

Breach: A portolan of multimodal practice

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1—

“A portolan—a written description of the course along which ships sailed, indicating bays, capes, coves, ports, magnetic rhumb lines, and the distances between places.”

—Dionne Brand (2001, 52)

Sometime in 2017, Joanne Douglas, an environmental humanist and boat specialist, and I sat at my kitchen table in Northwest Philadelphia to discuss Black women and water. Joanne talked about Black creativity and vulnerability around the waterways of Philadelphia, and I mused on the historical landscape of the region and present-day climate realities. Our conversation swayed back and forth between the past and future, buoyed by our present preoccupation with Black women's ecological intelligences, preparedness for environmental recalibration (also known as disaster), and migration. Like many conversations about Black women, survival, and the Delaware River Valley region do, our conversation drifted to the stories of the “great conductor”: Harriet Tubman. While the iconography of Tubman overwhelmingly places her on land, our exchange was ignited as we talked about Tubman the seafarer, who spent significant time (though she could not swim) wading water, traveling in disguise by boat up the Maryland Eastern Shore, and most famously fighting at the US Civil War Combahee River raid of 1863. As we mentally charted Tubman's routes, the conversation veered when Joanne pulled up maps on her phone of the same region that Tubman traversed that also mark present-day food deserts, heat islands, and future projections of flooding, erosion, and possible water submersion of Black residential communities. The history and science crashed hard on our sensibilities.

Several months passed, hurricanes raged, water levels rose, and we continued to consider Black women's relationship to the environment and rapid climate and political changes. Despite the scientific and popular language that demonizes the environment as acting on and against humanity, we recognized that the environment was reconfiguring herself in response to grave mistreatment. As Black women, we understood being called angry, ruthless, and wild in response to our self-care. At the same time, we contended with the evidence that our bod-

ies, loved ones, and possessions were most vulnerable to the ecological shifts occurring all around us.

And still, as we reflected on the physical and environmental dangers that threatened Tubman's movements toward freedom, we knew that Black women's survival depended on engaging our local and global ecosystems as partners, helpmates, guides, and healers. With this in mind, Joanne invited her co-conspirator and award-winning folk artist Emily Carris-Duncan to share her awareness of the folk and the plants that stain and sustain. We shared readings and techniques. We studied other Black women's lists and made lists of things we have or might/would need for a journey when the waters rise (Butler 1993, 80). We brewed. As we kitchen table pressed (see Smith 1989) in coffee shops and studios, we veered into an emergent strategy (Brown 2017). We knew that, like Tubman and hundreds of other Black women throughout our modern history, we could wade in the waters, but we also wanted a vessel. We decided we would build a boat. We also wanted to learn more, prepare more, practice more, teach ourselves and others more, so we designed a course.

The course—Modalities of Black Freedom and Escape: Ships—combined methods from environmental humanities, visual arts, and history to consider multimodal practices of Black freedom and escape. The course circulated around the ship. As our course description explained:

From free black sailors in the eighteenth-century Caribbean Sea, to twentieth and twenty-first-century West African fishing boats, notions of Haitian “boat people,” Parliament Funkadelic's mothership, and sinking boats with Somali and Ethiopian migrants off Yemen's coast, ships have been and remain technologies of containment and freedom for communities of African descent. In the face of environmental vulnerabilities and the reality of waterways as systems of sustenance and imminent death, the course asks: how do black people use the ship and the process and practice of shipping as vessels for freedom, escape, and as a site to experiment with futures? Using the city of Philadelphia and the Schuylkill and Delaware rivers as our primary site of interrogation, the course attends to the

threats that black people experience following natural disaster (New Orleans, Haiti, Dominica, Puerto Rico) and everyday engagement with the local and global state structures regarding water (Flint, MI). In this context, we also look to shipping and boats as sites to theorize and account for black innovation, meanings of (non)sovereignty, and alternative futures (Bonilla 2015, 2017).

The first semester of the course was held in spring 2020 and included three major projects. First, we designed, dyed, and started to assemble a full-size fifteen-foot quilted sail for a boat. In our course planning, we determined that building a boat would take more time than the fifteen-week course provided, so we postponed the boat making to subsequent summer and spring semesters. Second, the seminar readings and discussion drew from ethnographic, historical, theoretical, and technical understandings of boats, sailing, water, and quilting. We read texts like Alexis Pauline Gumbs *M:Archive: Notes on the End of the World* alongside Emiliano Marino's *The Sailmaker's Apprentice, A Guide for the Self Reliant Sailor*, and Kevin Dawson's *Undercurrents of Power: Aquatic Culture in the African Diaspora* alongside Gladys-Marie Fry's *Stitched from the Soul: Slave Quilts from the Antebellum South* and Jenny Balfour-Paul's *Indigo: Egyptian Mummies to Blue Jeans*. Finally, we studied for and earned our Pennsylvania boating licenses (Balfour-Paul 1998; Dawson 2018; Fry 1990; Gumbs 2018; Marino 1994). We taught ourselves anew. We sewed, we made dyes, and we sewed more. We imagined that years from now, we would meet the inevitable with our preparation. We thought it was a flood (and there will be floods),¹ but instead it was a global pandemic.

2—

What would you carry if you could only carry what you could carry? Weeks before we launched the course, we agreed that Alison Saar's 2016 installation, *Breach*, (Figure 1) would be our sentient port for the class. The simple wooden platform was exacting and expansive enough for us to dock our imaginations and play with our conceptualizations of a vessel. Mounted atop the planks, a nude woman figure is clothed in the care of Saar's carvings, draped in markings on her mahogany finish. Saar's tender articulation of craftsmanship is nearly overshadowed by the figure's crown—a puzzle of suitcases, pots, pans, a chair, and a satchel of books.

Without any distinguishing historical markers, the strategically stacked gems call forth Black women's histories of migration. The precise packing showcases a record of Black women's decisions over generations to depart suddenly when capture brought them to the ocean, and across it, to an old world that was called new; when the opportunity came to run, walk, crawl, wade away from enslavement; when the wind and sea washed it all away; when "white boys [were] circling, and ... would come look at them from afar" (Greenfield-Sanders 2019); when the levees broke; when the tide of foreign occupiers and debt made it suddenly unsustainable; or when violence lived in their homes. The



FIGURE 1 Alison Saar, *Breach*, 2016. Wood, ceiling tin, found trunks, washtubs, and miscellaneous objects, 155 × 60 × 51 in. (393.7 × 152.4 × 129.5 cm) Collection of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA. © Alison Saar. (Courtesy of L.A. Louver, Venice, CA) Image description: A museum installation of Alison Saar's *Breach*, 2016. A wooden carved figure standing on wood boards. The figure is balancing a trunk, chair, washboard, and other items on their head. Alt text: A wood carved figure standing on wood boards. The figure is balancing a trunk, chair, washboard, and other items on their head. [This figure appears in color in the online issue]

items are citing the aesthetics of a Black women's intergenerational practice—the art of moving quickly, with care.

Specifically, Saar was inspired by the history of the Great Mississippi Flood of 1927. Starting in the summer of 1926 and ending with the complete devastation of the Mississippi River Valley in August 1927, the "High Water of 1927" disproportionately impacted Black women and men, who made up 95 percent of the agricultural labor force of the region. In the months of flooding, over 200,000 Black people were displaced, joining the thousands already moving to the US North in the early twentieth century (Figure 2 and Figure 3). The "High Water" was the largest flood in US history until August 2005 (New Orleans) (Coyle 2017). Navigating these high-water histories and our futures, *Breach* called our course's work into the history of Black women procuring, making, or making themselves vessels to refuse displacement, the threat of sexual violence, and the absence of state support. Curator Carol S. Eliel (2018) wrote of the piece that "Because the figure's pole in *Breach* reaches the 'water'—in reality the floor where viewers



FIGURE 2 Near Choctaw, Miss., April 30, 1927. (National Museum of African American History and Culture Collection)

Image description: A blurry gelatin silver print of a person wading in Mississippi River flood waters with an item on head.

Alt text: Blurry photo of person wading flood waters.

[This figure appears in color in the online issue]



FIGURE 3 Y. & M. V. R. R. Station Cary, Miss., May 1, 1927. (National Museum of African American History and Culture Collection)

Image description: A gelatin silver print of the 1927 flooding of the Mississippi River. This photo depicts a group of people in canoes near a flooded railway stop.

Alt text: People in canoes during the 1927 Mississippi River flood.

[This figure appears in color in the online issue]

stand—anyone standing on that same floor is implicated in the work’s narrative.” Throughout our course, then, we asked ourselves: Where are we on, and in relation to, this vessel? If the figure’s paddle puts us in the water, what waters are we all faring? How are we creating, responding to, suturing, surviving, exacerbating, escaping, and embracing the “breach”?

With these questions, *Breach* became a hull to store new language regarding Black women’s movement and preparedness among changing environmental and political tides throughout the African diaspora. By its linguistic definition, the word *breach* invokes rupture, rift, wounds, and severance of friendly relations, but the art piece and our class experience also necessitated attention to breach as an action—as an opening in, an act contrary to, and a leap above water.² By tending to

breach as an opening, we reencountered visual histories and public discourses that miscalculate Black women’s urgent moving practices and relationship to water.

During the time that the Mississippi flooded and thousands of Black Americans were left adrift or pooled into poor quality US government “camps,” the US marines also flooded the shores of Haiti. Like the response to the Mississippi flooding, this foreign presence (1915–1934) had an undercurrent of anti-Blackness. The establishment of a US-led Haitian national army, the importation of US Jim Crow laws, and the physical and sexual assault of Haitian girls and women by US government agents meant that the quotidian quality and experience of the occupation for many women was spatial insecurity (Johnson 2017). Women were forced to move quickly to dodge unprovoked violence and surveillance. In the mid-twentieth century, the legacy of this gender-based violence and militarization was further extended during the nearly three decades of the François and Jean Claude Duvalier father/son presidencies (1957–1971 and 1971–1986, respectively). Similar to when they were being watched by white boys in the southern US, women, once girls, recounted being “seen” by the Duvalier’s military police, the *tonton makout*, and having to immediately leave for the countryside or another country in order to escape state-sanctioned sexual violence (COHDS 2010). Jan. J. Dominique’s work *Mémoire d’une amnésique* (Memoir of an amnesiac) notes not what was carried but what was hastily left behind. Dominique (2004, 77) writes, “The little girl did not like that house with the furniture, and the dressers full of clothes, the smoothly stretched bedspreads, everything pointed to a hasty departure.” The catalog of what remained and the treasures corralled onto these heads archived the urgency of some 100,000 Haitians that boarded boats for other places in the Caribbean and North America between 1970 and 1986.

By the late 1980s, images of Haitian girls, women, and their families on small floating vessels were blurred into the visual catalog of Black bodies in tightly packed boats making their way across the sea, Caribbean or otherwise. Routinely stopped in waters “owned” by the United States, these girls were identified by their vessels of escape—boat people. While media outlets popularized the relationship between Haitians and crowded, capsized, and captured boats, they rarely mentioned the historical relationship between the vessels and the people. The Haitian sloop—the boats used to make the journey from northern Haiti, along the Lucayan Archipelago, past the western coast of New Providence, Bahamas, and into the Florida Keys—is an engineering and artistic novelty of eighteenth-century colonial seafaring. Made from mahogany, cedar, sapin, and palm trees, the boats were used for small cargo distribution and pirating of enslaved Africans between European empires in the Caribbean. In the twenty-first century, through generations of apprenticeship and oral histories, Haitian boat builders continue to handcraft these 35- to 60-foot vessels out of local lumber. Withstanding hundreds of trips in its lifetime, the Haitian sloop is acknowledged by the contemporary sailing milieu as one of the most durable and agile nonmotorized small boats traveling the Caribbean seas.

The history and maintenance of the sloop attest that Haitian women and men are *boating* people. The Haitian boat space—production and

sailing—flows contrary to (breaches) the history of captivity and confinement that anchors Black folks' lives to boats by instead focusing on Black people's use of them. As Kevin Dawson (2018) offers of African-descended peoples' history with the aquatic world, Haitians, like African-descended people globally, have "enlisted" water and the vessels on them for their own, sometimes fleeting, experiences of freedom. As enlisted vessels, sloops carry Black women who are honing the craft of sudden migration. The boats are modified by the sacred assembly of desires. This enlisting is a *rasanblaj*. In her work, Gina Athena Ulysse (2015) calls forth the Krèyol etymology of *rasanblaj* as "compilation, enlisting, regrouping (of ideas, things, people, spirits)" and extends it as method and practice—"fè yon *rasanblaj*, do a gathering, a ceremony, a protest." This practice opens our witness of women and the Haitian boat space, "recognizing the crossroads not as destination, but as point of encounter from which to move beyond." With their citizenship's future afloat, these women passengers and sailors are bound by the prayers they articulate on these routes: praying people, or the aspirations that lead many to an overpacked vessel; aspirational people, or by the deep methodical breathing that is necessary to maintain a settled stomach among deep-ocean waves; breathing people, or the truth that some will not and did not make it to *lòt bò dlo* (the other side of the water); transitioning people.

This extension of breach through attending to breath and transition on boats is akin to Alexis Pauline Gumbs's (2020) articulation of "undrowned." Gumbs muses that Africans who surrendered themselves to the water to swim freely with marine mammals and those "who survived in the underbellies of boats, under each other, under unbreathable circumstances are the undrowned" (3). And it is "breathing in unbreathable circumstances" that Haitian novelist Edwidge Danticat (2007) bears witness to when she documents her family's travels in the Caribbean Sea in her memoir, *Brother, I'm Dying*. The present participle of death in her title and throughout Danticat's and Gumbs's narrations breathes an imperative attention to the milieu of life in relation to water, the lands that speckle it, and the vessels that traverse it. As Gumbs (2020, 3) offers, for those who make it across the water, "Their breathing did not make them individual survivors. It made a context." Perhaps the context of Haitian sloop routes, then, is a pattern of repair, stitching the Caribbean archipelago together one port at a time with the thread unraveling from the bundles of used clothes that women on these vessels repurpose for their international businesses, cleaning up imperial waste and wastefulness. As such, the context of Black women and water moving rapidly pools a particular quality of migration. It incubates a skillful practice of balancing life and death in one vessel, while hailing future freedoms into the present.

3—

A portion of my note to the students before the first day of class: "We will get right into our training and creations." Translation: Please come prepared to work. We will do more than read the syllabus.

When the students walked into the classroom on the first day, they were greeted with sewing machines spread out along five long tables. In



FIGURE 4 Student sewing quilted sail in class. (Photo credit: Nora Gross)

Image Description: A Black student's hands pushing multicolored fabric through an electric sewing machine. The student's nails are embellished with faux rhinestones.

Alt Text: Student's hands pushing fabric through a sewing machine. [This figure appears in color in the online issue]

another context, the sight of Black women sitting in front of machines, in a studio with industrial-building-style windows, would have communicated the underpaid, poorly ventilated, and manipulative conditions under which women work throughout the Americas, sewing, cutting, and mending a world that they will not inhabit, be clothed by, or play in. In this context, however, the students learned how to sew that day, and during each class, the hum of machines accompanied our class discussions (Figure 4). It was loud. We thought of this simultaneous sewing and discussion as a pedagogical practice akin to Elsa Barkley Brown's (1992, 297) attention to the intellectual stimuli of the *gumbo yaya* (everybody talks at once) among Black women quiltmakers in New Orleans. We laughed as we clumsily navigated this intellectual practice. Our stitches were accompanied by the frequent "Can you repeat that?" or "Sorry, I missed what you said. My machine jammed." Similar to the first time Joanne taught me how to row a boat, we were putting in so much effort, but as a class we were going against the tide, and it felt at times that we were making waves, but going nowhere. And then (by the end of the third class), we started to flow. Our voices, the machines, the sound of ripped fabric, and the sizzle of steam coming off the hot iron morphed into a familiar hum.

We baptized the floors of the lab with indigo.

We cut.

We screen-printed and letterpressed.

We wore quilted hoodies as capes.

We cut up.

We discussed.

We sewed.

We planned and plotted. And planned.

We cut out.

And sewed again. All at the same time (Figure 5 and Figure 6).

What felt like a frenzied pace at the time we later learned was predictive. Nearly seven weeks into our scheduled fifteen-week lab-intensive course, we were forced to shift abruptly. In mid-March



FIGURE 5 Letter Press. (Photo credit: Author)

Image Description: Typeset letters placed in an 1850 iron hand press. The words include “Water,” “Quilt,” “Sail,” “Ships,” and “Freedom.”

Alt text: Type set letters in iron hand press from 1850.

[This figure appears in color in the online issue]

2020, the United States went into a mandatory national shutdown in response to the spread of the COVID-19 virus. We were given a small window to get our stuff out of the university art studio. As we hustled to decide what we would take and what we would leave—carrying a dozen sewing machines, dyed cloth, books, and materials out of the building—we realized that the course had perhaps moved beyond the realm of the theoretical into the realm of the practical: Black women, moving quickly with care. In oral history projects in Haiti, the United States, and Canada, I’ve repeatedly asked Haitian women what they took with them when they fled political threats from the Duvalier government. The responses included a promise from a fiancé left behind, school-books (because parents had not imagined their escape would extend beyond a school year), some pink strappy shoes that were soaked with snow when stepping off the plane in Montreal, and laughter. We were not fleeing the immediate violence of a dictator or gender-based violence, but as the early days of confusion around COVID-19 progressed, it was clear that we were all carrying aspirations for the immediate future and even joy that could not be drowned by the uncertainty of the moment. Yet, the sudden pivot revealed that many students were running into unsafe home spaces, housing insecurity, unforeseen caregiving roles, and COVID “hotspots.” The disparities in health-care services for many students (a truth that is often disguised by the paraphernalia of campus life) became painfully evident as students reported the disproportionate rates of infection and fatalities in their families and com-

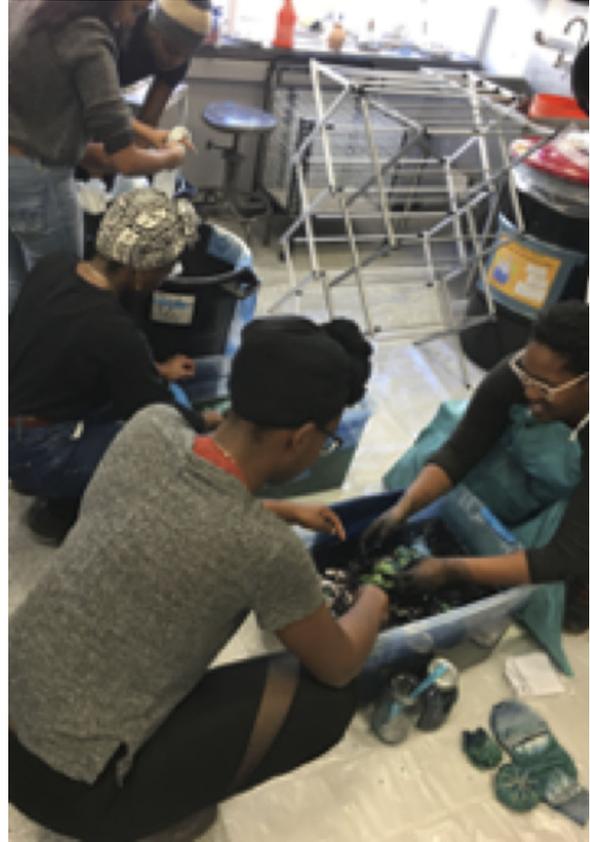


FIGURE 6 Indigo dying. (Photo by author)

Image Description: Two students and Emily Carris Duncan soaking fabric in plastic vats of indigo dye. Two students in the upper left-hand corner of the photo are rinsing and wringing fabric in a plastic vat of water.

Alt Text: Students soaking, rinsing, and drying fabric in indigo dye.

[This figure appears in color in the online issue]

munities. And still, email message after email message from students asked: “Did you get the sail?”

The inquiries about the sail during this time of uncertainty made us wonder: What had they sewn into their portions of the sail? What had they preserved in the dye? What had they planned to take with them? As the pandemic hit (and kept hitting), the sail was dispersed in parts among members of the course. Students were in the process of embroidering, printing, and re-dyeing portions of the sail for their own messaging, but with no access to our lab resources, they could not continue. Moreover, the students were now also dispersed across the country. Several weeks into the shutdown, we were able to get all parts of the sail into one place, but the details on the sail were incomplete. Thus, in a different kind of breach, contrary to traditional student-professor power structures, we—Joanne, Emily, and I—began taking instructions from the students (Figure 7 and Figure 8). This unique collaboration expanded the bounds of our creativity and experimentation as we attempted to translate the students’ vision of freedom.

Throughout the semester, we had written and shared sailors’ logs and studied one another’s creative practices, but the conditions of the pandemic drew us into new intimacies through unexpected shared

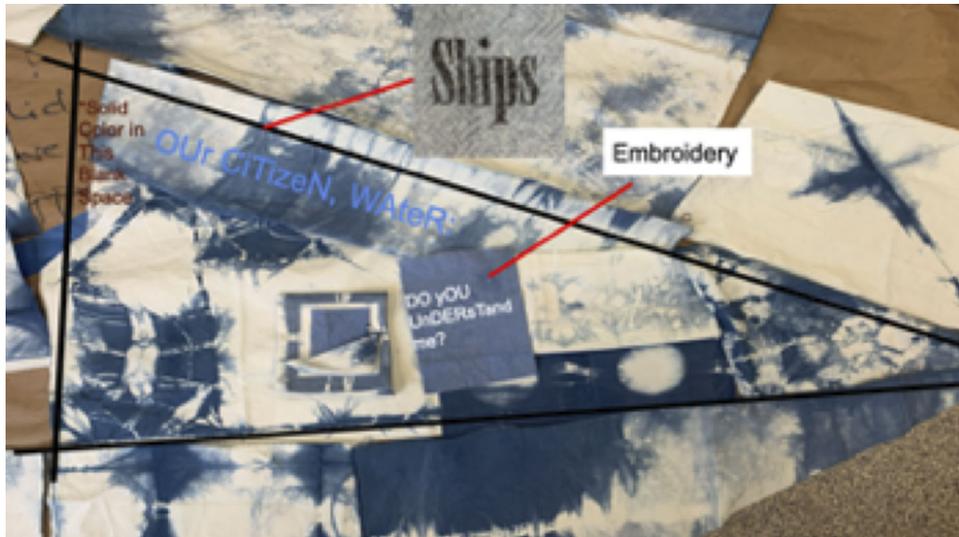


FIGURE 7 A student's digital instructions. (Photo courtesy of author)

Image Description: Image of a student's portion of the sail, with instructions for different presentation mediums, including typeset letter press, embroidery, and screen printing.

Alt Text: A student's digital instructions overlaid on section of the quilt.

[This figure appears in color in the online issue]

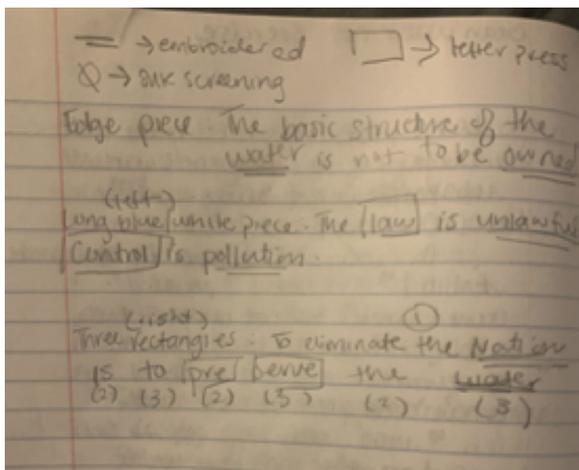


FIGURE 8 A student's written instructions. (Photo courtesy of author)

Image Description: Notebook page with student plans for their portion of the sail. The page includes an instruction key to mark areas for embroidery, letter press, and screen printing.

Alt Text: A student's written instructions on notebook paper.

[This figure appears in color in the online issue]

material that included digital revisions to designs, reflective prose, and screenshots of our shares during Zoom courses and meetings, all against the backdrop of bedroom floors, kitchen tables, and front stoops. In a multimodal course, this new material became texts for us to consider and incorporate in our production. It also directed our course of study. While we prepared for our boat-license exams, many of us also quickly learned programs like Adobe Illustrator, Canva, and Photoshop to communicate our ideas to one another. This extra material, or "trace media," slowly documented the contexts of an evolving global health crisis and how these students were moving with care through it. Read-

ing the ledgers and coded instructions of our students' desires, we were reminded of Black quilting women who embedded their own codes of celebration, memory, and escape into their work. Emily had taught us how to sew these patterns using her own project of overlaying quilts onto black hoodies as shields for Black people as they journey alongside present-day institutional racism and police violence (see Carris-Duncan's piece *Thug*). And much like the nineteenth-century "birds in the air" quilt pattern used to direct enslaved Africans to freedom in the Northern United States, the students' instructions had a Morse code quality that communicated simplicity and urgency. The pandemic further highlighted racial inequities, social disparities, and environmental changes, and the students used their symbols to trouble understandings of these global systems and redress their relationship to these ecologies. In their lexicon, water is a citizen, and she is free.

As we moved through the end of the course, separated by cities and Zoom boxes, we invited this breach—to leap and splash freely.³ There is no certainty about why whales breach. One hypothesis is that the humpback whale, for example, breaches in order to create a "resounding splash" that will vibrate louder and longer distances to communicate with other whales, sharing their location or signaling that they are changing course (Leatherwood, Caldwell, and Winn 1976, 30). Our trace media and multimodal musing located us and announced our changing course as "a 'work in progress' that traverse[d] multiple, collaborative platforms" (Collins, Durrington, and Gill 2017, 144). We breached into new media projects about water runoff in the Bronx, visual collages about our mothers' and grandmothers' journeys across water, musings about our use of water as caregivers, research on waterway projects in the Schuylkill, and prose that chartered our way to and through water one hundred years in the future. We were splashing. We were leaping, but it was directional. Our single-head sail, modeled after those hoisted on Haitian sloops, offered a

stabilizing force. And our collective attention to the sail-making and boating space remained what Gumbs might call our dorsal practice. In her attention to aquatic mammals, she writes, “dolphins evolved dorsal fins from practice across generations. By accepting that the ocean would always move, and becoming accordingly. An embodied emphasis towards balance” in order to withstand “a context that swells and tosses [us] around, where [we] might have to pivot without much warning” (Gumbs 2020, 36).

In this context of becoming accordingly while leaping freely and being tossed around, we returned to our sentient port. The full title of *Breach* includes a postscript: “A LARGE FIGURE ON RAFT.” While holding her balance with a wooden stick, the woman is balancing a world that makes her a 13.5-foot installation. The load is stabilized, but it is also far greater than her vessel. The events of 2020, which started and continued with the COVID-19 pandemic but also included the rehearsal of police murdering Black people, were larger than our 2017 kitchen table planning, or our course, or our students’ coding could bear. But in our attention to the many breaches, we offer that our dorsal practice is to teach our students and ourselves how to survive an end that will disproportionately crash harder on Black people’s shores. Like the pool of water called forth by *Breach* on the museum floor, we will be held accountable. When the cities continue to flood, tremble, and burn, will we have only given our students books and theories to throw at it? Might we practice our sailor’s knot as we discuss Tubman or read Morrison, Hurston, and Butler again and again, all necessary references for escape and freedom. In the context of Black women moving quickly with care, multimodality as a pedagogical practice is not novel, but it is an invitation to retool our classrooms, research agendas, and valued outcomes. Our measures of success, as our students defined them, were through the saturation of their indigo-soaked hands, needle-pricked thumbs, and media content clandestinely disguised under layers of instruction. This is not a call to open the floodgates and relinquish rigor or integrity. Rather, breaching—opening, contrary movement, leaping out of water—takes maturation and focus as we support students to establish their own pathways through an urgent now. Learning in the legacy of those Black transnational seafaring women, our research, teaching, and fields of study can only remain afloat, if we collectively learn and practice how to cut, mend, and sail.

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This essay is a love letter to my co-captains, Joanne Douglas and Emily Carris-Duncan. It is the warmest thank you letter to Deborah Thomas and the Center for Experimental Ethnography (UPenn) for valuing, funding, and overall cheerleading this vision from ashore. This course was also funded by the Department of Africana Studies (UPenn). And finally, this essay is a promissory note to our shipmates that we will see this project to its completion.

Land Acknowledgement. I acknowledge that this work was imagined and practiced on the ancestral and unceded land of the Lenni-Lenape people.

NOTES

- ¹ During the editing of this piece, Hurricane Ida, a category 4 storm, made landfall in Louisiana on the sixteenth anniversary of Hurricane Katrina (August 29, 2005). Formed in the Caribbean Sea on August 26, 2021, Hurricane Ida hit Philadelphia on September 2, 2021, causing the Schuylkill River to flood the city.
- ² Breach: Noun: 1. to act or a result of breaking; **break** or rupture; 2. An infraction or violation, as of a law, trust, faith, or promise. 3. A gap made in a wall, fortification, line of soldiers, etc.; rift; **fissure**. 4. A severance of friendly relations 5. The leap of a whale above the surface of the water. 6. Archaic. The breaking of waves; dashing of surf. 7. Obsolete. **Wound**. Verb (used with object): 1. To make a breach or **opening in** 2. To break or **act contrary to** (a law, promise, etc.) Verb (used without object): 10. (of a whale) **to leap** partly or completely out of the water, head first, and land on the back or belly with a resounding splash. <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/breach>.
- ³ Verb (used without object): 10. (of a whale) to leap partly or completely out of the water, headfirst, and land on the back or belly with a resounding splash. <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/breach>.

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