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Lyric Essays: Ruminations, Speculations, Loves  
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How do we dust the essay form, take it off its academic pedestal, so it can actually touch us, and *do* something, or conversely how do we take the person out of the personal essay? Relinquish some of that hard-won control or maybe the finessed vulnerability? This seminar offers a provisional laboratory in which to encounter and experiment with essayistic works that sit between genres or blend criticism and memoir, poetry that's in cahoots with the lecture, 'body essays', scholarly experiments that lyricise research or spit into the mouth of the academy, forms of poetic art writing. Can we attend to and imagine a type of amalgamated writing that offers new ways of thinking and seeing and being in which form is the crucial side-kick to any promise of political commitment? For that, we might rally humour, sensuousness, confusion, messiness, or maybe a type of rigour and seriousness free from the constraints of the scholarly rulebook. In some cases, this might also apply to design and typography. Where does the voice sit or dance or swim in such a swamp of forms? When is clarity and precision needed, when can authority be surrendered and softened by being in conversation with other voices?

Some of the voices we will call upon and bring into the room include: Bhanu Kapil, Maureen McLane, Lisa Robertson, Mary Ruefle, Sara Ahmed, Jack Halberstam, Kate Briggs, Uljana Wolf, Hito Steyerl, Gordon Hall, Maria Fusco, Julietta Singh, Christine Brooke-Rose, Mary Capello, Paul Preciado, Sianne Ngai, Renee Gladman, Wayne Koestenbaum, Pauline Oliveros, amongst others. With the help of these spirit guides, we will see the essay not as supplementary to but as the real work, a working on and working out. Sometimes we might need critical flamboyance, or silliness, or the vulnerability of not-knowing. How do we fumble our way out of a conundrum? How do we speak 'of' or write 'on' a subject where the saying sparkles with care? What does the lyric essay know? In its characteristically ambulatory form, it tip-toes around the understanding of a problem by sharing its processes of reading, writing, thinking, remembering, or doing *something*. It is all ruminations, speculations, loves. It might take some unlearning to get there.