

Experiments in Joy: A Workbook

Compiled by *Gabrielle Civil*
with contributions by Call & Response Artists
Gabrielle Civil, Duriel E. Harris,
Kenyatta A. C. Hinkle, Rosamond S. King,
Wura-Natasha Ogunji, Miré Regulus
and *Awilda Rodríguez Lora*



1

A TRAJECTORY OF JOY—

Gabrielle Civil

What comes to mind when you think of joy?

What comes into your body?

Call & Response artists: Wura-Natasha Ogunji, Awilda Rodríguez Lora, Kenyatta A. C. Hinkle, Miré Regulus, Duriel E. Harris, Gabrielle Civil, and Rosamond S. King, with community member Vernetta Willett at the Experiments in Joy Performance Festival, August 2014.

Cover photo credit: Dennie Eagleson

When I think of joy, I think of eating a massive feast with hybrid food from West Africa and Kentucky. Following a black woman into a glen and watching her tremble and transform. Dancing at DJ Buddha's dance party with Sun Ra's face floating in the air. Watching a black woman dig up earth, insert new words, then fill up pages of public writing. Watching another black woman become a shamanic nurse all in white, gathering drops of blood and flecks of skin. Another one "painting like man," smashing bottles of paint onto canvases, then auctioning them off. Me, playing Bettye LaVette's "Joy" in my art space and feeling something stir, starting to make something happen. Wide eyes and full lungs. Pulsing. Amazed, but not surprised at the extraordinary cracking through. I felt this too listening to the lady from church hit the highest notes and vibrate the room in song. (*This woman can saaang! Of course she can!*)

My thoughts of joy, really body memories, come from Experiments in Joy, a festival of black women and performance that I organized five years ago at Antioch College. The lead artists of the festival, in above order, were Kenyatta A. C. Hinkle, Awilda Rodríguez Lora, Duriel E. Harris, Miré Regulus, Rosamond S. King, Wura-Natasha Ogunji, and myself. Community member Vernetta Willett, an accomplished choir director and musician, also joined us in the festivities.

We were all black women artists with different relationships to the words "black," "woman," and "performance." And we didn't set out initially to conjure joy. Well, at least not consciously. Here's how it happened. While deliberating

on a job offer from Antioch, whether or not to completely uproot my life and move to a small town in the middle of the cornfields, I had a flight of fancy. You know what would help me take this job, I told the then-president of the college, a FESTIVAL of BLACK WOMEN and PERFORMANCE. Who knew that I would even say such a thing? That remark, and his enthusiastic reply, sealed the deal. I became a professor of performance at Antioch College (at least for a while) and Call & Response was born.

In Call & Response, the seven lead artists came together not once but twice. In July 2014, we collaborated on a Call, a collective prompt for artistic action. At the end of a five-day session, we announced this Call at an Antioch community meeting and shared it with our networks on-line. Then we went away for a month, created new work and, in August 2014, came back to campus, shared our Responses and witnessed community Responses as well. Going into the project, none of us knew what any of this would be.

We also didn't all know each other at first, so developing the Call involved a lot of talking, playing, laughing, and dreaming together. Working with markers and big sheets of paper, we asked ourselves many questions. What would it really mean for us as black women artists to explore our visions? How could we give ourselves and each other permission to go deep? *How does our work change when we create from a place of freedom? What is irresistible to us?* As we brainstormed, joy made its way to the surface and we recognized its power. We created a Call for Experiments in Joy that not only led to the Experiments in Joy Performance

Festival but has become a lasting tool for personal and artistic transformation.

The Call for Experiments in Joy is at the heart of this workbook. Created by black women artists, this Call can be used by anyone. The key is to remember how it developed and to stay grounded in its values. From our lived experiences, we asked: *How can we negotiate invisibility and hyper-visibility in productive ways? How can we make art that manifests change for a more socially just world?* At the same time, we also asked: *How do we undefine the defined? How can we achieve radical openness? How can we claim joy?*

To be clear, the Call doesn't promise specific experiences. You may not end up with a new job, a feast, a dance party, or a performance festival. Instead, you might draw a sketch, make a dessert, ask someone for forgiveness, or organize a political meeting. What will happen is up to you. The Call offers an approach to joy. The unknown outcome is what makes it an experiment.

With the help of this workbook, you can conduct experiments in joy and harness new possibilities for your life and creative work. Read the Call and follow the Activation. Sit with the questions. Follow the steps. Witness the testimony from the seven original lead artists and check out their suggested resources. Dream into the spaces: take notes, stretch, flow out into your own notebook. Be creative and give experiments in joy a try. With this workbook and the energy of the Call, let joy shift from a feeling to a practice.

2

THE CALL FOR EXPERIMENTS IN JOY

From Lagos and Austin, Los Angeles, Louisville, Minneapolis, Chicago, Brooklyn, Seoul, Pétienville, the Arkansas Delta, Horseshoe Mountain, Busan, Detroit, New York City, Kentifrica, Puerto Rico, Beirut, Mexico City, Banjul, The Gambia and Yellow Springs, OH, we arrived to participate in Call & Response, an innovative dynamic of black women and performance at Antioch College. We are a diverse group of seven black women artists with different relationships to the words "black," "women" and "performance." For five days, we shared stories and forged a process. We debated privilege, agency and forgiveness. We worked, played, laughed, sang, presented work and considered what we are all called to do.

What is the urgency of our invention?
How can we engage in collective imagining?
How does our work change when we create
from a place of freedom?
What is irresistible to us?
Are you available to yourself and to your calling?
How can we negotiate invisibility and hyper-visibility
in productive ways?
How do we undefine the defined?
How can we sharpen our awareness of energy and rhythm
in the body?
How can we make art that manifests change for a more
socially just world?
How can we move through or without fear?
How can we sustainably care for and be accountable
to ourselves and one another?
How can we achieve radical openness?
How can we claim joy?
In response, we call you to conduct
experiments in joy.

This call invites you to play, explore, investigate and create: performance, poems, drawings, desserts, long walks, spirited discussions, textiles, hairstyles, dance, research – make it funky – cooking, music, maps, apps, structures, sounds, movements, games, artifacts, political actions, adornment, manifestations, encounters, new intentions, letters, photographs, or anything else – surprise yourself! Here's how to do it:

1. Tell the truth
2. Make something new
3. Invite someone in
4. Document
5. Repeat

This process can be collective or individual, a single event or daily practice. Reasons to respond include: to participate in an artistic community; to connect to the enduring legacy of black women artists; to experiment; to play; to find new sources of joy; to confront obstacles to your joy; to learn how to inhabit joy while embattled; to make new work; to transform the work you're already doing; to interact in new ways; to heal. We don't have all the answers and we don't always agree on the answers we have. We do know the conversation is urgent.

Join us. Respond to the Call.

Call & Response artists: Gabrielle Civil, Duriel E. Harris, Kenyatta A. C. Hinkle, Rosamond S. King, Wura-Natasha Ogunji, Miré Regulus and Awilda Rodríguez Lora.

RESPONSES

(Dreamspace)

RESPONSES

(Dreamspace)

RESPONSES

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RESPONSES

(Dreamspace)

3

ACTIVATION PROPOSED BY

Gabrielle Civil

Read the Call for Experiments in Joy.

Read it out loud. Read it slowly.

Read it with your body. Sound it out.

Read it with a friend. Read it with your homegirls, your squad, your art pals, your people you don't know that well but want to get to know better.

Read it with people you want to make art with.

Read it with people to make a better world.

Read it with your favorite pen or pencil in hand.

Mark it up. Underline or star things that jump out to you.

Place question marks by things that make you wonder.

What do you mean by joy?

Jot down your wondering.

Explode the text. Generate your own responses.

Add your own annotations.

Map out your points of origin.

These could be literal, artistic or spiritual birthplaces.

These could be points on a map or corners of a room.

Consider: what are your relationships to the words
“black,” “woman,” and “performance”?

Which words are most often used to define
your life?

What are your relationships to those words?

What new words do you want to proclaim?

Look closely at how these artists forged a process.

Circle the key verbs and pick one to focus on for at least 5 days.

Then go back and pick another one.

Spend time with the questions.

Which questions here seem the juiciest to you?

Which questions seem the hardest?

Which questions resonate most with where you
are right now or with where you most want to go?

Dive into those questions.

Move them into your body.

Scribble responses in your notebook.

Dream. Speak. Write.

Sing. Breathe. Play.

Create. Make. Perform.

Experiment. Brave Joy.

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Black women's performance art remains alternative and adjacent to/outside of the Art World. No one I know does it because we're sure we have a place. We do it because we are called to do it from the inside out. When invited to be a part of the Antioch College gathering, I went because I love my friend Gabrielle and because I missed her and the body/art/ideation conversations the two of us have that can last for hours. While confident in my connection to her, I arrived at Antioch worried and unsure whether I belonged in that circle, in that room with those women, busy making art so fully. They all held the "oozing art-making from their skin" credentials, which I do not.

Within the first hour, I knew there were gifts and sharings I could offer and receive. By the end of the first day I knew I belonged, and by the end of the first gathering (when we birthed/unearthed the Call), I knew that circle of Blk Women performance artists and the guide that the Call became were essential to my artistry and to my life. Five years later, when I publicly share the Call with others, I struggle to read it out loud all the way through without tears. In facing the ways that the world strives to diminish us, to snatch any piece of our humanness away and shred it before our eyes, the deserved possibility of freedom and celebration inherent in the call feels SO big, SO life affirming, SO spacious to me that it hurts to read. The Call and this circle of women offer me joy and reminders of how much space I can take, how much impact I can have, and how much it matters that I do.

Since we created the Call to create Experiments in Joy, I have read and re-read it, taught it, and shared it with dozens of people. For me, the Call inspired two specific artworks: "Tiney Winey," which explores black women's erotic joy and how that is perceived by others, and "Leave It Behind" which invites people to give stories about — and tiny pieces of — themselves away. Beyond that, in these times when fear and anxiety seem to be tools of the government, the Call reminds me to return to, meditate on, and celebrate joy. *All the Rage*, my new collection of poems, focuses on state violence against people of color, but it also includes poems that emphasize that even in the worst circumstances, we have the capacity to love, laugh, dance, and experience joy. I encourage everyone to try creating an Experiment in Joy — and to share their experiments and the Call with others!

TESTIMONY

Wura-Natasha Ogunji

It has been amazing to see the expansion of Experiments in Joy from the initial workshop/performances at Antioch in 2014. I believe strongly in the power of making, of creativity to propel us into new ways of being, looking at, and experiencing the world and I know that when we act from places of joy we move with a clarity and vision that is quite powerful for both ourselves and others. I like that we are asking people to actively do, rather than just think about or intellectualize this concept. I love seeing the continued momentum of those actions.

TESTIMONY

Kenyatta A.C. Hinkle

For ten years, I'd been wanting to do a Fulbright fellowship. I remember mentioning that to Rosamond at Call & Response. She responded, "Well I've done that and Gabrielle has done that. Where do you want to go?" Then I got connected to Wura and that's literally how my Fulbright to Nigeria started. I put my dreams in the air in a powerful room of black women performers and they asked, "How can we help?"

In Nigeria, I learned so much about how to embody joy daily, how to laugh and cry and have anger and fear and frustration and still live life joyfully. Then back in the US in 2016, I remember marching in Inglewood with the Movement for Black Lives the summer night they stopped traffic on the 405. That summer there was so much proximity to the spectacle of Black death and very few moments of joy. I felt joyless without much possibility to cultivate it outside of watching my beautiful son grow. That's when the birthday challenges began. I give myself a new theme for my birthday and celebrate it for 364 days so each birthday is a New Year celebration.

For 2016, the theme was doing things that scare the shit out of me because I was so close to death, I wanted to focus on getting out of my comfort zone and living. The next year was devoted to spiritual, mental, financial, and physical health. Last year was about doing things my future self would thank me for i.e. landing a tenure track job with benefits. This year is about love and the erotics of joy so I am coming full circle regarding the Call. I recommend a birthday challenge as an experiment in joy.

TESTIMONY

Awilda Rodríguez Lora

Experiments in Joy is an important part of my daily creative practice. At Call and Response, I had the opportunity to share living, working and creative space with a cohort of black women performance artists. Together we shared many conversations about joy, resilience, conflict, violence, and love. The task of trying to define joy and its importance as a healing and creative practice gave us a set of ingredients that then created the recipe for others to generate experiments in joy. This practice can be done daily, weekly, monthly and/or whenever you feel joy escaping your body. In 2015, just a year after we created the Call, I started my own daily Experiment in Joy and I titled it Bailemos___/365 #bailartodoslosdias2015. Each year the hashtag changes with the days added to the experiment. I have danced every day since January 1st, 2015 and currently we are on #bailartodoslosdias2019. Experiments in Joy also led me to understand my current project La Mujer Maravilla as a life project. Read and see images at lamujermaravilla.org. Then try and share your own experiment in joy!

TESTIMONY

Gabrielle Civil

For the last five years, Experiments in Joy has been a major touchstone in my life. I've delivered a host of performance lectures on the theme; distributed the Call at readings and job talks; guest-edited an "Experiments in Joy" special issue of *Obsidian*; presented the project with my collaborators at a national theater conference; named my latest book after it; discussed the project in the book; and, even used the Call to organize the book's sections. Despite many other creative projects, it was also me who reached out to my brilliant, busy collaborators to endorse and materialize this workbook. Why?

Because the world is a mess and we need more joy.

Because Experiments in Joy is black feminist magic.

Because the questions are a framework and a springboard.

Because sometimes we need instructions.

Because for five years it's been irresistible to me.

It's not that I always feel joyful. In fact, in the last five years, I've undergone health issues, heartbreak, a cross-country move—not to mention the catastrophic politics of the United States and environmental situation of the planet. Still the memory of vibing with these powerful black women and the clear steps of this score have helped me over the tough spots. When I feel stuck, I know the Call for joy can help me through.

TESTIMONY

Durriel E. Harris

From a conversation with Marva Lord on July 2, 2019

“Experiments in Joy felt like an opportunity to both open up and transform my creative practice, to make it more concretely intentional so that the focus on play has direction. It was cool because it came out of a collective experience and I’m an experimental artist, so the risk in it was part of the fun. It reminded me of improvisation. You don’t know what’s going to happen, and that’s okay. It’s invigorating and life affirming. The call formalizes creative practice in a simple way that, by design, is generative for work, and is also generative for joy. Conceptually, as a whole, it is designed to augment your joy. It’s exponentially generative.”

5

BLOGGING EXPERIMENTS IN JOY—

Durriel E. Harris

All of my blog posts for *Harriet* (the blog of The Poetry Foundation) are written as Experiments in Joy. The series from August 2016 specifically engages other poets/writers/multigenre artists to respond to the Call. I feel that these posts give insight into the myriad ways in which Experiments in Joy can function as a portal for transformation.

August 2016

“Experiments in Joy: Cut the Cake or Ven Devórame Otra Vez,”
[www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2016/08/
experiments-in-joy-cut-the-cake-or-ven-devorame-otra-vez/](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2016/08/experiments-in-joy-cut-the-cake-or-ven-devorame-otra-vez/)

“Carving the Mask: Notes on Re-entering Tomorrowland,”
[www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2016/08/
carving-the-mask-notes-on-re-entering-tomorrowland/](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2016/08/carving-the-mask-notes-on-re-entering-tomorrowland/)

“Cake Somebody Momma Made & She Put Her Foot in It,”
[www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2016/08/
cake-somebody-momma-made-she-put-her-foot-in-it/](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2016/08/cake-somebody-momma-made-she-put-her-foot-in-it/)

“Serious Play,”
www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2016/08/serious-play/

“‘I set about writing wanting to give you something I love,’”
[www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2016/08/i-set-about-writing-
wanting-to-give-you-something-i-love/](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2016/08/i-set-about-writing-wanting-to-give-you-something-i-love/)

“Although it felt like a confession; or, Introducing the Harri Blogject: The HarriPoG and Other Experiments in Joy,”
www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2016/08/although-it-felt-like-a-confession-or-introducing-the-harri-blogject-the-harripog-and-other-experiments-in-joy/

April 2018

“The Light of Death”

www.poetryfoundation.org/harriet/2018/04/the-light-of-death

6

SIX BOOKS TO SPARK JOY—

Rosamond S. King

When trying out an Experiment in Joy, remember that joy comes in different shapes, sizes, and through many paths. The books on this list highlight and foster joy from physical and mental wellness and sexual desire and pleasure, to artistic gratification, craft projects, and yummy home-baked cookies!

Surviving in the Hour of Darkness: The Health and Wellness of Women of Colour and Indigenous Women edited by G. Sophie Harding. *This anthology includes essays, case studies, poetry, and prose written by over 45 contributors addressing the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health of women of color.*

Best Lesbian Erotica *This series has been published for more than twenty years, so there's a lot to choose from — and Cleis Press also publishes everything from erotica for couples to “kinky” erotica!*

Recyclopedia: Trimmings, S*PeRMK*t, and Muse and Drudge** by Harryette Mullen. *Though a lot of the poems are funny, Mullen's punning and word play will keep you smiling even when the topics are more serious.*

Collected Poems by Edna St. Vincent Millay —
She's a funny — and in her time, scandalous — poet. One of her famous poems about joy reads: "My candle burns at both ends; / It will not last the night; / But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends— / It gives a lovely light!"

How to Make Books: Fold, Cut & Stitch Your Way to a One-of-a-Kind Book by Esther K. Smith.
Making things gives me great joy — and this is one of the clearest guides to quickly and easily making your own books! (Smith and her husband artist Dikko Faust also published Making Books with Kids: 25 Paper Projects to Fold, Sew, Paste, Pop, and Draw.)

Better Homes & Gardens' Cookies for Kids —
Though this book is out of print, there are used copies available online. Even if you're not a kid anymore, the recipes are fun and easy — and if you can't find this book, check out other cook and craft books for children, which tend to have easy-to-follow instructions and great photos.

7

A BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR JOY—

*Gabrielle Civil, Kenyatta A.C. Hinkle,
Wura-Natasha Ogunji, Miré Regulus
& Awilda Rodríguez Lora*

Featuring memoir, poetry, psychology, spirituality, black feminism, and art practice, this eclectic book list reflects the distinct personalities of the Call & Response artists who compiled it. In the spirit of the third step of an Experiment in Joy, "Invite someone in," this list invites you to explore the ideas and experiences of diverse artists, writers, and thinkers. Consider how they "Tell the truth," "Make something new," and "Document" for creativity, empowerment, and joy!

Walk Through Walls —
Marina Abramovic

The Poet X —
Elizabeth Acevedo

The Heart of a Woman —
Maya Angelou

Borderlands / la Frontera —
Gloria Anzaldúa

Color Theory —
**ed. Maya Gomez
& Vreni Michelin Castillo**

The Viewpoints Book:
A Practical Guide to Viewpoints
and Composition —
Anne Bogart & Tina Landau

Radical Acceptance:
Embracing Your Life with the
Heart of a Buddha —
Tara Brach

Emergent Strategy —
adrienne maree brown

The Artist's Way —
Julia Cameron

On the Imperial Highway:
New & Selected Poems —
Jayne Cortez

The Creative Tarot —
Jessa Crispin

Create Dangerously —
Edwidge Danticat

The Four Agreements:
A Practical Guide to Personal
Freedom –
don Miguel Ruiz

Women Who Run with the Wolves:
Myths and Stories of the Wild
Woman Archetype –
Clarissa Pinkola Estés

Life as Material for Art
and Vice Versa –
ed. Nicolás Dumit Estevez

Head Off & Split –
Nikky Finney

Sisters of the Yam –
bell hooks

The T is Not Silent –
Andrea Jenkins

I have to live –
aisha sasha john

Manual of Psychomagic:
The Practice of Shamanic
Psychotherapy –
Alejandro Jodorowsky

Experiments in a Jazz Aesthetic –
**ed. Omi Osun Joni L. Jones, Lisa
Moore, and Sharon Bridgforth**

Mess and Mess and –
Douglas Kearney

The Source of Self-Regard –
Toni Morrison

Radical Presence:
Black Performance
in Contemporary Art –
ed. Valerie Cassel Oliver

Grapefruit –
Yoko Ono

The Forgetting Tree –
Rae Paris

A Synthesis of Intuitions –
Adrian Piper

Letters to a Young Poet –
Rainer Maria Rilke

Lost in Language in Sound –
ntozake shange

Nejma –
Nayyirah Waheed

8

CONTRIBUTOR BIOS

Gabrielle Civil is a black feminist performance artist, poet, and writer, originally from Detroit MI. She has premiered fifty original performance art works around the world and is the author of the performance memoirs *Swallow the Fish* (2017) and *Experiments in Joy* (2019). Her writing has appeared in *Dancing While Black*, *Small Axe*, *Art21*, *Obsidian*, *Kitchen Table Translation*, and *New Daughters of Africa*. She teaches creative writing and critical studies at the California Institute of the Arts and was named a 2019 Rema Hort Mann LA Emerging Artist. The aim of her work is to open up space. www.gabriellecivilartist.com

Poet, performer, and sound artist, **Duriel E. Harris** is author of three print volumes of poetry, including the award-winning *No Dictionary of a Living Tongue* (Nightboat 2017) and the multi-genre one-woman theatrical performance *Thingification*. Recent appearances include at the Art Institute of Chicago, The Votive Poetics Workshop (New Zealand), and Festival Internacional de Poesía de La Habana (Cuba). The 2018 Offen Poet and cofounder of the avant garde poetry/performance trio The Black Took Collective, Harris is an associate professor of English at Illinois State University and the Editor of *Obsidian: Literature & Arts in the African Diaspora*. durielharris.com

Kenyatta A.C Hinkle is an interdisciplinary visual artist, writer, and performer. Her artwork and performances of experimental texts have been reviewed by the *LA Times*, *Artforum*, *The Huffington Post* and *The New York Times*. Her writing has appeared in *Not That But This*, *Obsidian*, and *Among Margins: Critical & Lyrical Writing on Aesthetics*. She is the author of an artist book *Kentifrications: Convergent Truth(s) & Realities* published by Occidental College and Sming Sming Books. *SIR* is her first book of poetry published by Litmus Press. Hinkle is currently the Assistant Professor of Painting at UC Berkeley's Department of Art Practice. www.kachstudio.com

Rosamond S. King is a creative and critical writer and performer whose work is deeply informed by her cultures and communities, by history, and by a sense of play. Poetry publications include the Lambda Award-winning collection *Rock | Salt | Stone* and poems in more than three dozen journals, blogs, and anthologies. Her scholarly book *Island Bodies: Transgressive Sexualities in the Caribbean Imagination* received the Caribbean Studies Association best book award. King's movement-and text-based performance art have been curated around the world. She is the President of the Organization of Women Writers of Africa and associate professor at Brooklyn College, part of the City University of New York. www.rosamondking.com

Wura-Natasha Ogunji creates hand-stitched drawings, videos and public performances. Recent exhibitions include *City Prince/sses* at Palais de Tokyo, Paris and *A Slice through the World: Contemporary Artists' Drawings* at Modern Art Oxford. She was one of the Artist-Curators for the 33rd São Paulo Bienal and is a recipient of the prestigious Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship. Ogunji resides in Lagos where she is founder and curator of the experimental art space The Treehouse. wuraogunji.com

Miré Regulus is a writer, director, performance artist & community builder. She works the 'transformative intersection' using non-linear, rich, poetical prose; through where her work is sited/sighted; and explorations in how body/movement/gesture hold what we know. She has developed new work for Red Eye's Works-In-Progress series and studied in the Change Exchange program with the Los Angeles Poverty Department on Skid Row. In 2009, she was a recipient of Pillsbury House's Naked Stages grant and created work for Laurie Carlos' Late Nite series in 2011, 2013 and 2017. The anchoring tenets of her work are: for the audience to leave a performance feeling something different than when they arrived and the call, "i belong everywhere." pillsburyhouseandtheatre.org/mire-regulus

Awilda Rodríguez Lora is a performance choreographer who challenges the concepts of woman, sensuality, and self-determination in her work. These concepts are explored through the use of movement, sound, and video as well as through literal instantiations of an “economy of living” that either potentiate or subtract from her body’s “value” in the contemporary art market. As a queer woman born in Mexico, raised in Puerto Rico, and living in-between USA and Latin America, her performances traverse multiple colonial realities. Her work promotes progressive dialogues regarding hemispheric colonial legacies, and the unstable categories of race, gender, and sexuality.
laperformera.org

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The Call was later published in *Obsidian: Literature & Arts in the African Diaspora* volume 41.1-41.2, Fall 2015. This “Call & Response: Experiments in Joy” special issue remains a vital place to discover documentation about the original project and to engage creative work inspired by it. Thanks to Duriel E. Harris and the editorial staff of *Obsidian* for devoting space to Call & Response and for situating Experiments in Joy within a lineage of black diasporic culture.

For more information about the Obsidian back issue go online to bit.ly/ObsidianStore or contact info@obsidianlit.org. You can also find other artists’ engagement with the call on the Obsidian blog found at: obsidianlit.org/topics/experimentsinjoy/

The Call also was published in Gabrielle Civil’s performance memoir *Experiments in Joy* (The Accomplices, 2019) where she also elaborates on the role of Call & Response in her own performance practice. Thanks to The Accomplices for permission to reprint this text.

Thanks to Dennie Eagleson for permission to use her photograph and for all of her beautiful documentation of Call & Response.

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This workbook is in memory of Vernetta Willett who raised the roof in song at the Experiments in Joy Performance Festival. Rest in Power. Your spirit remains with us forever.

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