

## **IMAGINE THIS SITUATION**

By Odete

*This text was commissioned by 'a space' arts as part of our Critical Writing programme. The writer was invited to respond to the ideas and themes in the exhibition, House of Revision / House of Repair by Uma Breakdown.*

Content Warning: Please be advised this text contains mature themes, including explicit sexual content and strong language. Reader discretion is advised.

### **IMAGINE THIS SITUATION;**

There is a document, somewhere, made of paper and ink. There is a spirit trapped in that document, somehow. Someday, there is a girlboy, a boygirl, a multiplicity, that will cum on that document, unintentionally. The stickiness of the fluid will adhere to the aged paper and it will blot out letters. Without the fullness of a word, the adjacent letters to the ones who became blurred ...become...an enigma. Dispossessed of the solidity of word-meaning; orphans of the alphabet. But what exactly happened, you may ask? This is the story I want to tell you. I could've just jumped straight to the drama of the act, but the important part is not the person, or the cum, or the document, or the letters. The important thing in today's text is this layering you can call: *time*. What is important, both in the story pulsating through this text and in Uma Breakdown's work is the layering of time, as a sort of performance. Time is, in fact, performative. It performs. Time is the ultimate performer. No circle. No arrow. No spiral. A grand gesture of a sentence, this one. The cliché "time is a river" could be re-adjusted to mean time moves, time flows, in the sense that time *performs* itself. So, the important thing is the fact that the layering that happens with the cumming on top of the document that blurs our letters happens overtime. It is a theatrics of time, because only time could create it on its stage. Imagine the document pertaining to 1500. The spirit trapped in it in 1680. The document archived in 1950. The person cumming on it in 2026.

So you are starting to see glimpses of the story. But I haven't quite said what I wanted about time and Uma's work. The thing is that the performance of the situation of this story is the same of Uma's work. Time has performed a layering through Uma. Could we dare to say that the person in the story is Uma? A profanity! Maybe, the person is no person but an impersonation of Uma's work. Yes, let's say that. Let's imagine that the exhibition ( this exhibition, the one you

experience from Friday 5th June 2026 to Monday 27th July 2026) takes on a character, an anthropomorphic character. What could this mean? That Uma's work becomes the character that cums on an aged document holding a spirit within it?

Moving on: I have yet to describe the details of this hypothetical situation, so I will start this text again:

There is a document, made of paper and ink. It is a very old document, the paper has yellowed and is full of stains. This is a document about St.Brideswell. It is archived in a public archive (cannot give more details to keep some secrecy). Even though most people don't know, this document has a spirit trapped within. It is a water spirit. A spirit that had several names throughout their lifetime. At its peak, it was called Cybele. It has a twin, a moon spirit. It is a shadowy spirit, as opposed to the water one. Unfortunately, I do not know if this spirit is also trapped somewhere or if it roams freely. However, I do know that when twin spirits are separated, the place of their separation becomes decay. If a bridge, it becomes a broken bridge. If a palace, a decayed palace. If a garden, a withered one. It can also be political decay. A sort of curse upon the political sphere of the area. But we will get to decay in a bit. So, this document is archived in a place that the impersonation of Uma's work is researching on. It is nighttime. No one is in the archive but Uma's work. They approach the document feeling suddenly horny. There is something in the stains produced by time, in the artstyle of the letters, in the violence it narrates, that arouses Uma's work. They start reading the document while touching themselves, certain words triggering their nervous system

correction  
the sound of whips  
well behaved  
no hair  
trade  
society  
the sound of wits  
affection  
imprisonment  
sorority  
the sound of lips  
the world  
their world  
our world

They cum. Orgiastic knowledge production, they think. They look at the cum all over the document. Regret starts hitting once they see that words and sentences became diffuse. Blurred. Meaningless. They laugh first, thinking this some kind of revenge towards the material. *Fuck Brideswell*, they think, *They feel*. However, the post-cum feeling is not fully one of vengeful victory. Regret. Deep rooted regret. *How is this a victory over the document, if what produced the document in the first place was this sort of wanking-off knowledge making of these power hungry men? Horny little fuckers, wanting to imprison us! All because they wank their thoughts and their politics! I am just like them!*

Meanwhile the spirit is hearing and feeling and looking at Uma's work. Trapped, it cannot do anything but empathize. However, as the water spirit it is, it cannot hide its joy when the paper, dried up with time, becomes wet. It cannot hide its happiness watching the little ink stains grow bigger, engulfing letters and engulfing sense. The spirit feels honored with the movement of Uma's work cumming. It decides, from the core of its prison, to try and bless Uma's work. After all, the fluid that came out of it is a sort of sacrifice to the spirit, is it not? A gift. A future: the potential of organic fluids to disrupt other materials overtime is huge; pleasure's feet strangling time's neck in a victorious position, like, the letters are already *fucked up*, who says the paper won't decay aswell? Isn't decay the curse of the separation? So have it your way! The truth is that the spirit's prison can be corrupted ! If the paper tears

thorns

thrones

breaks apart at the seams of the hex

sex

it can set free what once was

the past

the passed

the spasm

the sprite

the spirit!

The promise of freedom, set forth by Uma's work invention of pleasure, by their creative folds, by their orgiastic cosmologies! So, you see, what the exhibition already carries. This show at the art space of God's House Tower. The show is coming

cumming

from somewhere

a well  
a water basin  
a river  
a raft

over

a water colour hallucination

“I’m interested in making something new”, said Uma, referring to historiography, behind Uma’s work’s back. That’s why Uma’s work was in the archive that day. To prove their attachment to the old. To protest.

UMA: Are you ok? Do you have any idea what you’ve done?

UMA’S WORK: I know what I’ve done. I did what you wanted to do. To create something new out of what once was.

UMA: Not like this! I wanted a story! A new story, a bridge towards something else, a balm. You have brought forth corruption.

UMA’S WORK: I have spellbinded time for you. I took his hand and made a pact. A sacrifice needed for the sake of fiction. For the sake of art.

UMA: I have no idea what you’re talking about.

UMA’S WORK: Look, now you can lie, freely. You are free. Free of history. Free of the meaning of that document. Now you can write whatever you want.

UMA: But what if I wanted that meaning? What is my story without its past, lingering, hovering over like the soul it is, the spirit, the essence! I am only here because history has brought me here.

UMA’S WORK: *Time.*

UMA: I am a sequence. You cannot break that sequence, otherwise everything becomes muddy, like a bad watercolour painting, where figures lay dead over the sword of abstraction.

UMA’S WORK: That wouldn’t be a bad painting. That would be a truthful painting.

UMA: I need a moment.

*UMA exits the stage.*

After a few days, the Spirit breaks free. Yes, it is true! The curse was lifted and so the Spirit, now liberated from a centuries old prison of letters and meanings, visits the one it blessed on that day. Uma is at the studio, looking at hands worn out by too much work. The spirit sees Uma's soul wounded by the slit between themselves and Uma's work. How could the work betray Uma? Uma has a breakdown. The spirit wants to offer a hug, but it lacks a body. So it gives another blessing. A promise to unite both Uma and Uma's work in a sacred fictionalized space, where both archival obsessions and future speculations can co-exist.

*At the sacred grove:*

I am sorry. Everything is so dazzling

Confusing?

Yes, but also sprinkled with a sort of magic. It makes me dizzy to go into it

The archive, you mean?

Yes, but also this thing of historiography. It is a sort of ocean glitter.

Isn't it the ocean itself? And we some sort of pirates?

That would be beautiful, but no?

It would make sense, you know, historiography as this aqueous movement.

It would, but that's not what I mean. You know when the sun is high and the movements of the water reflect its light, giving us a show of glitter over its surface? Each crest a sparkle?

Yes.

So, that's what I mean. Historiography is the meeting point between the sun's light and the ocean's materiality. A touching, a friction.

So, just like the tip of iceberg.

You're such a poetry killer!

Isn't that the metaphor you're looking for?

No! It is not a metaphor! It is a real thing. For once in your life, take me seriously.

I am taking you seriously.

The night is cold.

The stars are cold.

No, the moonlight is cold. Look at how it touches your skin.

Another meeting point. Touching: light, skin.

You're funny.

Is this historiography?

Yes.

*They kiss. A wet kiss, the saliva pouring out of their tongues and shining under the pale moonlight.*

### **About Odete**

Odete (they/them) is the alias of Levi Gabriel Carvalho, a multidisciplinary artist who salivates across writing, music, theater, and visual arts, leaking historical research into everything they do. They claim to be a bastard daughter of Lucifer, a descendant of the medieval practice of satanic pacts to alter someone's sexed body. They have been researching and working on building connections between "effeminate" histories, from Baroque castrati to 19th-century dandies. Their latest

book was published by Outline and is called “They lied to you about the eunuchs”- turning theory into the stage for poetry. Their work can be found at [odete.pt](http://odete.pt) or followed on IG at [@odetetheslayer](https://www.instagram.com/odetetheslayer)

### **About Uma Breakdown**

Uma Breakdown is an artist, writer, and game designer whose work engages animals, horror, and play. Across disciplines, her practice explores shifting combinations of love, grief, hallucination, and an excess of joy. She is currently drawing on Assemblage Theory and the history of religious art to develop a “dismembered Écriture Féminine,” in which a strategy of bricolage becomes a reflection of transition-as-becoming and a capacity for repair.

Uma has performed and exhibited at institutions including Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Embassy Edinburgh, Etc Prague, FACT Liverpool, KIM? Riga, Raven Row, Whitechapel Gallery, and Wysing Art Centre. Forthcoming exhibitions include *Troublemakers & Prophets*; *Elizabeth Allen and Other Visionary Artists* at Compton Verney. Recent publications include “Two Dolls & An Egg” (with Belladonna Paloma) for *Almanac: Journal of Trans Poetics* (Helsinki, 2024); “The Graveyard of Extension” in *Deleuzine*, Vol. 2 (London, 2023); “Trans Death Magic” for *SlugTown* (Newcastle, 2023); and “Love as Vector and Void in Luce Irigaray’s ‘The Natal Lacuna’ and Tai Shani’s ‘Phantasmagoregasm’” in *JAWs* (2025). She was shortlisted for the Adam Reynolds Award (2020) and The Arts Foundation Award (2023), and is a 2025 Fellow at the Henry Moore Institute.

### **About the Exhibition**

*House of Revision / House of Repair* by Uma Breakdown is a project about love, restraint, liberty, pain, growth and collapse. Commissioned by ‘a space’ arts for God’s House Tower, the exhibition explores alternative routes through time, drawing on fact and fiction to reimagine the past and speculate about the future.

Working across drawing, fiction, animation, code and sculpture, the artist revisits the building’s past as a Bridewell, an institution established in the 18th Century to house ‘idlers, vagrants and prostitutes’. The project asks what a place of spiritual and physical repair for people seen as ‘other’ might be, if freed from the authority of state and church that underpinned these ‘Houses of Correction’ and the subsequent systems they have evolved into since?

Using the unique history and architecture of God’s House Tower, as well as the artist’s home of the North East, *House of Revision / House of Repair* imagines a sacred grove for fringe cultures and unconventional communities with alternative belief systems, such as ancient outlawed religions and pre-modern travelling performance groups, centering communal care at the edges of legality.

Find out more here: <https://godshousetower.org.uk/eventer/exhibition-house-of-revision-house-of-repair/edate/2026-06-05/>