their implications in performance art and Canadian art history.

Performance art can act as an interlocutor, as the means to broach a connection and find collaboration in defining, shaping, and restructuring a community. When questioning what performance art could mean for art history and how it should be remembered, art historians might continue to look to at performance art created outside the gallery, off-site, in public space. These works confront societal norms, spatial codes, public history and discourse with broad social implications.[208] Performance art in public space constitutes a witnessing of an idea in transition, developed and interacted within the built environment to effect perception, place, and patterns of activity. These practices, though momentary, create collaborative, disruptive and innovative sites for interaction in the public realm. Writing about performance art is an attempt to capture a fleeting medium, yet finding its meaning within the needs and demands of contemporary culture, art historical discourse, and the lexicon of adjacent disciplines and practices. As I have discovered while activating an archival "practice" of my own, performance art remains in process, always continuing.

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[207] McKittrick, *Dear Science*, 8. As inspired by McKittrick's anticolonial frameworks for academic discourse, Black stories and storytelling.
[208] McKittrick, *Dear Science*, 45. "If we are committed to anticolonial thought, our starting point must be one of disobedient relationality that always questions, and thus is not beholden to, normative academic logics."

Figure 1. Monte Greenshields and Cheryl Bellows, The group of performers in *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head*, 1992, VW.1992.3229, Radio Rethink, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

Figure 2. Radio booth in the Walter Phillips Gallery, 1992, WPG02.227, Radio Rethink, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

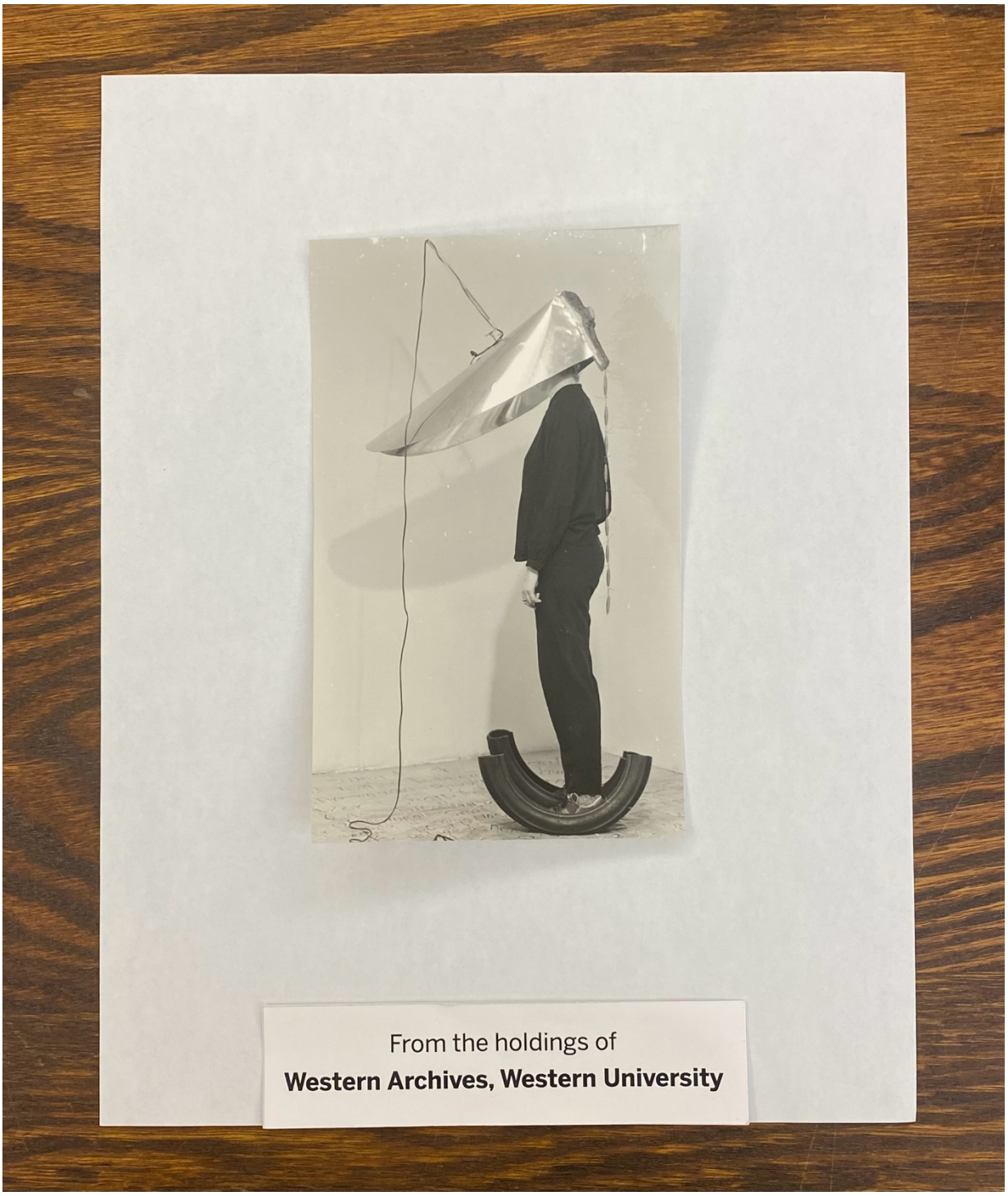

Figure 3. Urban, *I Feel Faint*, 1985, A13-044-010, box 25, Computer Prints, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.

Figure 4. Elisabeth Feryn. Photograph of the costume for *A song to sing, a tale to tell, a point to make*, 1989. "a song to sing, a tale to tell, a point to make – 1989," Projects, accessed July 15, 2024, http://www.coletteurban.com/projects/asongtosing.html.

Figure 5. Photograph of *Orchestrina*, 1989, A13-044-010, box 25, Computer Prints, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.

Figure 6. Photograph of *Orchestrina* in motion, 1989, A13-044-010, box 25, Computer Prints, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.

Figure 7. Banff Safeway, 1964, V190/I.C.i-11/NA-06, Bruno Engler fonds, Whyte Museum, Banff, AB.

Figure 8. Monte Greenshields and Cheryl Bellows. Performers interacting with customers at Safeway during *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head*, 1992, VW.1992.3522, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

Figure 9. Monte Greenshields and Cheryl Bellows. *It's On Your Head, It's in Your Head* at the Banff Upper Canada Hot Springs, 1992, VW.1992.3333, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

Figure 10. Bathing at Upper Hot Springs, V263/NA-3564, Byron Harmon fonds, Whyte Museum, Banff, AB.

Figure 11. Film still of the group arriving at the Canada Post Office during *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head* from the CBC Television segment on *Radio Rethink*, 1992, WPG03.227.5 v.1, Radio Rethink, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

Figure 12. Official Opening of Banff New Post Office, March 9, 1956, V190/I.C.i-9/NA-02, Bruno Engler fonds, Whyte Museum, Banff, AB.

Figure 13. Store Fronts of Block 11, Lots 1-2, September 30, 1937, V488/I.A./PA/Block11, Lot1-2, Parks Canada fonds, Whyte Museum, Banff, AB.

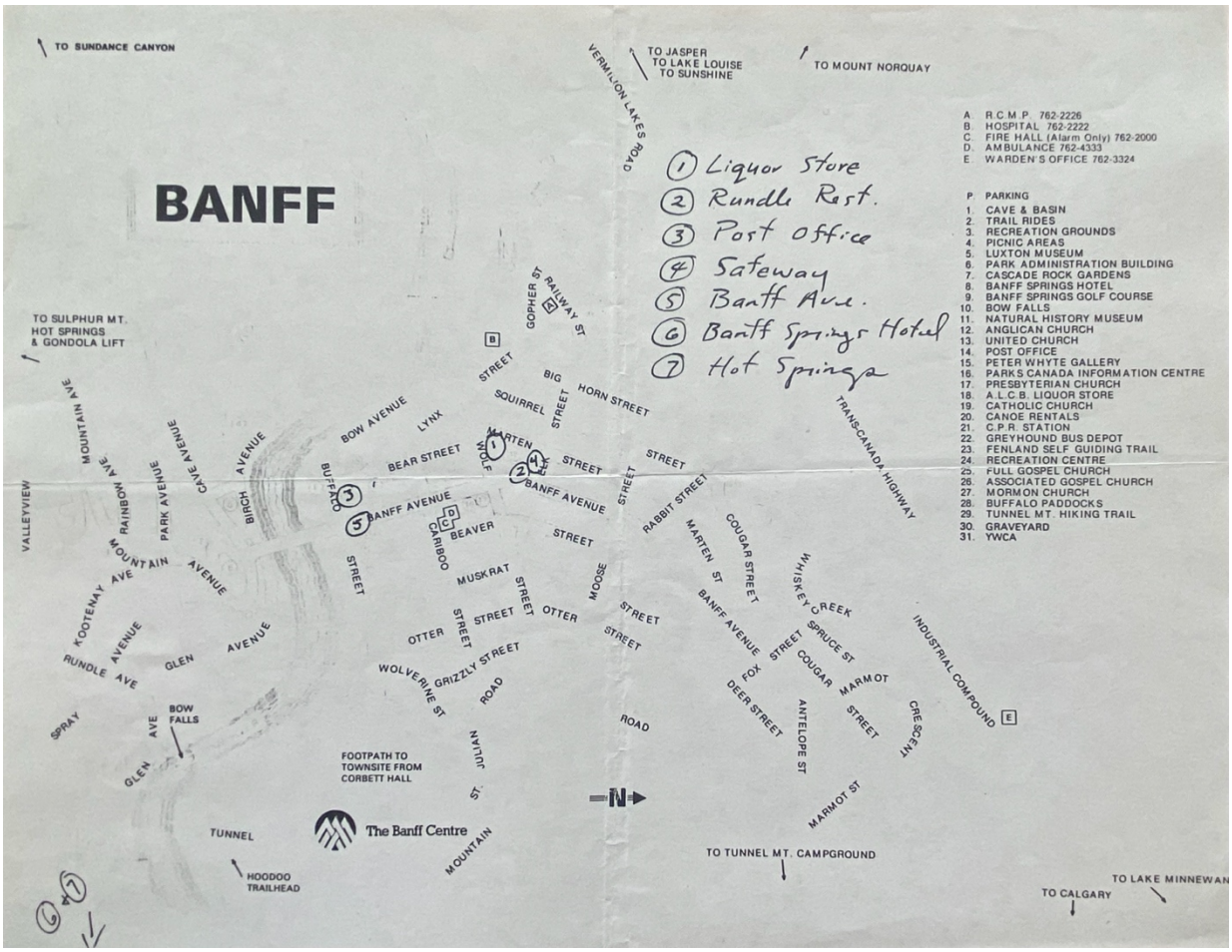

Figure 14. Map of Urban's performance locations, 1992, WPG02.227, folder 4, Radio Rethink, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

Figure 15. Margaret Lapp. Banff High School field aside the confluence of crosswalks, pedestrians, tour buses, transit bus, and historic buildings including the original site of the Rundle Restaurant at 321 Banff Ave where the building says “Unlimited,” 2023.

Figure 16. Margaret Lapp. Row of historic houses below a view of Cascade Mountain, across from the liquor store where the performance took place on day one, 2023.

Figure 17. View of Store Fronts on Banff Avenue, September 30, 1937, V488/I.A./PA/Block1, Lot13-18, Parks Canada fonds, Whyte Museum, Banff, AB.

Figure 18. Margaret Lapp. View of the streetscape in front of Banff Avenue store fronts, August 2023.

Figure 19. Monte Greenshields and Cheryl Bellows. Participants in *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head* pause with a group of passersby wanting to listen to the broadcast, 1992, VW.1992.3421, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

Figure 20. Monte Greenshields and Cheryl Bellows. Participants in *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head* pause with a group of passersby wanting to listen to the broadcast, 1992, VW.1992.3428, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

Figure 21. Monte Greenshields and Cheryl Bellows. Performers pause with a group of passersby in *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head*, 1992, VW.1992.3430, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

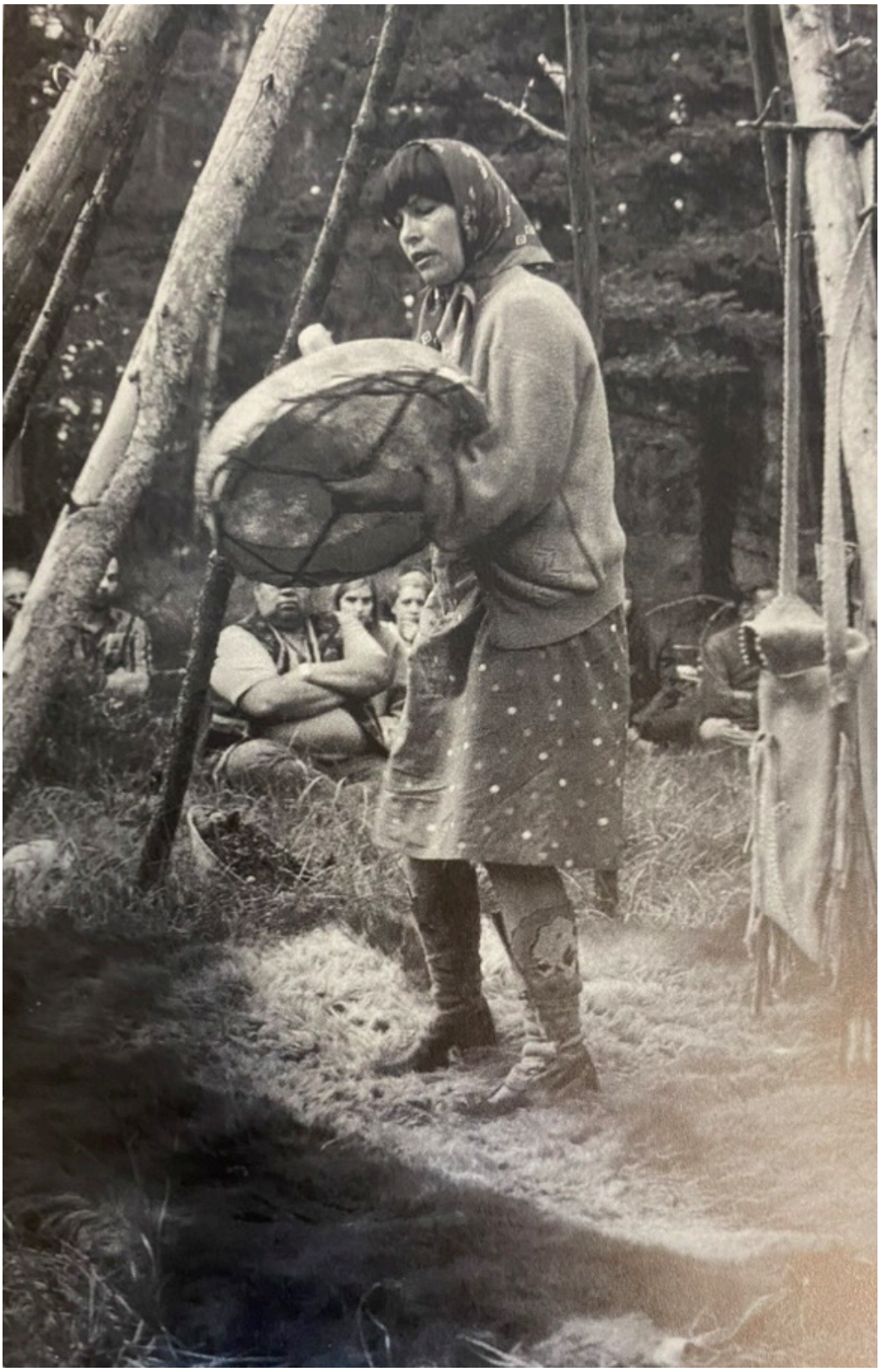

Figure 22. Monte Greenshields and Cheryl Bellows. Margo Kane during her performance for *As Public As Race*, 1992. Silvie Gilbert, *Margo Kane* (Banff: Walter Phillips Gallery, 1993), 21.

Figure 23. Camille Turner as Miss Canadiana during *Miss Canadiana Heritage and Culture Walking Tour*, 2011. Ellen Mueller, "Camille Turner, Miss Canadiana Heritage and Culture Walking Tour," Walking As Artistic Practice, accessed July 15, 2024, https://teaching.ellenmueller.com/walking/2022/01/09/camille-turner/.

Figure 24. Film still from footage of Rebecca Belmore, *Ayum-ee-aawach Oomama-mowan / Speaking to Their Mother* (film still), 1991, WPG03.221.9, tape 1, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

Figure 25. Margaret Lapp. Looking at slides taken by Monte Greenshields of Rebecca Belmore's performance, *Ayum-ee-awach Oomama-Mowan (1991)* through a light box, 2024. Exhibition Photographs, Between Views and Points of View, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

Figure 26. Monte Greenshields. Photograph of Rebecca Belmore's performance, *Ayum-ee-awach Oomama-Mowan, 1991,* Exhibition Photographs, Between Views and Points of View, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

Figure 27. Margaret Lapp. Film still from the VHS documenting the group of performers in the Safeway during *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head*, 1992, A13-044-015, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.

Figure 28. CBC personnel hold a gooseneck microphone toward the radio hat of one of Urban's performers at Safeway during day four of the performance, 1992, A13-044-015, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.

Figure 29. Film still of Cheryl L'Hirondelle's performance, *awa ka-amaciwet piwapisko waciya/climbing the iron mountains*, 2004, "2004 5th 7a*11d Festival Éminence Grise," 7A*11D, accessed July 15, 2024, https://7a-11d.ca/festival_artist/lhirondelle-cheryl/.

Figure 30. Film still of L'Hirondelle's performance at the parking garage at Dundas St W and Centre St, 2004, "2004 5th 7a*11d Festival Éminence Grise," 7A*11D, accessed July 15, 2024, https://7a-11d.ca/festival_artist/lhirondelle-cheryl/.

Figure 31. Photograph of Cheryl L'Hirondelle during her performance, *awa ka-amaciwet piwapisko waciya / climbing the iron mountains*, 2004, "2004 5th 7a*11d Festival Éminence Grise," 7A*11D, accessed July 15, 2024, https://7a-11d.ca/festival_artist/lhirondelle-cheryl/.

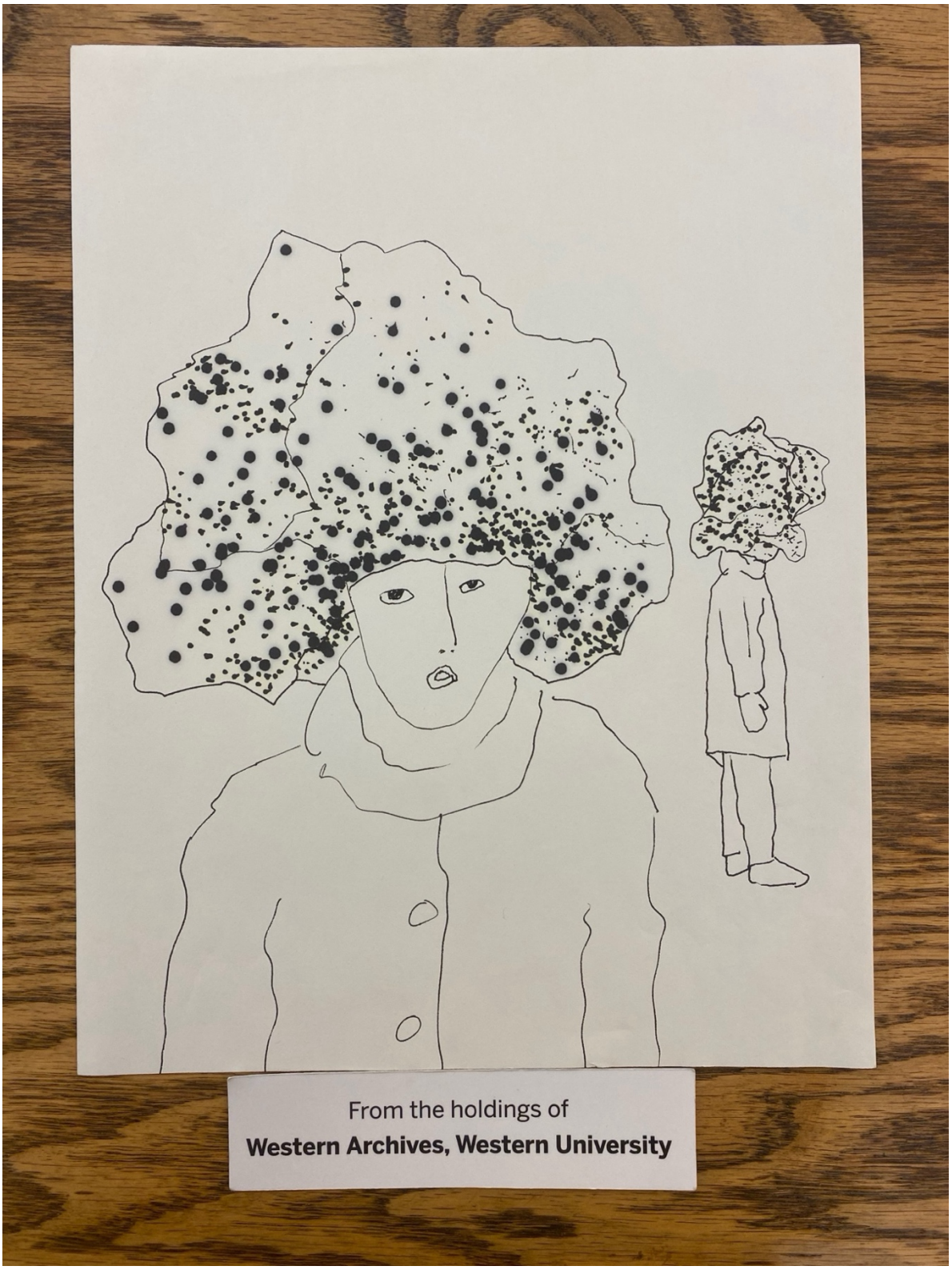

Figure 32. Sketch by Colette Urban of *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head*, 1992, A13-044-010, box 25, Rethinking Radio – Banff Centre, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.

Figure 33. Monte Greenshields and Cheryl Bellows. *It's On Your Head, It's in Your Head*, 1992, A13-044-011, box 26, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.

Figure 34. Monte Greenshields and Cheryl Bellows. Performers in the pool at the Upper Canada Hot Springs location, 1992, VW.1992.3326, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

Figure 35. Monte Greenshields and Cheryl Bellows. Urban sits in the steam of the Upper Canada Hot Springs during *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head*, 1992, VW.1992.3327, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

Figure 36. Monte Greenshields and Cheryl Bellows. Urban wades in the pool of the Upper Canada Hot Springs during *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head*, 1992, VW.1992.3314, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

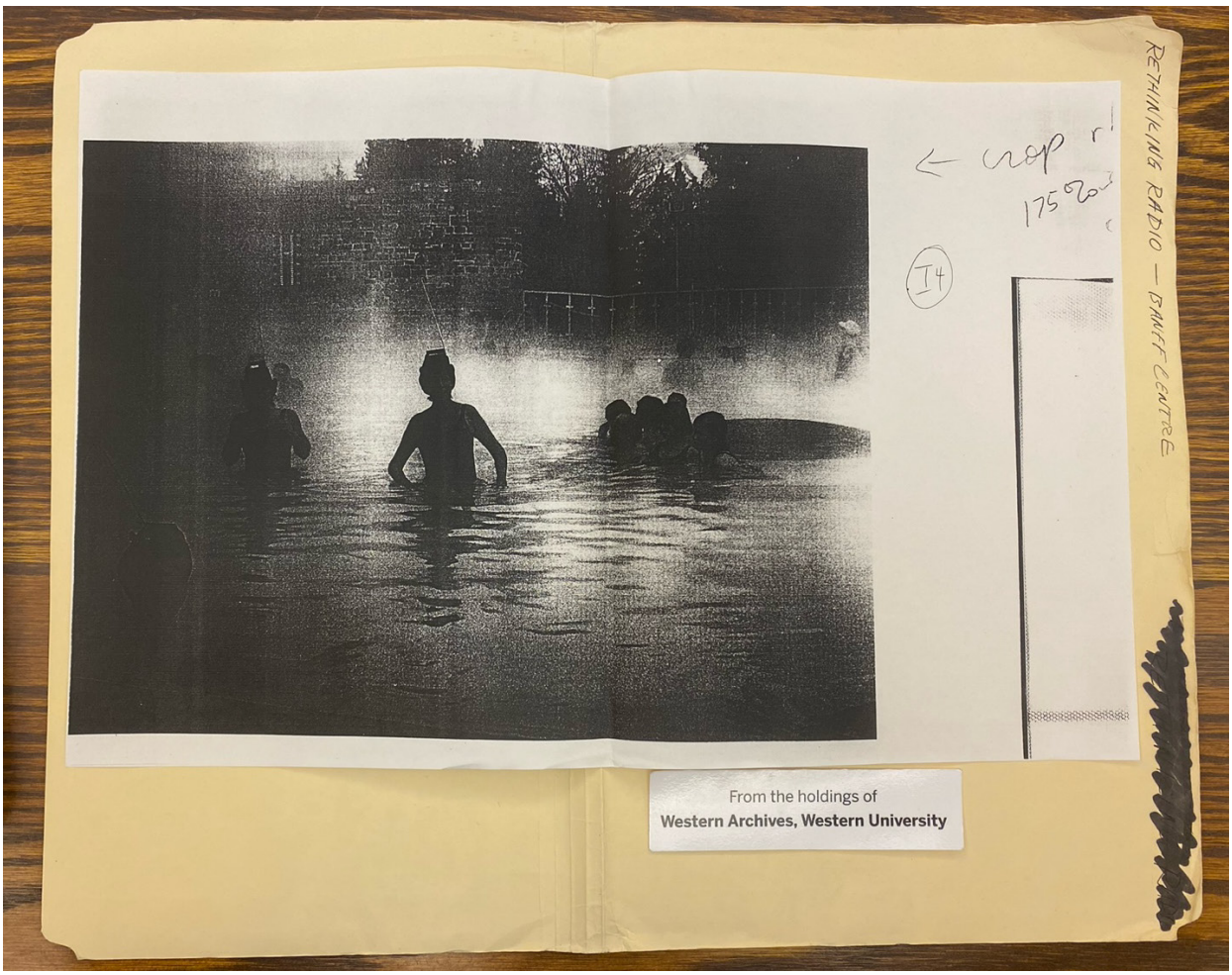

Figure 37. Monte Greenshields and Cheryl Bellows. Photocopy of photo negative from *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head*, 1992, A13-044-010, box 25, Rethinking Radio – Banff Centre, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.

Figure 38. Janet Cardiff, *Forest Walk*, 1991. Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller, "Forest Walk," Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller – Walks, accessed July 15, 2024, https://cardiffmiller.com/walks/forest-walk/.

Figure 39. Slide image of a watercolour sketch by Urban for *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head*, 1992, A13-044-017, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.

Figure 40. Colette Urban's radio hats on exhibition for *Radio Rethink* at the Walter Phillips Gallery, 1992, VW.1992.4102, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

Figure 41. The performers walk across Banff Avenue during *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head*, 1992, A13-044-011, box 26, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.


HOT SHORTS // HOT SHORTS // HOT SHORTS

Audio Clothes

Since 1983 Berlin-based Benoit Maubrey has been creating "Audio Uniforms"—clothes individually equipped with an amplifier, loudspeakers and batteries that permit the wearer to hook up either a walkman with pre-recorded cassette, an electronic instrument or a microphone. He has used these uniforms and their various wearers to create mobile and multi-acoustic sound environments in public places, independent of any power source.

Some of the projects realized to date:

—The *Audio Herd* (Berlin, 1985) featuring seven individuals in audio suits made of polyester resembling animal skin who roamed a 100-acre garden playing recorded sounds of animals.

—The *Audio Steelworker Uniform* (Ars Electronica, Linz, Austria, 1986) featured original uniforms and asbestos aprons from the local steel mills worn by 10 individuals who walked through the city, each playing one track from a 10-track composition of sound elements recorded in the steel plants.

Above: "Audio Steelworker Uniform"
Above right: "Guitar Monkeys"

—The *Guitar Monkeys* (Berlin and Graz, Austria, 1987) was a musical group that used specially designed electronic guitars and microphones. Because they wore their own power amplification the *Monkeys* did not play on stage but wandered about within the audience.

When the "uniforms" performed in Pittsburgh (sponsored by the Mattress Factory, 1986) the performers were thrown out of several shopping malls. "That's usually how the pieces end," said Maubrey, "when the authorities intervene."

Audio Herd

WPG02.227
23 of 35
Radio Rethink - Colette Urban

Figure 42. Margaret Lapp. Photograph of a textual record on *Audio Herd*, WPG02.227, folder 23, Radio Rethink, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archives, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

Figure 43. Sketch by Urban for her performance *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head*, 1992, A13-044-017, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.

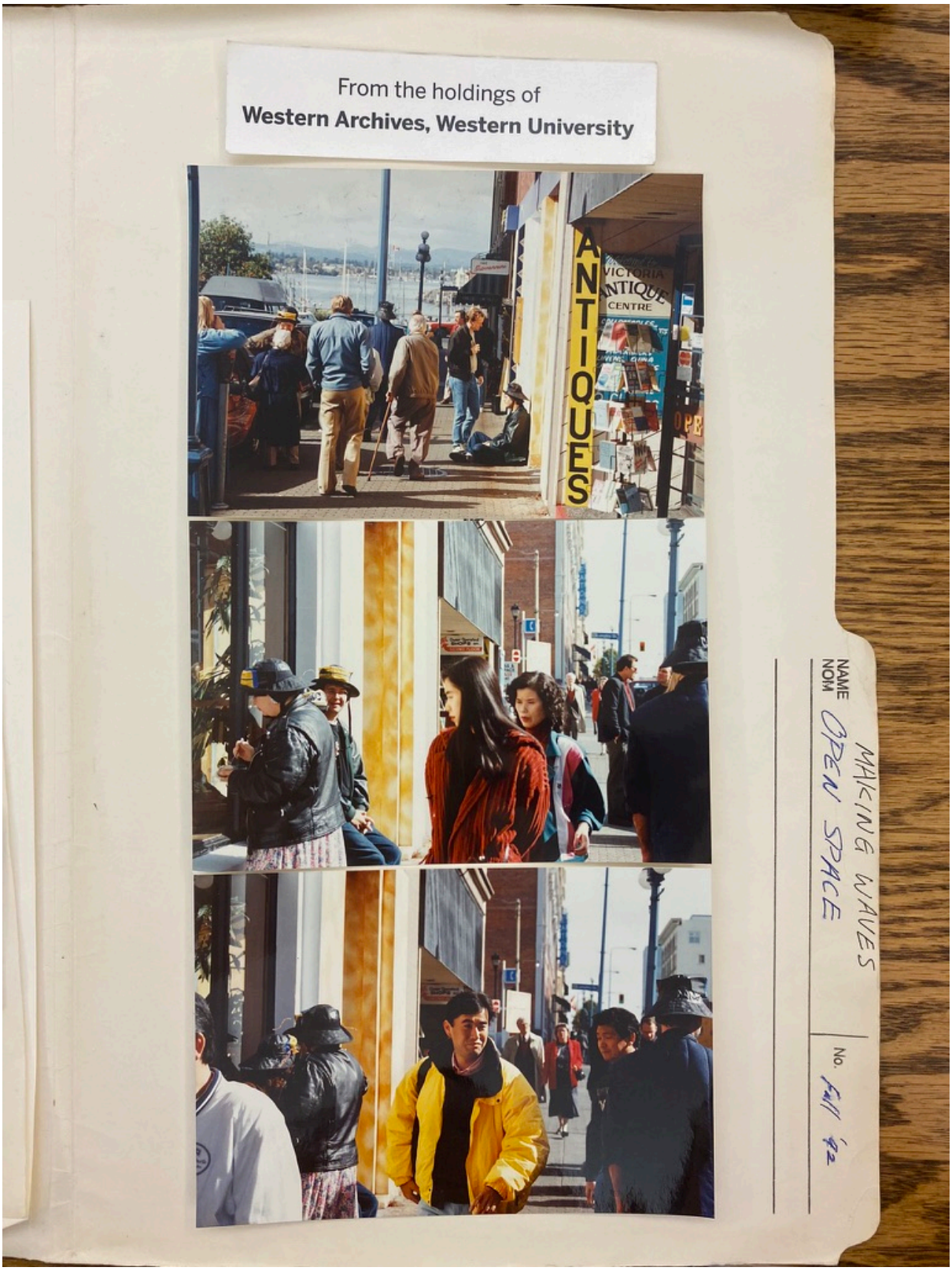

Figure 44. Photographs of *Making Waves*, 1992, A13-044-010, box 25, Making Waves - Open Space, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archive, Western University, London, ON.

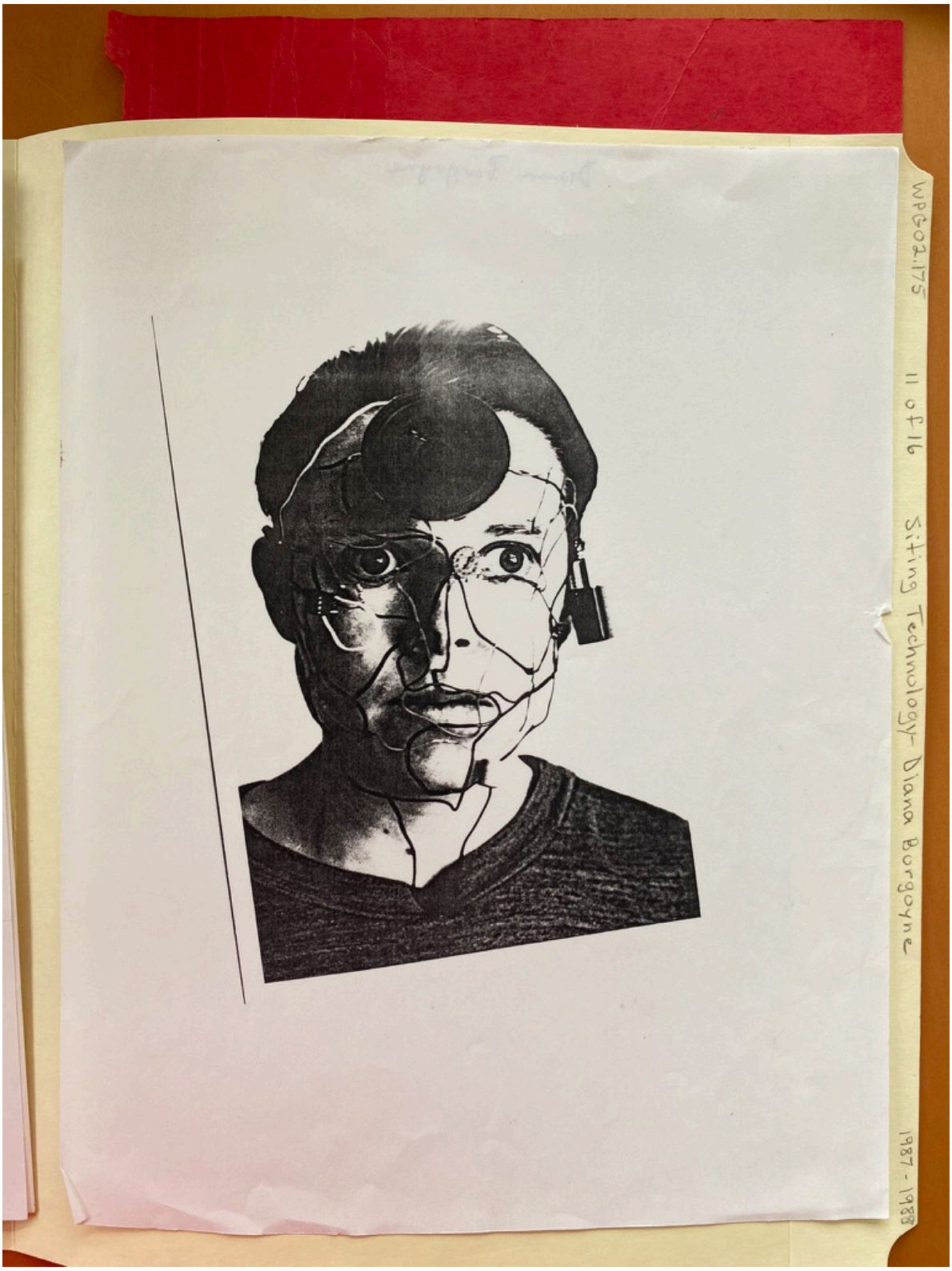

Figure 45. A photograph of Diana Burgoyne during her performance for *Siting Technology* at the Walter Phillips Gallery, 1987, WPG02.175, folder 11, Siting Technology, Paul D. Fleck Library and Archive, Banff Centre, Banff, AB.

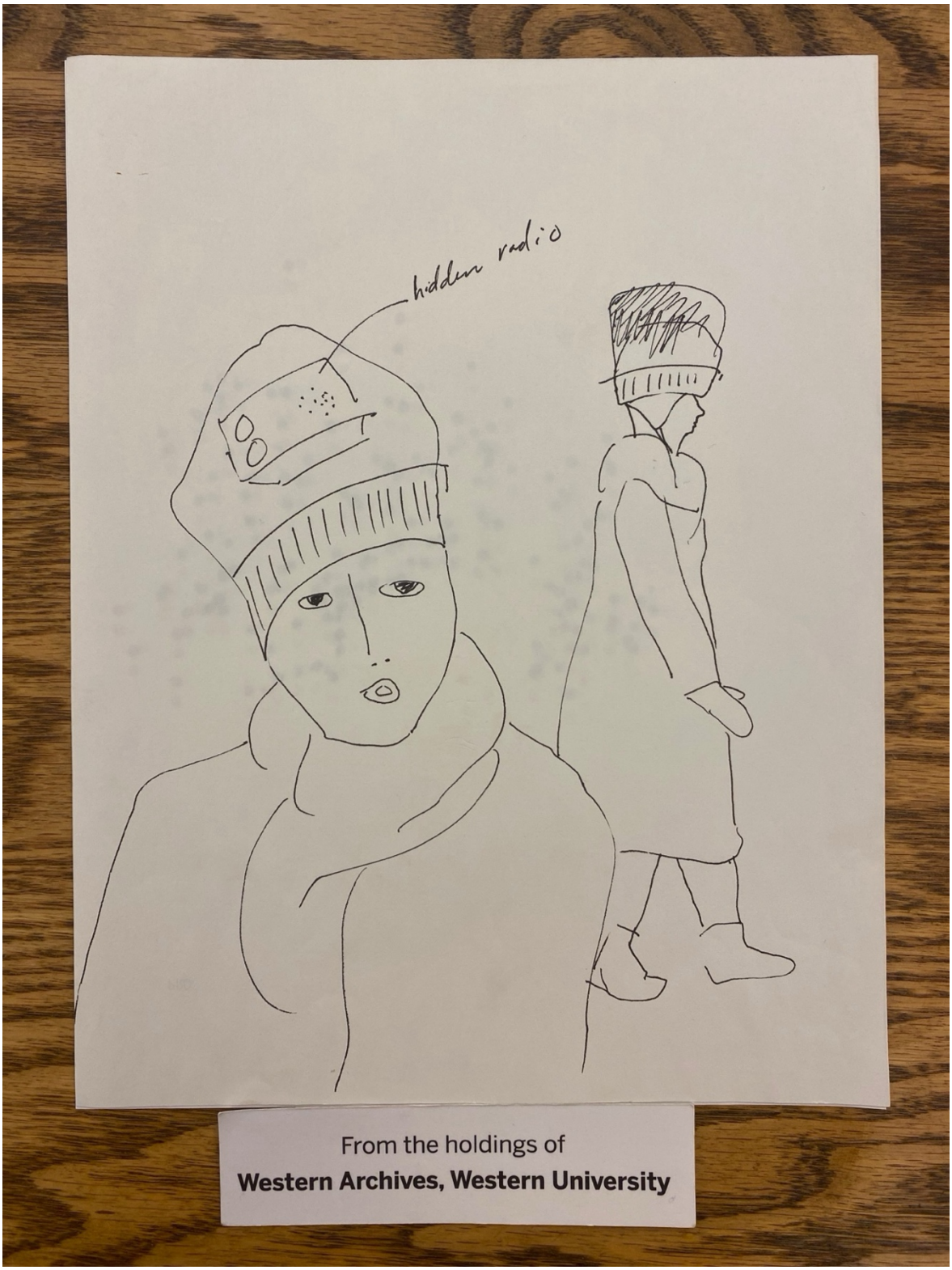

Figure 46. Sketch by Urban of *It's on Your Head, It's in Your Head*, 1992, A13-044-010, box 25, Rethinking Radio – Banff Centre, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.

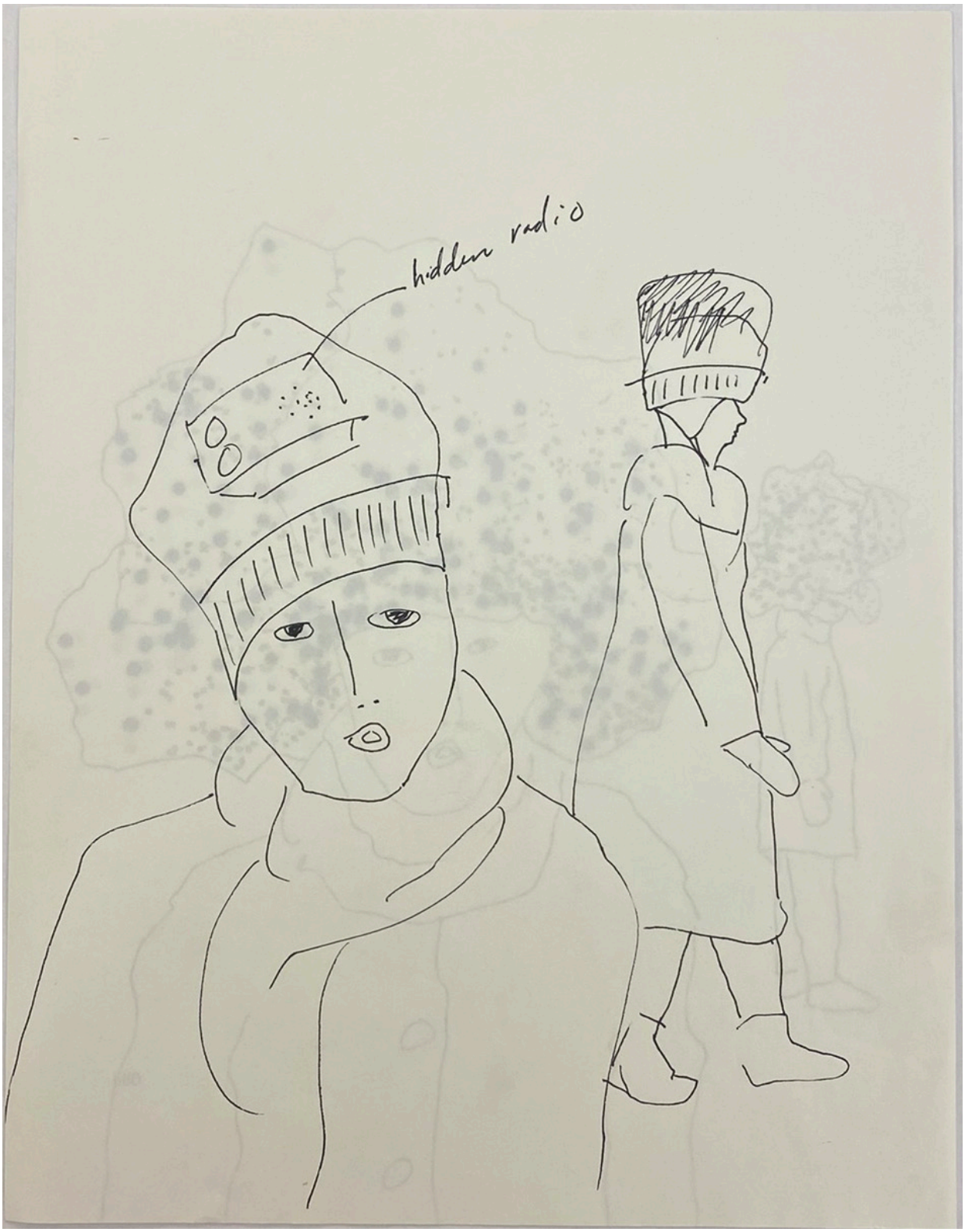

Figure 47. Two sketches by Urban layered atop the other in the file, A13-044-010, box 25, Rethinking Radio – Banff Centre, Colette Urban fonds, Western Archives, Western University, London, ON.

Figure 48. Margaret Lapp. Photograph of the television screen of Urban outside the Canada Post Office during a CBC News Segment on *Radio Rethink* (1992) with the reflection of blinds from the library on the screen, 2023.

Figure 49. Margaret Lapp. Archival holding room at Western University, demonstrating the potential for sonic interventions of researchers elsewhere in the room, 2023.

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