

Shadowing

a Non-Lecture

by

Paige Davis

Cassie Aiello and J Pansa as Greek Chorus (Wikipedia/Direct Quotes)
Sandra Cherk as Shadow/Mother
Paige Davis as Herself

December 4, 2017

7:00 P.M.

Room 395, Kroeber Hall, UC Berkeley

To be followed by a short conversation with the audience

(Projector) Lights on and off

Someone in your class recommended it to you because of something you hung on the wall and propped on the floor. The windows let in the light and so, I was there, too. Remember?



You remember her telling you about the film outside of the art building, because that's where you found out Jo was Uncle Woody, one month later. But, no, she told you in a classroom, the one made of white walls that look grey when the lights aren't on, or when the sun isn't all the way there. I followed both of you in conversation; I held space between you and her and saw you write the name down, the paper picking itself up at the torn corners.



Paige: *Right, and I didn't know you were there, though maybe I had felt you.*

And then, somewhat suddenly, I found myself in the film, *Chan Is Missing*, walking around Jo and Steve, trying to find Chan.



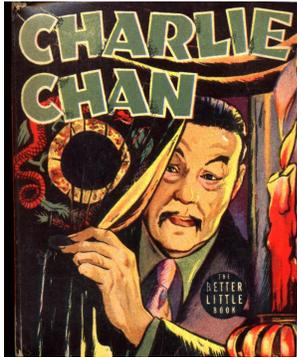
The sun hadn't made it through the fog that day in the city so I followed them with distance; the sky showed up a near white on the screen.

Paige: Yes.

Lights on and off



Chorus: QUOTE “Chan Is Missing is a 1981 American [independent comedy-drama](#) film produced and directed by [Wayne Wang](#). The film, which is shot in black and white, is plotted as a [mystery](#) with [noir](#) undertones, and its title is a play on the popular [Charlie Chan](#) film series which focuses on a fictional Chinese immigrant detective in Honolulu.



Chan Is Missing turns the Charlie Chan detective trope on its head by making "Chan" the missing person that the film's two protagonists, Jo



and Steve,



search for. In the process of trying to locate Chan, a fractured, even contradictory portrait of him emerges, mirroring the complexities of the polyglot Chinese American community that Chan's character allegorizes.” ENDQUOTE

Paige: *Now for a footnote here.*



Chorus: FOOTNOTE: QUOTE Wikipedia is not considered a credible source. Wikipedia is increasingly used by people in the academic community, from freshman students to professors, as an easily accessible [tertiary source](#) for information about anything and everything. However, citation of Wikipedia in research papers may be considered unacceptable, because Wikipedia is not considered a credible or authoritative source.[\[1\]\[2\]\[3\]](#)

It is the goal of Wikipedia to become a research aid that all students can trust. If you, in the course of your research, find that there is misinformation on Wikipedia, look over [the basic guidelines](#) of Wikipedia and especially [what the community considers a reliable source](#) and please consider editing the article (and even creating an account) with what you have learned. This is a part of how Wikipedia wishes to attain its goals. ENDQUOTE

Lights on and off



I had forgotten Woody was in that film, or didn't think about how you might be interested in it, until the person in your class mentioned Chan, and I was reminded of how strange it is to know everyone and everything all at once. I know them, but they often don't think to get to know me.



Maybe no one can know me because I am always everywhere, and I've noticed that lots of people can't get to know the things closest to them, the things and people they see everyday. I am invisible until the sun feels too big or too small. This seems fine, some of the time.



Maybe I'm too close.

Paige: *Maybe. I'm not sure. I'm not sure what would have happened if I had known about Chan earlier. Would I have had a different relationship with Woody?*

Perhaps...

Lights on and off



Chorus: QUOTE There is an eclectic cast of Chinese American characters that Steve and Jo Paige: (-- played by Woody) --

Chorus: encounter while looking for Chan. That includes Henry, the cook, who wears a Samurai Night Fever T-shirt while singing "Fry Me to the Moon"

Paige: (-- Fryyy me to the moon --)

Chorus: as he stir-fries in the kitchen. Both Chan and the film's characters suggest that Chinese America, is also impossible to easily summarize or characterize.



Film scholar Peter X. Feng suggests that *Chan Is Missing* can be understood via the metaphor of a doughnut: "Each character...holds a doughnut that contains the possibilities of Chinese American identity in its center. Each of the film's characters only serve to widen that hole, thus widening the space for spectatorial subjectivity and by extension, Asian American subjectivity." [8] ENDQUOTE



Paige: *And I wonder, if the doughnut could also be a metaphor for American subjectivity.*

I heard you say "shame" and while I know the relation to Woody, I don't know "shame." I heard your disbelief on the phone, Woody was right in front of you and you didn't notice.



Perhaps this is what you call shame: when you don't look, really look, *feel*, so that you can't see what's in front of you, what you already know.

Lights on and off



Paige: *This all happened in the summertime, a summer class. The previous summer, HOWDOYOUSAYYAMINAFRICAN?, also called he Yams, pulled out of the Whitney Biennial.*

Joe Scanlan, a white, male artist had thought up the idea of hiring a Black woman to perform not as herself, but as a faux artist named Donelle Woolford. It was the faux Woolford's name -- not Scanlan's -- that appeared in the Whitney catalogue.

Hmm I'm going to look up the word shame. [pause] QUOTE, "A "sense of shame" is the feeling known as guilt, but "consciousness" or awareness of "shame as a state" or condition defines core/toxic shame. Also -- this is interesting -- "The roots of the word *shame* are thought to derive from an older word meaning "to cover"; as such, covering oneself, literally or figuratively, is a natural expression of shame."^[2] ENDQUOTE



Paige: *That is interesting. Scanlan does seem to be covering himself. By covering his harmful actions with the concept of role-playing, he steps out of the possibility of addressing racial politics in an effective way.*

Looking up the word sham [pause] A person who pretends to be someone or something they are not.

As Vikrum Anuraddga writes, "Scanlan uses 'Woolford' to usurp the visibility accrued to minority artists in the contemporary art spotlight by the fact of their relative absence." Important to point out, is that Scanlan was not the reason why the Yams pulled from the show, but it was the consistent institutional racism found within institutions like the Whitney Museum.

Following is a quote from CHRISTA BELL, a member of the Yams:



Chorus: QUOTE: I want to clarify. This is not about Joe Scanlan. We are not protesting Joe Scanlan, or Michelle Grabner. We are protesting institutional white supremacy and how it plays out. A main part of our message is that we want to move the idea of white supremacy away from caricatures of white supremacy: neo-Nazis, KKK members, crazy kids who live in the mountains of Arkansas. White supremacy is embodied in these institutions that tokenize us, that invite us into spaces where they have absolutely no interest in ceding power. That's the most important thing to get about this. This is not about Joe Scanlan. He's this mediocre artist, he's part of the Ivy League, institutional collective of Yale and Princeton and the Whitney. And it's the larger part of his collective that we are concerned with. ENDQUOTE

Lights on and off



Chorus: *Singin' in the Rain* is a 1952 American [musical-romantic comedy film](#) directed and [choreographed](#) by [Gene Kelly](#) and [Stanley Donen](#). It offers a lighthearted depiction of [Hollywood](#) in the late 1920s, with the three stars portraying performers caught up in the transition from [silent films](#) to "[talkies](#)".

The film was only a modest hit when first released. But it has since been accorded legendary status by contemporary critics, and is frequently regarded as the best movie musical ever made.

When the studio Don works for attempts to make a talking film, it is a disaster, as Lina, the leading lady has a grating voice and strong New York accent.



Don, Kathy and Cosmo come up with the idea to turn the movie they're working on, *The Duelling Cavalier* into a musical called *The Dancing Cavalier*, complete with a modern musical number called "Broadway Melody". Cosmo, inspired by a scene in *The Duelling Cavalier* where Lina's voice was out of sync, suggests that they [dub](#) Lina's voice with Kathy's. R.F. approves the idea but tells them not to inform Lina about the dubbing. When Lina finds out, she is infuriated.



Paige: Carol Clover, author of "Dancin' in the Rain," argues that *Singin' in the Rain's* "moralizing surface story" can be seen as "a guilty disavowal of the practices that went into its own making." The guilty disavowal that Clover focuses on, the one beneath the surface, in shadow, is that of the profiting off of Black dancers in the film's dance numbers and side references.



Paige: She writes, "Slavery may have been remote to audiences in 1952, but the plundering of black culture was not, and to judge from *Singin' in the Rain* neither were white guilt and anxiety on that score. This is not surprising, given the economics of the entertainment business. If ever there were an arena in which profit was to be had, this is it. . .



Eric Lott writes of early minstrelsy, "The moment that interests me in these narratives, is the one in which black sounds fill the air and fascinated white men understand for the first time that there are fame and money to be made" ["LT," p. 38].

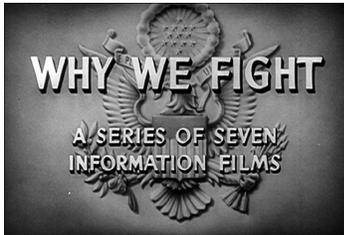
Lights on and off



Chorus: QUOTE "The film [*Illusions*] is set in [Hollywood](#) in 1942, a time when the role of the film industry was to create an illusion for the audience to believe in. This illusion was based on the creation of American history in films; what is seen on screen is usually what they want you to believe and not actually the truth."



Made during a time of heavy war propaganda, Hollywood created its own version of America and its freedoms.



Illusions follows a young woman working at National Studios in Hollywood, very rare during that time. As the film progresses and we see this woman, Mignon Dupree, create the illusion of talent among white film stars while a young African American girl, Ester Jeeter, actually sings the part for the film.



After Mignon says that the original singing voice for the film they are working on is in Burma, with the war effort, one of the men in the sound room says, "I remember before the war, hundreds of male dancers and singers. I liked the colored tap dancers best," he laughs, "but they got drafted too."



*Mignon responds with, "Well I guess we know why you didn't get drafted." I thought this an interesting reference to *Singin' in the Rain* -- it seems to suggest the dubbing of "the colored tap dancers" by others, like Kelly.*

Later in the film, when Mignon and Ester talk about Hollywood, Mignon says, “I wanted to be where history was made.



Where it was rewritten on film. . .people make films about themselves, what they want, what they love, what they fear most. Here we’re nothing but props in their stories... musical props or dancing props or comic relief. I came into this world of moving shadows and I made this work for me. But I made what work? There isn’t anything here for me. There’s no joy in the seduction of images.”



Chorus: QUOTE [Ella Fitzgerald's](#) voice was used as the voice of Ester Jeeter in the film as Ester’s voice was dubbed as the voice of a white woman. Julie Dash wanted Lonette McKee to play Mignon Dupree from the beginning and was not able to offer her anything for her work but **Lonette** loved the script and participated in the film anyway.^[2] ENDQUOTE



Donelle Woolford, performed by Abigail Ramsay and Jennifer Kidwell at different times, was shown at the Whitney, because the museum -- the art institution -- claims to maintain “a profound commitment to diversity.”

Artist	Medium	Year	Location
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	2019	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	2018	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	2017	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	2016	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	2015	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	2014	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	2013	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	2012	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	2011	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	2010	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	2009	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	2008	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	2007	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	2006	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	2005	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	2004	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	2003	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	2002	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	2001	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	2000	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1999	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1998	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1997	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1996	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1995	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1994	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1993	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1992	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1991	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1990	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1989	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1988	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1987	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1986	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1985	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1984	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1983	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1982	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1981	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1980	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1979	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1978	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1977	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1976	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1975	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1974	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1973	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1972	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1971	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1970	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1969	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1968	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1967	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1966	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1965	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1964	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1963	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1962	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1961	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1960	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1959	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1958	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1957	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1956	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1955	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1954	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1953	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1952	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1951	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1950	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1949	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1948	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1947	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1946	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1945	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1944	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1943	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1942	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1941	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1940	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1939	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1938	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1937	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1936	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1935	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1934	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1933	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1932	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1931	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1930	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1929	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1928	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1927	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1926	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1925	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1924	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1923	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1922	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1921	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1920	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1919	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1918	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1917	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1916	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1915	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1914	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1913	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1912	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1911	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1910	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1909	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1908	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1907	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1906	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1905	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1904	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1903	Whitney Museum of American Art
Abigail Ramsay	Performance	1902	Whitney Museum of American Art
Jennifer Kidwell	Performance	1901	Whitney Museum of American Art
Donelle Woolford	Performance	1900	Whitney Museum of American Art

Having Woolford/Scanlan in the show seems to be proof that this claim is not necessarily true. Dash created Illusions, a film about Hollywood, outside of Hollywood, another institution highly

lacking diversity. McKee did not get paid for her work because Dash did not have the means to pay her. What does the labor of McKee, Ramsay, and Kidwell have in common?

Lights on and off



Chorus: QUOTE Over the course of the film Mignon talks a lot about the illusion of Hollywood and the different levels of society that it creates in film and in real life. It is hinted throughout the movie, like when Ester tells Mignon, “Oh don't worry....they can't tell like we can,” that there is a secret that she is hiding.



It is not until the final scene when the Lieutenant opens her mail to find a picture of Mignon's African American boyfriend that it is clear to the audience that she has been passing as a white woman and is actually an African American woman, just like the young girl Ester Jeeter that they use at their whim. ENDQUOTE



To prove a point, must one play into the very structure it wishes to destroy? In order to fully destroy, it seems it must be undone, not continuously played or poked at just because one can.

*I sort of hate that I am even mentioning Scanlan here, and giving him so much space -- why am I doing it? What would it sound like to read a chunk of text that has been “struck through” as the word processing applications call it? I’ll turn to Carol Clover, for assistance. As Clover writes in her essay *Dancin’ in the Rain*: What is so striking about these moments is not just that they are the only bits of blackness in an otherwise white film and not even that the blackness in question is arrived at through an act of blackface. It is that they are so uncalled for. I would suggest that these symptoms look for all the world like the complements of the paradoxical process Freud*

called *Verneinung*, negation, whereby the effort to "forget" necessarily calls up the very "memories" it means to put down.



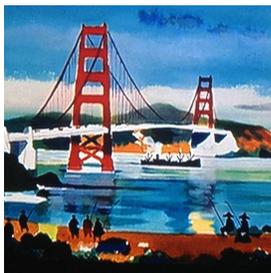
I included this image because I was trying to find this scene online and the only video that I could find of it was this one, titled "Movie Mistakes". I thought it funny, sad, that the "Mistake" was not the man on the right in blackface, but something to do with *Variety* being mentioned in the film when it hadn't been created yet in the movie's supposed year, 1927.



Clover concludes her essay with Michael Jackson's music video, "Black and White," as Jackson clearly references *Singin' in the Rain*. Here we see how Jackson might be taking back or reclaiming the dance -- the credit -- that *Singin' in the Rain* showcased. It is Jackson remembering (for everyone) the forgotten memories in the film.

The yellow outdoor light made flies and moths and mosquitoes appear larger than themselves as they flew by and I appeared as a flutter on the lichened concrete. I was there in *all* of the night. People think that when the sun is not there, I crawl into dark corners, but really, when the sun is not there, this is when I become more tangibly whole and find myself in all the corners radiating out. You just have to look.

Lights on and off



Chorus: QUOTE C.Y. Lee's novel, Flower Drum Song, focuses on a wealthy refugee from China, who clings to traditional values in [San Francisco's Chinatown](#).

-- Hmmm a painting... --

Oh, yes, this is a still from the opening credits of Flower Drum Song, the last painted image before making way for the film image -- an illusion making way for another illusion.



Chorus: Rodgers and Hammerstein shifted the focus of the musical to his son, Wang Ta, who is torn between his Chinese roots and assimilation into American culture. The team hired [Gene Kelly](#) to make his debut as a stage director with the musical and scoured the country for a suitable Asian – or at least, plausibly Asian-looking – cast.



The three producers sought Chinese, or at least Asian, actors to fill the cast, an idea that was, at the time, considered "very risky".^[14] In the 1950s, there were relatively few Asian-American actors;^[19] Rodgers believed that Asians avoided acting because of shyness.^[20] Critics note, in any case, that Asian-Americans "had found few opportunities in mainstream theatre."^[14]



Chorus: *(speak this paragraph quickly)* The team found it difficult to fill the remaining places in the company with Asian performers, especially in the chorus. . . The role of Fong proved difficult to cast. Initially, it was given to [Larry Storch](#), a nightclub comic, but during the Boston tryouts, it was given to another Caucasian, [Larry Blyden](#),^[21] who was married to Carol Haney, the show's choreographer.^[26] The role of Madame Liang, Master Wang's sister-in-law, fell to [Juanita Hall](#), a light-skinned African American who had played a [Tonkinese](#) (Vietnamese) woman, Bloody Mary, in *South Pacific*.^[27]



Chorus: (*slower*) Rodgers later wrote, "what was important was that the actors gave the illusion of being Chinese. This demonstrates one of the most wonderful things about theatre audiences. People want to believe what they see on a stage, and they will gladly go along with whatever is done to achieve the desired effect." ENDQUOTE

Casting people, people casting shadows, shadows cast on people. . .



Chorus: QUOTE "The musical proved difficult to produce for amateur and school groups, because it requires a cast either Asian or made up as Asian. Even professional companies found it difficult to round up an entire cast of Asian singer-dancer-actors. [14] The Rodgers & Hammerstein Organization, which licenses the partnership's works, believes that the work's loss of popularity was due in part to increased racial sensitivity in the U. S. after the [civil rights movement](#). [2]"



"The **Red Guard**, greatly influenced by the Black Panthers, was a radical Chinese-American street youth organization formed in February 1969. The street youth party formed in the dusky pool halls in [San Francisco's Chinatown](#) aimed to attain adequate social services and serve as a unified front against the [police brutality](#) and oppression they faced as [minorities](#). The Red Guard served as a pioneering revolutionary organization for the [Asian American movement](#) on the West Coast which sought to combat the model minority image and promote solidarity with other oppressed racial minorities." ENDQUOTE



Lights on and off

The light that is also dark on the water makes you confused. Not in a bad way, but in a way that makes you think the world is magic. You've said to me, multiple times, that it feels strange to not know if you are seeing shadow or reflection. Maybe it is both, sometimes. Like when it's just rained and traffic lights are on the pavement in a way that feels like their reflection is also somehow a shadow.

Can color be a shadow?

Last month, my dad and I were walking to a restaurant to meet my sister. He told me that in high school he was in a production of Flower Drum Song. He said he was the backstage person, moving sets and so on, and that a pretty blonde girl was a dancer in the show. The musical took place at a time when my dad and his girlfriend -- Leslie Wong -- were going through a rough patch. By the end of the production my dad was holding hands with the pretty blond, leaving Leslie Wong steaming.

[photocopy of letter]

I was going to read the letter I wrote to Uncle Woody. But, it never got to him, and somehow when I was writing it, I knew it would never get to him. I think it might've been because part of the reason I was writing it was "for art." It only feels wrong now if I were to read it. I learned the morning of Thanksgiving that he had passed a few weeks prior. I had written it weeks before that -- I could have sent it, why did I not?

Lights on and off



Lights on and off

So, I was there, very much there, and you didn't know it or acknowledge it. You climbed up the rickety stairs, passed through the yellow light -- here I am, here I am. You eat your ice creams. One person drags their plastic chair to the also-rickety railing's edge, leaning their head back so that it rests with minimal contact on the thin, corroding metal. To see up. Upwards in darkness, with darkness, eyes through me again and again, traveling

through and through. It is one big travel, even though it may feel like a thousand little travels.

Lights on and off

This next piece is written by Chantal Bax.

Chorus: QUOTE “Let me start by giving some information about the debate to which [Jean-Luc] Nancy responds in *Identité: fragments, franchises*. At the end of 2009, basically the whole of France was engaged in a discussion of what it means to be French (or at least in a discussion about that discussion). This was instigated by then-president Nicolas Sarkozy, who had already made national identity a prime issue in his presidential campaign. Sarkozy had his minister Éric Besson arrange an online survey as well as numerous town-hall meetings on topics ranging from prototypically French *cuisine* to the importance of Republican values like *égalité* and *laïcité*. Yet before the government was thus able to identify the essence of Frenchness once and for all, it had to shut its project down. Both the town-hall meetings and the internet site had turned into platforms for unabashed anti-immigrant and (more specifically) anti-Islamic xenophobia.” END QUOTE

And now by Wikipedia:

Chorus: QUOTE “The **Identitarian movement** is a movement that advocates the preservation of national identity and a return to 'traditional western values'. It has been described as [white nationalist](#)^{[1][2]} and [white supremacist](#).^{[3][4]} It started in [France](#) in 2002 as a [conservative](#) youth movement deriving from the French *Nouvelle Droite* (New Right) *Génération Identitaire*. Initially the youth wing of the [anti-immigration](#), conservative [Bloc Identitaire](#), it has taken on its own identity and is largely classified as a separate entity altogether with the intent of spreading across Europe.

The group is described as being part of the [counter-jihad movement](#).^[5]

On 20 May 2017 two US Marines were arrested after hanging a banner with an Identitarian logo from a building in [Graham, North Carolina](#) during a [Confederate Memorial Day](#) event. The US Marine Corps said that it condemned the behaviour and would investigate the incident.^{[22][23]} The [Traditionalist Youth Network](#) is modeled after the European Identitarian movement according to the [Southern Poverty Law Center](#) (SPLC) and the [Anti-Defamation League](#) (ADL).^{[24][25][26]} The [United States](#) has seen a rise^[vague] in the Identitarian movement coinciding with the [campaign](#) and election of [Donald Trump](#).^{[27][28]}” ENDQUOTE

Lights on and off

Ooo, a shooting star! someone exclaims.

A collective Ooo and then the sound of twelve plastic chair legs dragging their way along to the railing. I watched you all, or more like, I was with you all, watched *with* you all -- seeing the stars you saw.

Lights on and off

Absences, erasures. . . Who is missing? Chan is missing. Talking to Woody at family picnics is missing. HOWDOYOUSAYYAMINAFRICAN? Is missing. Ester Jeeter is missing. . . Are stars missing? Maybe stars are missed when we light up darkness when it only wants to be darkness. When we don't think of what is not there, this is dangerous. What could possibly be missing that is right in front of us, behind us, beside us, with us, within us. Who is being shadowed, who is shadowing? Who is in shadow and embracing it?



Lights on and off

A shadow is all shadow(s)

A shadow is all singular and plural at the same time

A shadow is not a shout

shadow is quiet but not shy

shadow is in a way, out of reach, untouchable, or, rather, ungraspable but,

shadow is felt, one can feel shadow

the way an ant crawls along your ankle,

the way the breeze pulls your hair

shadow is not the same as the sun swath hitting your face, but, it also is

it is a similar concept, an inverse or something

shadow is okay with being shadow.

of being seen as cool or blue or flat or dependent, definite, ambiguous

it can only be shadow

some sort of deja vu all over everything

it is the same as it was a day ago, an hour ago, a thousand centuries ago but different

it is there when it is forgotten or unseen, unheard

Turn projector off