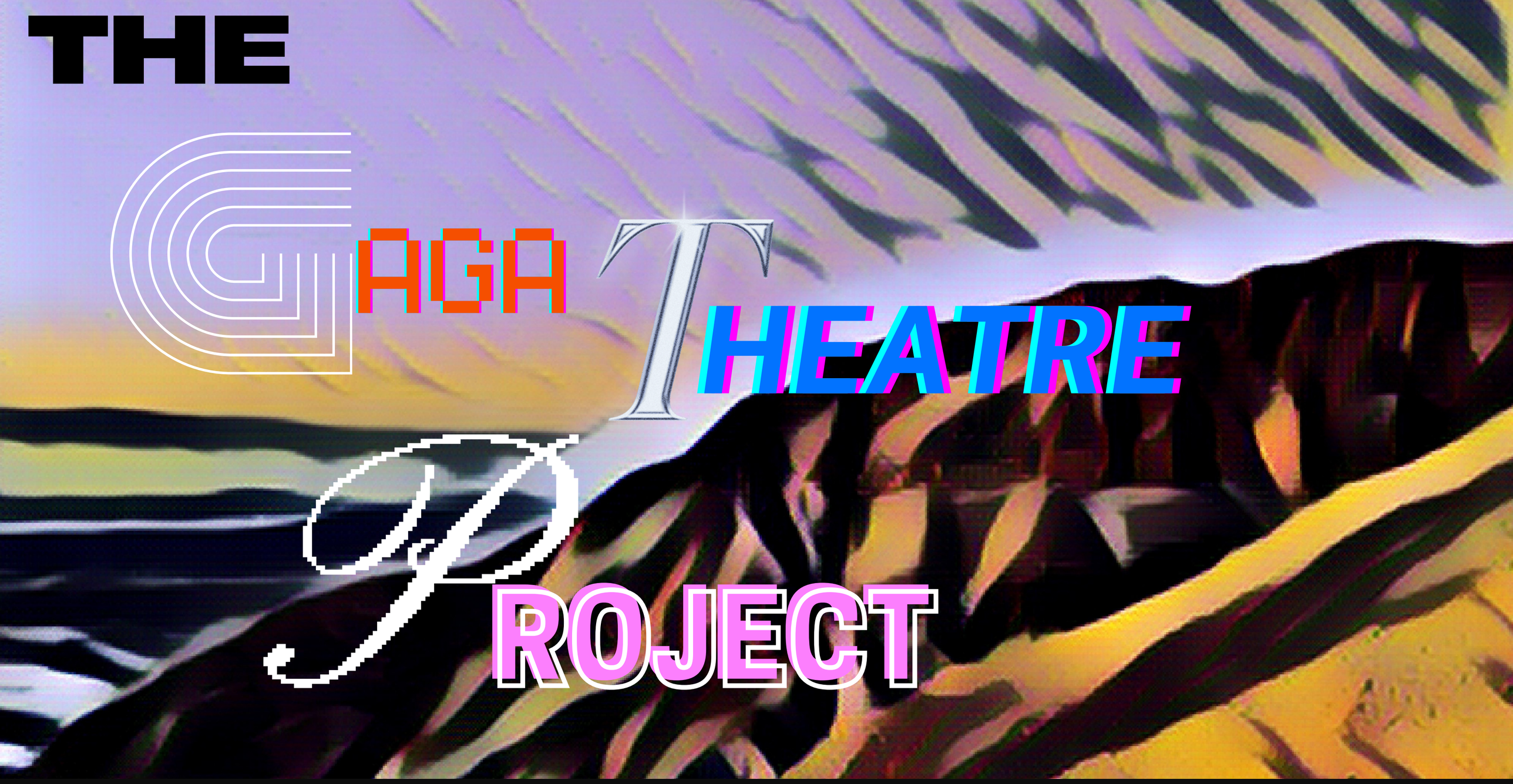
THE GAGA THEATRE PROJECT



A RESEARCH OVERVIEW BY MACE COWART

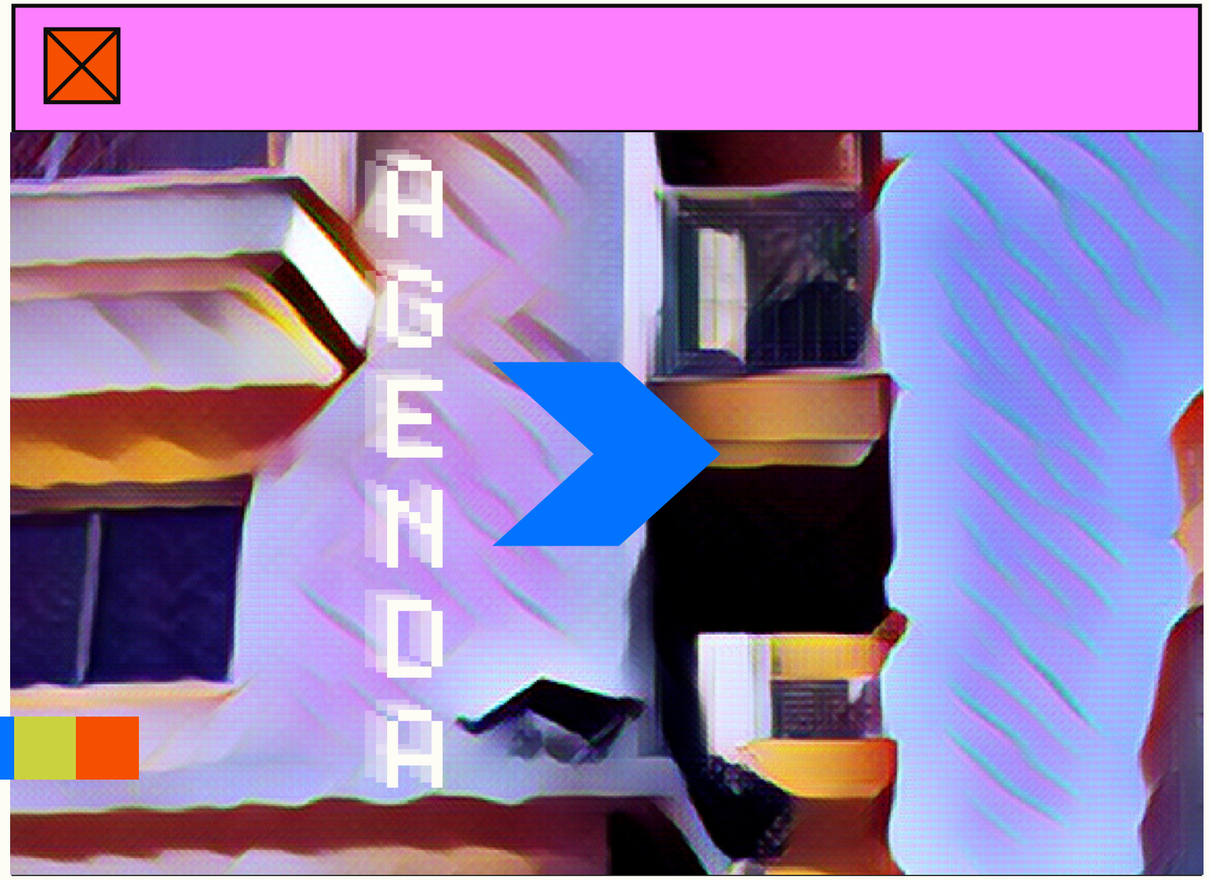
my elevator pitch

"get out of your head and just do"

"you're muscling it"

"stop judging yourself during the scene"

Gaga unlocks an actors physical potential, connects identity to embodiment, and redefines the body as an extension of perceived self and a vessel to safely explore character. Gaga is about going beyond familiar limits every day, arriving at places you've never been before and couldn't even imagine exist, and listening to the body before telling it what to do. Every actor knows their objectives and actions, but Gaga puts them in the body.



- THESIS STATEMENT
- RESEARCH IN PRACTICE
- WHATS NEW
- WHATS NEXT

THESIS

Initial thesis in research proposal

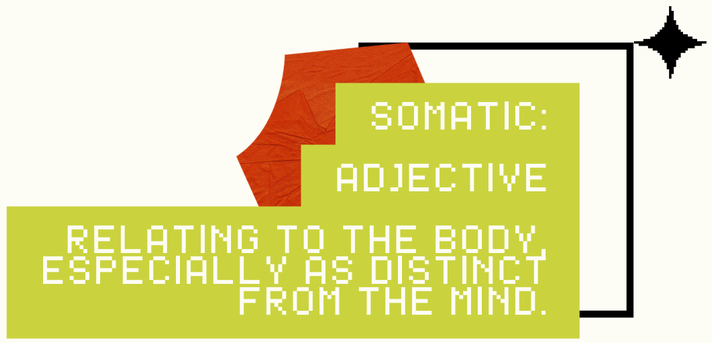
12/21

Can actors use the Gaga movement method in theatre spaces to invite personal identity and embrace relationships to the body?

Updated thesis

7/22

How can actors use Gaga as somatic method to connect and/or disconnect with themselves and/or a character?



QUOTES FOR THOUGHT

What potentially exists can be actualized through the experience of it
- Aristotle

Play is not something that someone does, but rather something in which one participate.
-Kant

Arrive at places you've never been before and couldn't even imagine exist.
- Naharin

Research → → in Practice

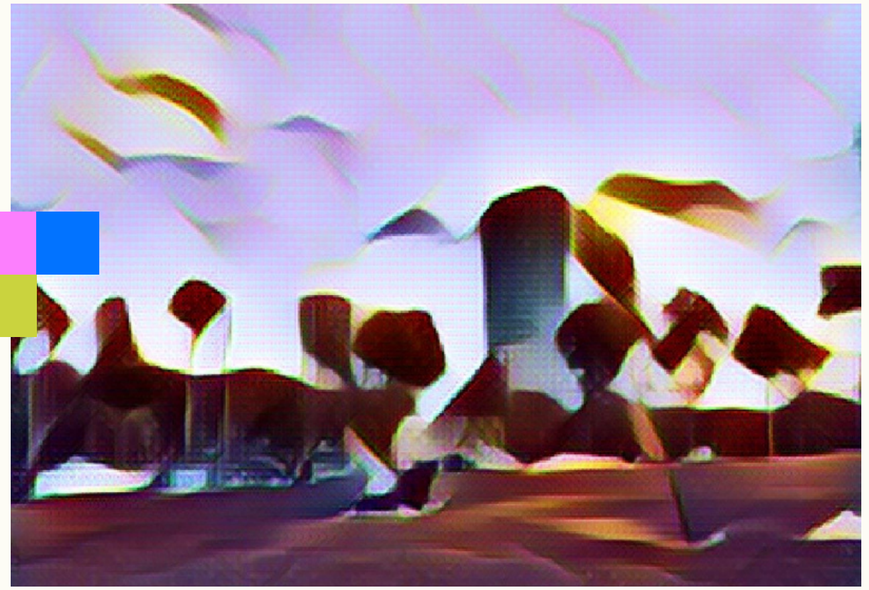
Attend 1 or both Gaga/People classes a day	**Write** about discoveries and revelations.
Read and annotate in books, articles, and journals.	**Engage** the body in various ways.
Explore Israel and learn about its culture, history, and people.	**Dance** for my own enjoyment and exploration of the body and its rhythm.
Watch dance shows.	**Ask** questions. In formal interviews, bars, classes, shows, and on the street.

WHATS NEW?

so much. but here are some big ones.

JACQUE LECANS "MIRROR STAGE"

A paranoiac condition for knowledge, or the breaking of mind and body connection for self-consciousness. When the mind and body are not connected, you are self-conscious.



BUTOH THEATRE

Butoh is an attempt to uncover the dance that already exists, it must emerge from within, and not be imposed from without.

OBJECTIVE AND ACTION

The Gaga process and actors shared need for an objective and the multi-tasking of bringing every action through that objective.

WHATS NEW?

The Mirror Stage	Butoh Theatre	Objective and Action
Interested in how the mirror stage blocks actors from identifying with a character. Similar to Dr. Trescot's SoulWork use of soul versus stereotype.	**Butoh is a performance style that shares the most similarities with Gaga's approach to movement that I have found to date.**	**In Gaga, you are given a prompt to move/an objective. In that prompt, you perform actions while maintaining the objective. This is acting.**
The mirror, or self perception, becomes the ideal I, while the experience of self and the body remains fragmented.	Offers a bridge between theatre and dance/a stepping stone in the journey to Gaga.	Muti-tasking is something we strive for and work up to in a Gaga class. To multi-task or overwhelm yourself while describing form is one of the "meca goals" in Gaga.
There is an attempt to bring together two different detached representation that become identified with oneself: what the imagination projects as the ideal and what it projects as the current state of ones self	Butoh is a more acting based movement method to balance Gaga as a movement based acting method.	When asking Saar Harari what to do when you lose focus in Gaga/think about how your look/begin muscling, he replied, "what is your objective and what action are you trying to do." (Light bulb moment)

WHATS NEXT?

Workshop

Lee Sher Gaga/Acting workshop at SMU.

Meadows funding needed. Weekend workshop + she offered to help workshop my thesis show.

Out reach to movement theatre researchers/ professors, such as a later interview with Emily Coats/Yale Dance Theatre and of course my SMU professors for feedback.

Share

Share Gaga with student body. This has already begun via an 18 minute Gaga intro class thats a private Youtube link.

Check about freshman and sophomore acting classes having a Friday Gaga class at beginning of semester

Offer Gaga classes online and in person (when school beings) to students. People can come once or 100 times. There is zero commitment to being apart of a "Gaga exploration" which entails a class and offering reflection.

Show

Assemble a cast for the thesis production. A cast of 5 or 9 committed actors is ideal.

Write/devise script. How much I write/how much we devise will be determined after I gauge how interested people are.

A 4-5 week rehearsal process, performance in the Bates studio (or the Jones...) in December or early spring.

How involved can meadows students be in this? Can a story be written around student art work? Feature music students original compositions? A voice major? Film majors? What is the potential of this project?!