

# GOOD SYMPTOM: A SERIAL ANTHOLOGY OF TIME-BASED DISTURBANCES

EPISODE 1, SEPTEMBER 2023

## AND SO WE BEGIN: A NOTE & MARGINALIA FROM THE CURATORS

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This year-long experiment in time-based publishing unfurls outside the bounds and in the margins of what we think of as cinema or literature. It suggests something in particular is happening in the uncharted region between page and screen—something worth paying attention to, something insurgent and urgent, something we can't quite name<sup>1</sup>.

And so we begin.

*Good Symptom*<sup>2</sup> gathers together work that disrupts genres and transgresses disciplinary boundaries by messing with image, sound and text in idiosyncratic ways. *Good Symptom*<sup>3</sup> stirs up a certain cognitive dissonance that fissures the creative firmament, opening gaps in the imagination and in between familiar ideas—illuminated spaces of uncertainty, reckoning, wonder...where we can savor the nature of time, of writing, of seeing and listening, of being and belonging. *Good Symptom*<sup>4</sup> offers a way out of imposed reality and fucked up thinking. *Good Symptom*<sup>5</sup> invites us into a liberated realm that calls to radical hearts.

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1 "The incapacity to name is a *good symptom* of disturbance." Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida* (Hill and Wang, 1980). See page 51.

2 *Good symptoms* may include: curiosity, tenderness, discomfort...

3 ...loss of equilibrium, self-awareness, disorientation...

4 ...creative destruction, ideation, cellular repair...

5 ...inflamed emotion, heartache, drowsiness...

6 ...chills, shortness of breath, weak knees...

7 ...increase of interest or pleasure in most or all normal activities...

8 ...deep thoughts, blank stares, awkward laughter...

9 ...distraction, increased libido, sweaty palms...

*Good Symptom*<sup>10</sup> gathers together work that **disrupts** genres and

- fiction
- bio-pic
- documentary
- essay
- poem
- interview
- love letter
- performance<sup>11</sup>
- history
- how-to
- redux
- memoir

10 ...intuitive leaps, loss of perspective, snacking...

*Good Symptom*<sup>12</sup> gathers together work that disrupts genres and transgresses **disciplinary**

genre nonconforming

[i.e. disturbs notions of how a documentary<sup>13</sup> is supposed to behave]

and, or, maybe genre fluid

[mixes genres into a single work]

12 ...tension, hunger, rapid heartrate...

**transgresses** disciplinary boundaries by messing with image, sound and text **in idiosyncratic ways** *Good Symptom*<sup>14</sup> **stirs up a**

- a body follows the poetic line<sup>15</sup>
- San Francisco becomes a protagonist<sup>16</sup>
- redaction corrects history<sup>17</sup>
- home movies<sup>18</sup> retell origin stories
- interviews make mixtape<sup>19</sup>
- voice-to-text terraforms desktop<sup>20</sup>
- dreams craft essays<sup>21</sup>
- a found poem enters our bloodstream<sup>22</sup>

13 “I had this useless, pointless archive of just me playing around with the camera, casually documenting my life for no reason.” ~ Elene Gomelauri, *Für Lilith* / ლილიტს

14 ...longer than usual showers, lapses in linear processing, tremors...

15 Forthcoming: Rose Ansari, *Another Birth*; Aleksey Ushakov, *Collection of Stones*, and Dionysios Tanteles, *Spinning Sun*

16 Forthcoming: Lourdes Figueroa and Peggy Peralta, *Las Marimacha Fragments*

17 Forthcoming: Roland Dahwen, *MAY 35*; Fatma Belkis, *Keje*; and Quenton Baker, *we pilot the blood*

18 The essence of home video is the extraordinary ability to make the otherwise ordinary captivating. See Elene Gomelauri, *Für Lilith* / ლილიტს and Tiffany Jiang, *Results May Vary*

19 In Tobi Springer's *My phone needs to charge so this'll be a little far away*, as with any good mixtape, the sequencing of micro-stories from recorded interviews is intent on creating a mood, taking the listener on an emotional journey, or transmitting a coded message.

20 Forthcoming: Anna Mundet Molas, *CARA-B*

21 Forthcoming: Takahiro Ueno, *A fiction right after you wake up* and Leslie Cuyjet, *1993*

22 Forthcoming: JuPong Lin, *Limulus Love*

gnitive dissonance that **fissures the creative firmament** **openin**

the reader becomes a viewer

the viewer, a reader

opening gaps in the imagination and in **between** familiar ideas

image and another  
 sound and history  
 sound and now  
 text and record  
 one idea and camera  
 liveness<sup>23</sup> literary art and art  
 screen words spoken and words seen words spoken  
 and words heard the listener and the reader  
 innocence and experience photo and development  
 remembering<sup>24</sup> and reckoning these things and other things

illuminated **spaces** of uncertainty, reckoning, wonder **where we can savor** the nature of **time**<sup>25</sup>, of writing, of seeing and listening, of being

to unfold  
 to create  
 to process<sup>26</sup>

savor the nature of **time**<sup>27</sup>, of writing, of seeing and listening, of being

becomes a medium [a substance] [a conduit]  
 memory is present in the [a] present<sup>28</sup>  
 repetition replenishes and revives the sensory palette  
 the finite is interrupted by the infinite

opening gaps in the imagination **and** in between familiar ideas—  
 illuminated spaces of uncertainty, reckoning, wonder...**where we can savor** the nature of time, of **writing**, of seeing and listening, of being

all over, away, in  
 stone  
 the stars  
 off / on  
 the wall  
 a topic  
 why not through  
 time?  
 with  
 sound?  
 moving image?

illuminated **spaces** of uncertainty, reckoning, wonder...**where we can savor** the nature of time, of writing, of **seeing and listening**, of being

image and sound are bridges spanning the distance between what is spoken and unspoken

medium manifests as material inside the gaps and without

23 Naima Lowe's embodiment of a performed text takes us into a realm of liveness rarely achieved through digital means. In film form, an improvised moment is no longer ephemeral, it can be revisited (relived) again and again.

24 "The layering is about the deterioration of memory. The tarnish. The distortion. Also making sure that I'm remixing this footage and not just taking it as is...to make it [a] living [archive]." ~ Tiffany Jiang, *Results May Vary*

25 Is it a known quantity that can be taken from? Is it a loss? Is it a respite? How is the time taken to see an image or watch a film different from time spent reading?

26 As in: to process the experience of the work, to process film, the creative process.

27 "The layers of time include the time when the poem was written; the time of the poet's recorded recitation; and the potentially infinite number of times when the poem is read or the film shown." *Poetry and Film: Artistic Kinship Between Arsenii and Andrei Tarkovsky* (Tate Publishing, 2014) compiled by Kitty Hunter Blair. See page 44.

28 "I don't feel like Asian American families grow up with [home videos] as much as other cultures maybe. I've never seen my own... That particular family, though, I felt like I saw things reflected from my own childhood...even some baby photos that look like the little girl in the beginning and relatives that reminded me of the people in there." ~ Tiffany Jiang, *Results May Vary*

language activates the embodied and implied

[i.e., improvisation as a phenomenon emerging from the experience of the enslaved<sup>29</sup>]

illuminated spaces of uncertainty, reckoning, wonder, where we can savor the nature of time, of writing, of seeing and listening, of being and belonging *Good Symptom* offers a way out of imposed re

in relationship

to self  
other  
the unknown

is a process [a vulnerable opening] [i.e., the construction of animation reveals the construct of identity<sup>31, 32</sup>]

doubt and possibility conspire to produce

productive uncertainty [this being true, what now?]

destabilization [wait, what?]

acceptance

maybe

[i.e., the ambiguous connection between the artist, the text, the image]

is a mirror

that calls attention to itself [reflexivity<sup>33</sup>]

looks you right in the eye.<sup>34</sup>

belonging *Good Symptom*<sup>35</sup> offers a way out of imposed re

the bind<sup>36</sup>

[sameness]  
[difference]  
[indifference]  
[dread]  
[invisibility]  
[hyper-visibility]  
[insatiability]

29 “My practices as a writer, filmmaker and performer were informed by musical tradition. As I’ve come to understand it, improvisation within a Black music context is about the critical intersection between individual and collective expression. It comes out of a very specific historical context of Black survival.” ~ Naima Lowe, *According to Sun Ra, None of Us are Real*

30 ...unexplained optimism, crying, ease...

31 Revealing the animation process in *My phone needs to charge so this’ll be a little far away*, Tobi Springer breaks the fourth wall and provides an opening into a space of belonging within the work and within an endless process of becoming.

32 “...where you can see the craft in front of you.” ~ Tobi Springer, *My phone needs to charge so this’ll be a little far away*

33 “...when a work of art calls attention to its own construction, not only disrupting the cinematic illusion, but also enlisting the audience as active participants in the work.” M Freeman, *The Illuminated Space: A Personal Theory & Contemplative Practice of Media Art* (The 3rd Thing, 2020). See page 112.

34 “...in film, no one ever looks at me: it is forbidden—by the Fiction.” Roland Barthes *Camera Lucida* (Hill and Wang, 1980). See page 111.

35 ...heightened senses, compassion, flow...

36 “A queer person is unable [to accumulate] respect from heteronormative society unless the person is willing to condemn the image created by heteronormative society. Condemnation of the image means validating the image. And invalidating oneself.” ~ Elene Gomelaury, *Für Lilith / ღოგოცხ*

fucked up thinking. *Good Symptom*<sup>37</sup> invites us into a liberated realm  
possibility  
discomfort  
rest  
laughter  
intimacy  
love  
courage  
survival  
a wild place<sup>38</sup>

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**We're glad you're with us.**

xo,

**The Curators**

37 ...agitation, restlessness, temporary paralysis...

38 "It ends with love, exchange, fellowship...in between various modes of being and belonging [...] a wild place that continuously produces its own unregulated wildness." See "The Wild Beyond: With and for the Undercommons," Jack Halberstam in an introduction to *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study*, by Stefano Harney & Fred Moten (Minor Compositions, 2013).

39 ...relief, sudden joy, vivid dreams...

40 ...double vision, tunnel vision, loss of time...

41 ...euphoria, disbelief, hope...

42 ...and/or ecstasy. Proceed with abandon.