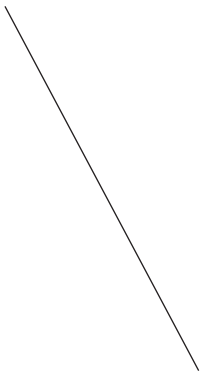


**Ecstatic**

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**Resilience**



And so the party continues.  
Every night I dance to the  
triplet hi hat trap boi fantasy. A  
slow syrup oration, deceptively  
similar to my code swapped  
histories—punctuated by an 808.

Every night I dance to the  
sex-laced crescendo as *bands  
make her dance*, or the desire  
for another's body, as the  
heart decelerates and drugs  
slowly seep out of the system,  
*I only want u when I'm coming  
down* or *fuck faces*. There  
is a rhythm for everything.

The “party” is about a moment of suspension. Feeling a rigorous sensation in the body, a pulsating tip-to-tip. Like Paul B Preciado’s Testogel—the moment it seeps in is palpable. Like pins and needles all prickly across the skin’s surface and a slow numb that calls

attention to each beat of the heart, harder and harder. And the Sensation, conjured by this dance, is void of history, geographic location and pain. It’s a sensation that is without my scars or muscle memory. It is without his trauma of domestic violence. It is without the memory of crack or our 80’s birth. It is without those small deposits of rage. It is without because even the sweat releases something from the body. Without—because we are giving everything and to

splurge is an act of depletion.

I've listened to my peers recite  
remixed versions of the names  
of the recent fallen, lately. I've  
watched the faces in white  
spaces as the words leave lips.  
I moisten my lips to receive  
these names. I insert my own  
name at times wondering the  
difference between me and  
them. I am so moved by this  
murmur propping up each  
individual's performance or

non-performance. Propping me up as the energy in the space constricts and begins to envelop me and certain “others” in the audience. And I think about the camouflage of mourning and how space shapes itself around each of our bodies, pushing in a little more each time.

*This is a chance*

*This is a chance*

The dance, however, is not an escape. It is a punctuation. It is about claiming an instant of time and something that can be mine completely. Though at times I share it with others, as we are all our own orbiting planets spinning in excess in proximity to one another. And sometimes our bodies touch. Sometimes I run my shoulders

past exhaustion to elation.  
Ecstatic resilience glittering  
down.

up against his. And there is a  
transfer. A silent affirmation.  
We are taking up space at the  
same time and spinning the  
most delicate webs out of the  
strongest material imaginable.  
This is the dance. This is the  
work of living between that  
distinct moment when we push





I want to dance. Slick with sweat and cum and saliva. I want to hold the body in a state of titillation—rushed to its peak by the simple act of being alive. By taking a breath... by breathing...the club is a sanctuary for queer liberation.

**Audre Lorde writes:**

For those of us who live at the shoreline  
standing upon the constant edges of  
decision  
crucial and alone  
for those of us who cannot indulge  
the passing dreams of choice  
who love in doorways coming and going  
in the hours between dawns...

In the beginning they say *gXX*  
*created the heavens and the*  
*earth. The earth was without*  
*form and void, and darkness*  
*was upon the face of the deep...*  
And the fiction continues.

Being without form and void  
suggests a folding on to itself,  
so that it may always be both,  
negating the other. While the



dance just holds us in, detaches our weight and gives us a small respite. It is a portal. A tiny dressing room to construct and sharpen our outfits, our attitudes, our swag and presentation as we go out in the world and perform our positions, in the hopes

to acquire or swap into other positions, permission to be amorphous.

A woman I dated once was really attracted to my ability to slip. She put language to a fluidity that she identified in me. For her my slippage to female was only visible when we fucked. Though in fucking I oscillate back and forth in a way she did not find present as I walked through the world not fucking. And so I wonder about the rhythm of my walking. This

walking through as opposed to  
being rested in. This pendulum  
sway from form to void.



Funk music does not occupy  
a space separate from the sex  
and drugs. It is about a visceral  
manifestation of pleasure—to  
negate the flaw is detrimental.  
It is about sitting in a Caprice on  
Slauson, slouched down in your  
seat real low, eyes low, blazed,  
two 10's in your trunk listening  
to Bootsy, to Parliament, to  
E-40, to Tupac, to Curtis—to the  
vibration in the seat that leaves  
a plush velvet fabric and enters  
the spine, the forearms, the ass.  
A form created in the 60's,

resistance is embedded  
in its syncopation. Funk  
is about the journey. And  
sometimes just to be a body  
feeling is revolutionary.

I think of James Brown sliding  
across Ed Sullivan's stage in  
1966 both exclaiming and

singing *I Feel Good*. I think of  
the rapidity of his steps— as  
an autonomous choreography  
that straddles a stark line  
between performance and  
refusal. An acknowledgment  
that at some point the  
ground will refuse to uphold.

I see the ground buckling myself  
and so we shake it. Shake it  
as vigorously as the earth  
shakes itself loose in California,  
along certain fault lines.  
In search of fluid space.



Eddie Hazel lifts the gravity in one's room. He jams it into the chest cavity with one long note in E-minor. A guitar solo played on top of itself echoes in the parts of us that have already been made hollow. Time stops. I imagine a callousness across the tips of his fingers—some hard shell of labor. Catharsis peaks with each wail of the guitar and we float weightlessly deeper into the void, and maybe the body rattles like trunks when a deep bass

vibrates through them. His guitar bleeds all the language out of the lament. It festers in the body. It sits against the spine applying pressure.

And I ponder that space between the moments where  
l a n g u a g e

falls  
a w a y

from sound; or the moment that sound becomes language dragging with it a weight that resides in the body, forcing us to confront it.

The music is both thick and empty. So that we may climb into it and be many selves at once planted on table tops, hips rocking back and forth, smiles slick across faces, black joy is an act of resistance.

**Ecstatic Resilience**

by Sable Elyse Smith

Written in parallel with Lauren Halsey: *Kingdom Splurge (4)*. July 2016.

Sable Elyse Smith is an interdisciplinary artist and writer based in New York. She has received awards from the Queens Museum, Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, the Franklin Furnace Fund, and Art Matters, and is a 2016 Creative Capital Fellow.





# **Album Introduction**

Lauren and I move from the backyard of her house to the living room area, which connects to a large open, almost commercial grade kitchen, tucked near a beautiful staircase ascending...

It is a house she's lived in twice in Harlem and holds new histories of a group of us. We are artists, writers, brilliant beings occupying loud liquid bodies. Maybe our own renaissance... informal speakeasy, bodies squatting in slumber across couches, beds, floor space; cooking communal meals because we can anticipate each other's hunger. Here, Lauren and I tag team DJ G Funk,



a cyclical introduction and reentry to Funk music and P Funk. Songs that make me evoke a vernacular dance that draws language across the floor. The words written, spelled out with the folding in and out of a foot lightly, are fraught with a type of violence, a violence, an implied violence, a memory vibrating in the calf muscle, a connection to a geography. California is a thing we share. Jheri Curl Funk reminding us of lovers. And the earnest tears we bore witness to, watching each other stretch and grow.

Trap Music—its sub-bass lines forming the tools of the subaltern, gathering cinematic

strings and 808 kick drums banging out its authorship—my authorship—a sharp line between the many worlds we straddle and the pure adrenaline a rhythm can produce.

There are movements on this album that allow me to travel, even when my feet stay planted. There are movements on this album that allow me to see.

The following list of songs make up transcendent portals if played in the right succession. They are beautiful, flawed, and not without transgressions. Neither are we. They are a record, a sonic document of an ongoing conversation

**between Lauren & I. They are evidence  
of our fellowship and our need for one  
another in this world. Our need for you.**

- 1.** **Kung Fu:** Curtis Mayfield
- 2.** **G Funk (Intro):** Snoop Dogg
- 3.** **Mothership Connection (Star Child):** Parliament
- 4.** **Quik's Grove:** Dj Quik
- 5.** **The Payback:** James Brown
- 6.** **Low Life:** Future, The Weeknd
- 7.** **Panda:** Desiigner
- 8.** **Do I Love Her?:** Dj Quik, Suga Free
- 9.** **If U Stay Ready:** Suga Free

- 10.** **We Can Freak It:** Kurupt
- 11.** **Girls All Pause:** Kurupt, Nate Dogg, Roscoe
- 12.** **I'd Rather Give You My Bitch:** Suga Free
- 13.** **Quki's Grove II-For U 2 Rip 2:** Dj Quik
- 14.** **Give Me Your Love (Love Song):** Curtis Mayfield
- 15.** **Keep Your Head to the Sky:** Earth, Wind & Fire
- 16.** **Maggot Brain:** Funkadelic





**Let Me Ride**

