

Verbal Walkthrough

VIGIL – Film Installation by Outer Urban Projects

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Entering the Exhibition

From the Stairs

- The staircase down to the exhibition is wide with handrails on both sides. You would not be able to hold both handrails at once.
- The ceiling hangs low in two spots.
 - About 13 steps down at the short landing in the middle of the staircase.
 - In an arc, lowest near the handrails.
- If you are taller than 5'5", be mindful of these and maybe request assistance or use the lift as needed.
- At the bottom of the staircase you will encounter a glass wall, with a door in it slightly to the right.
- Once through the glass door you are in the exhibition.

From the Lift

- There are up and down buttons with braille to the right of the lift doors.
- Inside the lift, on the walls to your right and left, there are raised print and braille buttons. It may feel as though there are two columns of buttons but the columns on the right are just markings.
- When you enter the lift, you do not need to turn around. The doors that will open to let you out into the exhibition are opposite the doors you entered the lift from.
- Once you exit the lift, a short walk forward will take you through a glass door into the exhibition.

Introduction

Overview

- A large burgundy coloured wall has a video projected onto it and a large section of text with Artist information and about the Exhibition you are walking into.

Projection

- A person with long dark hair dressed in all black in the woods. Covering their eyes they spin in a circle, uncovering their eyes as they stop to point directly at the camera.

Text

VIGIL SHORT FILM, 2024 OUTER URBAN PROJECTS

The VIGIL film is an intimate reflection on the ripple effects of gender-based violence and the power of collective congregation. Through dance, film and composition, it unpacks the layered trauma of abusive relationships and violent events, evoking the interior landscape of human, and in particular, female experiences.

The film emerged from a provocation by Outer Urban Projects Artistic Director Irine Vela, who was deeply moved after attending a series of public vigils in Naarm's inner north, held in response to multiple gender-based murders within the community. Irine and the company entrusted filmmakers Tara and Pippa (the Samaya Wives) to develop a work as part of a larger VIGIL project, that used dance to explore the complex, embodied layers of trauma embedded in acts of violence, rape, and murder.

Shot against the stark, wintry landscape on the outskirts of Berlin during the 2020 COVID-19 lockdown—amid the coldest winter in 30 years—the film holds both personal and collective grief, while gesturing toward healing and empowerment. The film's score climbs from unsettling stillness to a sonic pressure, driving fear, urgency and resistance. Audiences are invited beyond the film's surface, encountering fragments of the creative process and witnessing how experimentation evolves into the final work.

This internationally award-winning short film is presented alongside the large-scale performance work VIGIL; together they examine the intersection of public and private safety with race, gender, and terror.

Developed with support from the Australian Government through Creative Australia and its arts funding and advisory body, the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria, Besen Family Foundation, Inner North Community Foundation and Merri-bek City Council.

Credits

VIGIL Project Director and Originator:

Irine Vela

Directors:

Pippa Samaya and Tara Jade Samaya (The Samaya Wives)

Performers:

Tara Jade Samaya, Pippa Samaya, Ivy-Victoria Otradovec

Original Music and Sound Designer:

Irine Vela

Producers:

Kate Gillick and Irine Vela

Cinematographer:

Pippa Samaya

Editor:

Pippa Samaya

Movement Director:

Tara Jade Samaya

Photographer:

Pippa Samaya

Production Manager:

Ivy-Victoria Otradovec

Mixing and Mastering:

Trevor Carter and Evaripides Evaripidou

Musicians:

Irine Vela, Evaripides Evaripidou, Mulaim Vela, Ron Peers

14 min 17 seconds, played on loop

Section One (Right from entrance)

Candles on plinth

- A white block about 75cm tall has a collection of battery-operated candles sitting on top of it.
- Three tall candles sit across the back.
- In the centre of the plinth is a yellow flower.
- Multiple shorter tea lights sit towards the front and around the sides.
- You are welcome to touch the elements on display here but please try to leave them as you found them.

Floating signs with text

- Four white signs with text on them sit on a black stand that fades into the background. This gives them a 'floating' feeling.
- The signs are lit from above.
- The text on them is as follows:
 1. An excerpt from the email chain from Artistic Director Irine Vela to the Samaya Wives.

“Hi there,

I thought now I would feed another piece of writing by Chevara..

I'm not sure where I'm going with this..

It does resonate in the sense that violence can be cyclical – as much as it can be random...it is about power...premeditation.... It's food for thought - Perhaps it is LIFE that we are investigating.. that to

understand and appreciate it in its totality – we have to confront the darkness..."

15/11/2020

Chevara Orrin is a community catalyst, social entrepreneur, public speaker and justice activist in Jacksonville, Florida. Born the daughter of a white, Jewish mother and Black father, both human and civil rights activists, Chevara's work in both the nonprofit, education and creative spheres has been shaped by her passion for equality, diversity and inclusion. And by her lived experience of sexual abuse.

In Chevara's own words from 'Soul Survivor: Reimagining Legacy by Chevara Orrin (October 2017): "My father, who fought for my freedom before I was even born, molested me. He altered my life. Whoever I was to become: I am someone else. I now know I am exactly who I was meant to be. In spite of, and because of, my father."

2. Below is a text extract from Chevara Orrin's essay 'Necessary Disruption: Navigating Unbalanced Power.' Medium, October 12, 2018
I don't do it all the time. Only when I feel safe.
And that shit's relative. Safety, I mean.
First time, I was at a traffic light. It was early morning. Daybreak. They were gathered on the corner, at an intersection near my neighborhood. Day laborers waiting for a chance to work. A group of 20 or so. Smoking cigarettes. Shooting the breeze. I'd see them most days on my way to catch the sunrise over the St. Johns River.
Usually, I don't get stopped by the light and turn before they even notice me. Not this morning.

My ritual: convertible top down, meditation music on deck, water with fresh lemon, raw, unsalted almonds and a ripe banana.

“Hey baby, I got something else to put in your mouth.”

I glance to my right. I say nothing but slowly lower the banana.

“Yea YOU, sexy bitch!”

The others laugh.

I feel violated. Womanhood interrupted by the Patriarchy. I wonder how many seconds before the light turns green. I contemplate closing my convertible top.

I glance to my left. There’s a gas station and sometimes police cars.

Not today.

A few moments later, the light changes and I drive away. I’m scared and pissed. I don’t get far.

I’ve thought about it before. Exactly what I’d say. I even practiced in the mirror.

But each time, I’d freeze. Feeling overwhelmed with the ordinariness of it all.

Not today.

I abruptly turn around in the middle of the street, burning a little rubber.

There’s an abandoned lot across the street from the day laborer spot and I pull in. I zig zag through oncoming traffic, my eyes focused on the one with the smart, dirty mouth.

They see me coming and give each other high fives.

I walk up, extend my hand.

“Hi, I’m Chevara. What’s your name?”

He looks startled and grins. Like maybe I'm about to ask for his seven digits.

He says his name is T.J. I don't ask what it stands for. I don't care.

3. "I assume that what you were trying to do was say 'good morning' but somehow the right words failed you."

Before he has a chance to respond, I ask if he's ever heard of poet, essayist, and activist, June Jordan.

His blank stare answers my question before he begins to shake his head from left to right.

They've crowded around us now. It feels like spectator sport. I imagine I'm in a boxing ring. Except I'm not feeling much like a champ. I feel as though I might suffocate. I feel small. I'm wearing sneakers and not my trademark stilettos. Spears of light pierce through clouds as the sky brightens and I feel a sliver of safety.

Before I lose my nerve, I tell him that June Jordan wrote a piece about Mike Tyson called "Requiem for a Champ." I read it in college.

She writes about the horrific conditions of poverty and oppression under which Tyson learned the "rules" of interacting with a girl...of talking...to a girl.

I tell him that June Jordan says "the choices available to us dehumanize."

I'm not sure if he understands the quote or the enormity of the moment.

I ask him where he grew up, if he was raised with a momma, sisters, aunties or a grandmother. I ask if he has brothers, uncles, a dad or grandfather. I ask if he has daughters. He says his grandmother reared

him. He says he grew up in the church and had a paper route. He says his little girl is three.

The other men are silent. A few have wandered away to stand on the periphery.

I tell him I live blocks away and that I shouldn't have to detour to feel safe.

Not in my neighborhood nor anywhere in this world.

I tell him I'm an incest survivor. I ask them all if they know what that is.

Now, it's really uncomfortable. A few lower their heads. One nods.

"It means that my father's semen was on my thigh when I was 10."

I say it slowly. I want them to hear it. I want them to feel the pain in my words.

I tell him that his morning greeting almost f***** up my day. Disrupted my spirit. That his words felt violent and hurtful and disrespectful and mostly made me sad.

Something changes. The air is lighter and heavier at the same time. He looks like he might cry.

He tells me again that his daughter is three. He calls her name.

I tell him that I don't need him to see me as his mother or sister or daughter. I need him to see me as human.

He asks if he can give me a hug. I walk into his outstretched arms.

4. I leave him with June Jordan, whispering: "I can stop whatever violence starts with me."

I don't do it all the time. Only when I feel safe.

And that shit's relative. Safety, I mean.

I've done it with construction workers at a city job site and college students in a grocery store near the frozen waffles and corporate executives in a towering office complex.

Irrespective of status or profession or age or geography.

The struggle is real. The intersection of my identity as a Black woman.

The struggle is real. Navigating toxic masculinity on a daily.

The struggle is real. Layers of unbalanced power and complicity of men in causing harm and maintaining misogynistic structures.

The struggle is real. Demanding autonomy of voice and power of agency in a world filled with men who never learned how to talk to a girl.

Today, I awakened channeling June Jordan's spirit: "...I am the history of battery assault and limitless armies against whatever I want to do with my mind and my body and my soul...

...and I can't tell you who the hell set things up like this but I can tell you that from now on my resistance my simple and daily and nightly self-determination may very well cost you your life."

I don't do it all the time. Only when I feel safe.

And that shit's relative. Safety, I mean.

I am not the one. I believe in necessary disruptions. You will be held accountable on my watch.

Section Two (On the left wall)

Floating signs with text

- Three white signs with text on them sit on a black stand that fades into the background. This gives them a 'floating' feeling.
- The signs are lit from above.
- The text on them is as follows:
 1. In 2022, nearly 89,000 women and girls were intentionally killed worldwide—the highest annual number in two decades.
 2. About 48,800 deaths (55%) were caused by an intimate partner or family member. Women and girls are most often killed at home or by someone close.
 3. While overall homicide rates have declined since 2021, female homicides remain stubbornly high. In 2023 and 2024, roughly one woman or girl was killed every 10 minutes by someone close to them. This is a global crisis.

Section Three (On the back wall)

Photo Block 1

- A gallery grid of 9, with 8 photos and a block of text. The photos are all of the performers Tara Jade Samaya, Pippa Samaya and Ivy-Victoria Otradovec as they shoot the VIGIL film in the Grünheide Pine Forest.
 1. Top Left: Photo. Pippa wearing a black vest holds a camera points her finger at Ivy who walks into the forest with her back turned. The sky is overcast.
 2. Top Centre: Photo. A pier leading to Grünheide lake at sunset. The water is still and the clouds are wispy.
 3. Top Right: Photo. Tara dressed all in black. She has a black hat and veil on, obscuring her face. A piece of sheer green fabric is pinned to their side. She stands in front of a tree, holding a tablet.
 4. Centre Left: Photo. Tara stands in the forest and smiles at the camera, holding up a peace sign with her gloved hand. She wears a beanie and a large green coat and carries a notebook.
 5. True Centre: Photo. The Grünheide forest at dusk. Leafy foliage and tress are warmly lit by the headlights of a grey car. Ivy stands in the distance, wearing a white coat and facing a tree.
 6. Centre Right: Photo. Pippa wearing a white coat and holding a camera on a gimble. She watches her step as she moves through the leafy foliage of the forest.
 7. Bottom Left: Photo. Tara wearing a grey hoodie and green puffer jacket smiles with her eyes closed. Her hood is pulled over her head and she holds a notebook. Beside her, a small black and grey dog Goji wears a

pink jacket and looks towards Pippa in the background. Pippa is wearing a black vest and is moving further into the forest. She holds a camera on a gimble.

8. Bottom Centre: Text block. It reads as follows:

- These images offer a glimpse into the conditions in which we were working—wrapped in heavy winter jackets, in contrast to the light dresses seen in the final film. We made use of the many birdwatching and hunting towers scattered throughout the forest, gaining height to extend our visual perspective.

At dawn, we used our car headlights to cast light across the forest, creating the film's opening scene—an atmosphere that reflects a state of freeze. Driving along uneven, bumpy tracks, we filmed from the car windows to capture moments of wild running, evoking the state of flight, as we explored the body's responses to fear and violence: freeze, flight, and fight.

Working within the constraints of lockdown, we were both camera operators and performers (although two of the three of us were completely untrained and inexperienced in the latter).

Using iPad screens to monitor each shot in real time, we navigated the process intuitively, balancing presence in front of and behind the camera.

9. Bottom Right: Photo. Pippa in all black up a wooden birdwatching tower with a camera. Light is fading.

- To the right of the gallery wall, sits a large photo of the Grünheide Pine Forest. A dense quantity of thin trees stretch upwards. It is a sunny day so the

tops of the tress are lit brightly with their base in shadow. A seedling amongst the foliage is lit by sunlight.

Photo Block 2

- A singular image in a large size. It's a black and white photo of Tara standing against a white background. She stands nude with her arms covering her chest and genitals. Additional arms wrap around her stomach, mouth, head and throat.

Photo Block 3

- A large photograph of Tara in the forest. She wears a black veil and hat and has her eyes closed. Sheer green fabric wraps around the rest of her torso.
- A gallery wall of smaller images and text blocks. It features 8 photographs and 2 blocks of text.
 1. Far Upper Left. Photo. Tara dressed in black lies atop a tall black column. Her head and feet dangle unsupported. Her dress falls from the ledge. The column is a long strip of orange fabric that hits the floor and curls to sit upon the leafy foliage.
 2. Upper Left. Text. The accompanying text is as follows:
 - This image echoes a proscenium within the forest, a sudden plane of colour cutting through the natural world-its intensity evoking the shock that can stain or abruptly shift the tone of a scene. The body lies draped and fallen, yet remains elevated — precariously poised atop the structure, suspended above a

narrow path that suggests both passage and escape, forward or away.

3. Centre left. Photo. Ivy, Pippa and Tara stand in a triangular formation in a rehearsal room. All three wear black hats, black bouses and coloured floral skirts. Ivy's skirt is pink, Pippa's is light blue and Tara's is dark blue.
4. Bottom left. Photo. A camera on a tripod. It captures the view ahead. A pale brick path cuts through a manicured garden with hedge blocks and red and green leaved trees. At the end of the path sits a white chapel with a triangular roof and an arched door.
5. Upper Centre: Photo. Pippa wears a brown coat over her blue floral skirted costume. She holds her phone in front of her as if she was taking a landscape photo. In the background, walking down the path, Ivy's pink skirt can be seen, covered partly by a bright green coat. The chapel sits blurred in the back.
6. True Centre: Ivy, Pippa and Tara stride forward along the tan brick path in a line. They are wearing their floral skirt costumes. All three have their hands clutching the brims of their hats.
7. Bottom Centre: Text.
 - This small collection of behind-the-scenes moments traces the transition from studio to screen, capturing the evolution of movement into its final form on location. Filmed within a modest chapel nestled in a quiet graveyard, surrounded by forest in regional Germany, the work emerged during our time living and creating in Grünheide, Brandenburg throughout the COVID-19

lockdown.

The morning of the shoot was bitterly cold—just two degrees, with an icy wind cutting through the space. The redness in our skin reveals the intensity of those conditions, a physical imprint that came to echo the emotional force at the heart of the film.

8. Upper Right: Photo. The three performers stand stacked close up on the left. We can only see Ivy and Tara from the shoulders down. They both face away, showing their floral skirts prominently. Pippa faces forward, looking at her phone in landscape mode. The tan path disappears behind the trio.
9. Centre Right: In their rehearsal space, Pippa, Ivy and Tara stand hand in hand. They wear their floral skirt costumes and smile towards the camera.
10. Bottom Right: Photo. Ivy, Pippa and Tara stand side by side in their floral skirt costumes. Pippa points a camera straight ahead.

Plinth with candles

- A white block about 3m tall has a collection of battery-operated candles on it.
- Three tall candles sit in the middle
- Multiple shorter tea lights sit towards the front and around the sides.

Section Four (The Film)

Seating

- There are two rows of seats in front of the video screen.
- The first row has two bench seats, each about 1.2m long. The second row has one long bench seat, about 2.4m long.
- Each bench has two black rubber cushions.

The Screen

- The screen is 4m x 2.25m in dimension. It is made of a white fabric so that images projected show up clearly.
- At the base and to the sides of the screen, leaves are gathered. There are a mixture of pine and eucalyptus. You are welcome to touch and smell but please try to leave this as you found it.
- There will be projection on the screen during all exhibition opening hours

The Film

- An [Audio Description track of the film](#) has been prepared by Zoe of Loom Arts and Management.
- You can also ask at reception and we can provide it to you before you enter the exhibition.