The Three Year Clock

Sam Roeck
CUNY Hunter College

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The Three Year Clock

by

Sam Roeck

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of the requirements for the degree of
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Thesis Sponsor:

December 12, 2016 Andrea Blum
Date Signature

December 12, 2016 Lisa Corinne Davis
Date Signature of Second Reader
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Introduction

The history of Witches and Witchcraft is a history that is as oppressive as it is empowering. It is a history that has been told and retold around the world for as long as there has been language to tell it. Its continual reshaping is as much a part of the magic it holds as it is the magic it tells the story of.

Almost all cultures have held some belief in Witches and the working of Magic. In the medieval Bishopric of Basel and other parts of Catholic Europe, “Witch” was used for the subjugation and murder of, primarily, women. While in Northern Europe and Iceland, the victims of medieval Witch hunts were, in the majority, male. In colonial America, the accusations of “Witch” closely paralleled those of property disputes, and preexisting grievances between accuser and accused. Even today, as Wiccans in Britain and America embrace and find power in the label “Witch”, in Papua New Guinea, tens of women, children, and men are burned alive as “Witches” each year, while lookers-on take pictures and videos with their smartphones.

Central to the examination of the history of Witches and Witchcraft is the question of belief in their existence. Are we looking for people who harness supernatural powers and who can bend fate to their will? Or, are we examining an archetype? Is “Witch” a lens though which people have viewed their worlds and with which we can examine our own past?
I took a train, as one does, to Connecticut to clear my head. The train, which I just barely made, my arms full of challah and rosé and other things you can’t buy in Connecticut, pulled away from Grand Central at 6:47 on Friday and, after a dozen or so stops in the various hamlets and nooks along the eastern edge of New York, deposited its precious cargo (moi) in the village of Wassaic, the closest I could get to Connecticut via public transportation, where I then crossed the street and stepped, at last, finally, virginally, onto Connecticut soil an hour later than I had and was expected.

Now I shall tell of things that change. Before land was and sea— before air and sky arched over all, there was1 Chaos and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep. And from this Chaos, we drew ourself together, water heaved and turned in darkness. We separated earth and air, heat and cold, and heaviness fell into things that had no weight. And we knew ourself to exist.

Thank you so much, thank you, thank you for coming here. Tonight, here, this is special.
It’s special because you’re taking the time, you’re MAKING the time, for you. And I get it, we’re all busy, we all lead busy, stress-filled lives. We’ve got cellphones and twitters, and emails and TV. We’ve got deadlines and bosses and husbands and wives. And it’s hard,  

1 Ovid, The Metamorphosis, H. Gregory translation, 1955
isn’t it? It’s hard staying on top of that, not to mention succeeding on top of that. Or, at least trying to. But people do, and we’re here today, right now, right now, to find out what the secret to that success is.”

I was picked up in Connecticut by the homosexual whose house I would be staying at for the weekend. As we drove along the Connecticut roads he queried me on my train ordeal to Connecticut and recent job interview back in the city, and I, dutifully, read aloud to him from the Connecticut signage and billboards\(^2\) that decorated our fleeting view of the Connecticut landscape outside.

You know, I’ve been doing this for over thirty years now\(^3\), I’ve been in hundreds of cities, and I’ve talked to successful people all over the world, millions of people just like you, and I’ve learned a few things. And I know what it is, what that hunger is, what that hunger looks like that drives people, everyday, ordinary, run-of-the-mill people just like you, to success in their lives. I’ve studied moguls and businesswomen and poets and all of them have, no matter what field they are succeeding in, all of them have that same, extra-special capacity to visualize an alternate reality, a reality in which they are succeeding, and to manifest the ability to materialize the actualization of that reality.

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\(^2\) There had been a fair somewhere near here once, long ago, with motorcycle races; the signs still carried fragments of words. DARE, one of them read, and another, EVIL, and she laughed at herself, perceiving how she sought out omens everywhere; the word is DAREDEVIL, Eleanor, daredevil drivers, and she slowed her car because she was driving too fast….


\(^3\) The difficulty, or one of the difficulties, with witches is their elusive nature. They are almost always only glimpsed, flickering between the trees, darting behind clouds.
Hell, I’ve been where you are: I was overweight, addicted to drugs, battling cancer, my bank account overdrawn. I know, I’ve been to the bottom, the absolute bottom, and I am standing here today to tell you that THIS IS NOT THE WAY YOU HAVE TO LIVE YOUR LIFE ANYMORE. Have I battled with my body? Yes, I have. Have I failed myself? Hell yes. Have I hurt people in my life? People who I genuinely love and care for? Yes. And have I done things that I am ashamed and embarrassed of? Yes. But that low point, that’s the point where you have to ask yourself, “Am I walking toward something that I should be running away from?” And I am my own living proof, right now, right here, to show you that YOU CAN CHANGE YOUR OWN LIFE.

And time passed and we were changed. From red to black to blue to green. And where there were wounds, scars formed. And where there had been strife, sleep. Land fell away from sky and water fell farthest, embracing shores and islands.

4 FOUR BURNER GAS GRILL
WITH SIDE BURNER
AND FOLDING SIDE TABLE

5 / They are subject to the observer effect, that infelicitous law of physics (and psychology) which states that the act of observing changes that which is observed.

6 S. Jackson, The Haunting of Hill House, 1959

7 Yes...so...please...
All those people here...
Is love of boys...
The boys...
With the garlic...
The water below...
For below.
For the, you know...
The water.
— K. Richards, 2014
In no more than twenty-five minutes, we arrived at the homosexual couple’s homosexual house, built in the 1970s, remodeled in the 1990s, and then again sometime in the early aughts and then redecorated when these particular homosexuals moved in two years ago, and which was perched on a hill overlooking, what I imaged was, in the daylight, quite the Connecticutian vista.

Dinner, which had been cooked, then halted, then set aside, and then at last reheated on account of my inability to properly read a train schedule, was returned to its serving bowls and brought to the table. “How was your train ride?” the homosexual who hadn’t picked me up asked.

But that was not all. Out of sight, hidden within the ice mists of the L4, a shadow was taking shape. Unknown, secret, flung together from the carrion of

———

8 / Thus, they hide themselves in the corners of our minds, and our catching them inevitably leads to their death.

9 Mario’s bed is loosely, unanally made. Hal’s bed is unmade. Hal and Mario’s mother had done her undergraduate Honors work at McGill on the use of hyphens, dashes, and colons in E. Dickinson.


10 Beyond the initial publication concerning its discovery in 2004, there has been little writing of consequence on the Great Early Archaeological Synchronicity (GEAS) and its effect on the reshaping of historical contemporaneity. Its discovery, by a software bot checking for redundancies in the shared results of the Harvard funded Artifact 3D Laser Scan Initiative Project (A3LSIP), marks the first of its kind. What at first appeared to be a flaw in the data was, upon investigation, a perfect co-incidence. The broken convexity of *Fragment of a Queen’s Face, 26.7.1396* (discovered in Southern Egypt, and purchased by the Metropolitan Museum of Art with funds from the Harkness Gift in 1926, c. 1350 B.C.) (fig. A) matched perfectly, within a micron, the looted concavity of *Jade Q’uq’umatz Prominence, L4.26.1985(damaged)* (discovered in Teotihuacán in 1905 by Leopoldo Batres and now housed in a private collection in Texas, USA, c. 150 C.E.) (fig. B).
birth, our quiet sister grew. And in the darkness, she named herself Theia. And we did not know how long she was there for we did not know of her until it was too late. And so, like this, the years passed.

Now I want you to take a moment, and I want you to ask yourself, “Am I ready for change?” “Do I want to open myself to the penetration of success and love?” “Am I ready to name the shadow that is holding me back?” “Is my life worth it?”

I’m gunna do something for you. You’re already on the path. You’ve already said “YES” to the vortex of self-reinvention. You’ve already decided that those anti-vaccine monsters who disguise themselves are parents aren’t going to win this time. Because polarity can work that way too. So I want you to make a promise, to yourself, not to me, not the person sitting next to you. I want you to make a promise to yourself that you’re going to stop associating pain with change and you’re going to start actualizing your fifth-plane potential of reality and all of the joy that that can bring.

Are you ready to come with me on this journey?

Invisibility (or, What Do We See?) “For ———-, true invisibility is impossible but one can enter a state of fiercely held modesty that can render the ———— unnoticed. With the right degree of intense modesty, —- could pass through a crowded room or walk beside a solitary traveler unnoticed.”

—P. Pullman, His Dark Materials, 1995-2000

“...he says, I says, she says, I says, I says, I says—”

— V. Woolf, Kew Gardens, 1919
In a pool the following day, a homosexual who worked in advertising, whose partner lounged on a lounge chair opposite us, and who I had earlier avoided successfully in the house, casually asked me what I did for a living. I listed off my five or so vocations and then at the end I boldly added, “I’m also an artist.”

In the driveway, four black SUVs, from four different brands, were parked four across, in a gradient of resale value.

“How old are you?” he asked and I could imagine his mind was assaying whether my culling together of various, unrelated paychecks was a sign that I was dilettantish and cavalier or unguided and destitute. “Thirty-one,” I said. Destitute, he decided and my shoulders sank into the water. “So, what kind of art do you make?”

And then a time came, in the Late Heavy Bombardment, as the great gas giants wrestled to determine who would claim the outer realms, and when none were looking, shadow-born Theia leapt from her hiding place. Hurling herself from

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13 “The first represented clouds low and livid, rolling over a swollen sea: all the distance was in eclipse; so, too, was the foreground; or rather, the nearest billows, for there was no land. One gleam of light lifted into relief a half-submerged mast, on which sat a cormorant, dark and large, with wings flecked with foam; its beak held a gold bracelet set with gems, that I had touched with as brilliant tints as my palette could yield, and as glittering distinctness as my pencil could impart. Sinking below the bird and mast, a drowned corpse glanced through the green water; a fair arm was the only limb clearly visible, whence the bracelet had been washed or torn.”
— C. Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, 1847

14 “On the first day of March, 1692, no work was done in the homes or fields of Salem Village. Early in the morning, as though it were a meeting day, the people dressed in their best. They gathered excitedly around the big house of Nathaniel Ingersoll, which was half dwelling, half inn, and the main center of gossip and news in the town.”
behind the ice mists that hid her, Theia rushed toward us with all her strength and she would have destroyed us, but at the last, our still-small brother Mars called out to Theia and pulled her off her course.\textsuperscript{15} And so she struck us but a glancing blow and yet in the impact she, herself, was destroyed and our mantle was ripped from us and thrown about us into space.

I’m going to tell you about love. Let’s forget your life. Forget your problems—administration, bills, and loans—and come with me.\textsuperscript{16} I’m going to show you something, here, today, that I don’t normally show people I’ve just met but I’m going to show you here because I can feel that you are ready. You are ready and open to accept this. And I’m going to show you how, once you’re there, once you’ve gotten from here to the point where you’ve made that your reality, you can tap into it at any time. I want you to reach your hand out. See. You’re touching it, and I’m going to show you how to see it so you can, at any time, access simultaneous, alternate, parallel realities that exist all around you. Everything will be open to you. The sky will rend, you will watch as the magnificent and glorious fabric of time unfurls before your eyes. Nothing will be out of your reach and you will see the throw of possibilities and you can pick the path to your success.

\textsuperscript{15} “‘I bought her a rocking-horse and a doll and a million lollipops.’ the man said, ‘and then I took her and I put my hands around her neck and I pinched her and I pinched her until she was dead.’ The little boy gasped and the mother turned around…”
— S. Jackson, \textit{The Witch}, 1949

\textsuperscript{16} M. \textit{Future Lovers}, 2005
I make… paintings. Oh cool, I love painting. Yeah. What kind of paintings do you make? Uh—. Like are they oil…? Acrylic…? Oil. Cool. Yeah. I saw some really cool paintings at a gallery the other day. Cool. Yeah my friend took me to this gallery in, I think, the Lower East Side? Oh yeah? Awesome. Yeah it was cool, they were like really abstract. Cool. Are your paintings abstract. Um, yeah. Cool, I like abstract art. Yeah. So, what artists do you like? Um. Like do you mostly look at like other abstract art? Um yeah, I guess so. Cool. Do you like Rothko? Yeah, sure. I saw that big show of his a few years ago at—was it the Met? Yeah, I don’t know if I saw that. It was really stunning. Yeah they do a good job with the shows there. Just like, seeing all those paintings together… Yeah, wow. I mean like the way he paints color is just like… Yeah, color. So do the abstract paintings you make kind of look like Rothko?… Yeah.18

Naked, we shook. Molten, fiery, storming, hurtling through space…19

We made a blueberry pie with blueberries that we had picked from a blueberry farm earlier that day. Blueberry picking is easy, rather fast work, and while not an experience I regret, not an activity I would seek out again.

17 “They would discuss the ancient stories. She always wanted to play them all. Then once she was in possession of the subject, came the challenging part—finding the right moment, the moment that presents meaning, that sums up the essence of a character, a story, an emotion. it was the same hard choice painter were supposed to make. As Diderot wrote, ‘The painter has but one moment; he may no more record two different moments that two separate movements.’”
—S. Sontag, The Volcano Lover, 1992

18 // Denial of a name is primal as far as injustices go. This marker that separates the one from the many is also how we form a connection to the beast. I am “Blank,” you are “Blank.” Names, the root of magic, hold the key to that which they denote.

19 // The witches of Salem differ from those that came before because they were given names. The Bible contains reference to only one witch, the witch of Endor, denied a name, identified only by locus, killed because she did what was asked of her. “The Witch of…” roots itself as the identifier of these others.
That night I helped my homosexual hosts cook dinner. Four additional homosexuals were coming over to join us for dinner putting the number of homosexuals present at seven. Seven homosexuals, and the original three of us agreed that none of the three of us particularly liked any of the four new homosexuals who were currently on their way, begging the question of course— why were they invited to dinner? Connecticut. Two of the homosexuals used to be a couple and then broke up and found two other homosexuals to, respectively, be couples with. All six homosexuals (including my original two) now lived, at least part-time, in Connecticut, were architects, worked in architecture or, dated an architect. One of the homosexuals was openly unhappy. Two of the homosexuals didn’t directly address me all evening. And three of the homosexuals I would have gladly slept with then and there.20 21

And I know what you’re saying to yourself, you’re saying, “This guy is nuts, he has no idea what he’s talking about. Simultaneous parallel realities? Ha!” But let me explain.

That night it took me two tries to properly make a béchamel sauce and I decided my vocation for the evening would be to “liven up the party.” All of the dinner components prepared, except of course for the tomato salad, which would wait until just before we sat down, the four

20  Yami Kippy Yaibo
     Setteriffic Kaibo
     Indo-latin he quoth: Yew-jay Saffi Serray
     — K Cattrall

21 // Land can be conquered, troops can march across, and flags can be planted. “The Witch of…” can be eliminated simply by colonizing. But the townspeople of Salem differed in that they brought the witches into their homes.
homosexuals arrived, a second and third bottle of wine were opened, and the evening commenced.

“Anyone want to get stoned?” I said.

“Blowjobs,” I said.

“Blueberry picking,” I said.

“Double penetration,” I said.

“Sauce?” I said.

“9/11,” I said.

“I’ll sleep with anyone,” I said.

“Connecticut,” I said.

“I have two boyfriends,” I said.

“More corn?” I said

“Suicide,” I said.

“Anyone want to get stoned?” I said.22

We’re going to start with the most basic understanding of our understanding of our universe, our way of visually navigating our day-to-day lives, and so I want you to see that, I want you to hold that understanding in your mind. Got it? Now, I want you to

22 // They started with names. “Blank is a witch,” “Blank danced with the devil,” “Blank sends her spirit out.”
reimagine that flatbed picture plane as a hyperbolic paraboloid.\(^2\) Just think what that does. We’re no longer talking about traveling to and from places. We are not going from here to here BETWEEN things. No, not us. We are going THROUGH them. Because now we are using the power of actualizing our own personal visualizations to open up the gate of possibilities and bend those possibilities to our own will. Because this is important—in this hyperboloid parabolic world (which we’ll call the HPW) because in the HPW we are not examining what this idea does when it is next to this other idea. No, the ideas in the HPW are penetrating one another and that penetration is what plants the seed that will turn into success. And in my own personal opinion, this is the key to it all.

Dinner, which had started at 8:00 was finished and cleared by 11:00 and the four guests, drunk, well-fed, and gay piled into one, almost-new car and three homosexuals smiled as four drove off into the night. And I, dinner earned, windows opened and curtains drawn, slipped safely under the Connecticut quilts on my Shaker bed.\(^2\) Outside, the Connecticut trees and the Connecticut grass distilled silver under the nearly full moon. And seven scared, insecure little boys went to

\(^2\) Fragment and Jade share not a three dimensional form (as there is no depth between their shared surfaces) but rather a two dimensional space that has been warped and manipulated through the third dimension while still retaining all of its essential two dimensional properties. The resulting shape has no thickness yet exists in the third and fourth dimensions. This shape is referred to as a synchronic. The existence and discovery of synchronics in the Third Dimension points to the probability that they can also exist within the Fourth Dimension and possibly other higher dimensions as well. It is through such re-imaginings of space-fabric (for example the notion of “wormholes”) and now with their discovery through at least one dimensional plane, that we can begin to conceive of these synchronics as actualized, non-physical gateways that open onto portals through which one can move through the hyperbolic paraboloid of our universe not only physically (de loco in locum) but also temporally (de temper usque ad tempus).

\(^2\) “The wind drives straightly; the flame stoops slightly. Wild beams of moonlight cross both floor and wall, and, meeting, stain the faces bent; the faces pondering; the faces that search the sleepers and seek their hidden joy. Safe, safe, safe”

V. Woolf, A Haunted House, 1921
sleep in seven adult bodies in four Connecticut beds in three Connecticut homes and around two in the Connecticut morning a thin, fine rain began, misty and dull.

I awoke in the morning fully dressed—had I really not remembered to undress? No time for coffee. No time for breakfast. Goodbye. Goodbye. Thank you. Thank you. And one of my Connecticut hosts rushed me from their Connecticut home to the non-Connecticut village of Wassaic, along roads dark and glossy from the rain, so that I could catch the 9:40 train, which, at that point, I was perilously close to missing and needed very much to be on so that I could be back in the city by 11:44 and to work by noon.

But that which was flayed was not lost. Partly our own and partly the broken body of Theia, it circled us, and though our magic was not strong enough to bring it back, we held it close and still. As time went on, and under Mars’s watchful eye, a new sister formed. Pale and weak she circled in our skies and she called herself Luna.25

The 9:40 train arrived perfectly on time at 10:30 and I decided that reading a train schedule properly was not, in any way, a skill that I admired in other people or particularly wanted to have for myself.

25 // These named witches are no longer a terror in the night, they cannot be plowed from the earth, they are inside our homes, tucked in alongside us in bed.
I want to talk about how we categorize success. Success is not necessarily what we want it to be because we can’t always see ourselves as whole. Before I learned about decision-making through the HPW, I thought I wanted money, and a good home, and a car and a watch. But personally, now that I have seen the coralic branching of possibilities that we are capable of seeing when we expand our minds through the HPW I realize that’s not what I want for myself personally, and I’m guessing that’s not what you want either.26

On the train, two women and three children sat down in the Turkish corner of vinyl seats that I currently occupied. (Metro-North has a particular cruelty towards single passengers regarding the geography of seating in their trains.) “Where do you kids want to eat lunch when we get to the city?” one of the women asked. “Hard Rock Cafe,” the girl said. “Yeah Hard Rock Cafe,” echoed one of the boys. “They love Hard Rock Cafe because they have movie costumes there and it’s fun for them to see the movie costumes, and the prices are pretty reasonable,” one of the women explained to the other. “Will they have Star Wars?” the girl asked. “I don’t know, maybe,” and to her friend: “They loved seeing the Star Wars costumes the last time we were in the city.” “Did you have a good summer, Madison?” the other woman asked the girl who was looking out the window. “I went to art camp” she replied, still looking out the window. “Madison went to art camp. She’s really very talented. You should see the friendship bracelets she makes, beautiful,

26 Fragment and Jade are two examples of, what we hope is, a new, connected, and expansive way of theorizing and experiencing time and location as it pertains to the bounds of our comprehending of and travel in this universe and the laws that, up until now, we had thought governed it for example, presentism vs. externalism (specifically in how they relate or don’t relate within the theoretical frames of Kurt Gödel and Lawrence Sklar) but are now being examined, for the first time, as co-existential rather than combatant.
just beautiful,” Madison’s apparent mother added as Madison looked down, fingerling the clasp of her children’s purse.

This is a hard journey. Climbing up this road, at times it feels like you can’t go on. The way ahead is full of rocks and precipices. Your feet hurt. Your soul hurts. And we go on. We persist because we have to and because we can. You are all beautiful. I can see the light in each and every one of you. I can see in you the ability to bend your reality and to make it your own. This has been an amazing night here tonight. We’ve come a long way and I wish I could stay here with you forever, but there are hundreds of thousands of people out there just like you, struggling just like you, who need my help. Thank you for listening, thank me for talking, I love you27, goodnight.28

Our hills cried out to her.29 Our waters rose to meet her but could not span the void. Our trees silvered their leaves in mourning and our moths sought her in the air. Yet, we could not bring her back.

27 P. LeHelle, Got 2 b Real, 2011

28 Thank you.

29 Because it is my name. Because I cannot have another in my life. Because I lie and sign myself to lies. Because I am not worth the dust on the feet of them that hang. How may I live without my name? I have given you my soul; leave me my name.
   — A. Miller, The Crucible, 1953
And like this the years passed. Time began and time ended. Ages were brought into being and watched other ages pass. And Luna remained, part but apart, fixed in the heavens.\textsuperscript{30}

“Certainly not from my side of the family.” “Dylan kicked me.” “The cat peed on Logan’s.” “Put the dog down!” “Tickets” “Grandad, the old man.”

“I went to sports…” “Arlington…” “The money we spent on shots, sugar, flour…” “A real deal on the hotel…” “…or was it Annadale?” “Back-to-school shopping…” “Coupon” “I says…” “Is anyone sitting here?” “Really, very talented.” “Tickets”

And I leaned against the window, waiting to be engulfed by the city.\textsuperscript{31}

\textsuperscript{30} Thank you.

\textsuperscript{31} Thank you.
ANDREA BLUM: Okay Sam, what if we try it like this? What if, instead of you trying to write about your work, what if you just explain what this play is about to me. Just lay out what the different parts are and how you see them relating to each other.

SAM ROECK: Alright. So this piece is basically these three different monologues delivered by three different “witches” that are interwoven with one another, and each one is looking at time in a different way.

BLUM: In what way are they different?

ROECK: On the most basic level, they are the past, present, and future. But also, each of these is trying to create a different way in which they can be delivered as monologues and inhabit the “time” of the performance. The past is this hybrid creation myth / true story of how the moon was created and dealing with the kind of awkward poetics of translation. The present monologue is a first-person narrative of a trip I recently took to Connecticut. And the future is this motivational speech that deals with time and space travel and overcoming the struggles in your life.

BLUM: How do you see that as the future?
ROECK: I mean, it’s “a” future. It’s like half what I want to be and half completely not what I want. I didn’t want to create a future that I was entirely excited about because I’m not actually that excited about the future. It looks pretty fucking grim.

BLUM: So does the present.

ROECK: Yeah but at least that has the potential to change, you know? But, so there are these three witches...

BLUM: Yeah, the theme of “witches” is something that keeps coming up in your work. Can you talk about that?

ROECK: Well, I’m thinking of the “witch” as an archetype through which I can look at navigating life, you know? I’m not so much interested in answering the question of belief when it comes to witches, but I am looking at that notion of belief as the linchpin in how the archetype operates in our collective unconscious. Like the notion of witches is this vessel through which we can filter our fears and our hopes and it’s terrifying and empowering and it’s a history that has been written and rewritten over and over by various people who all, I think, are trying to figure out what it means to circumvent the most fundamental principles that we associate with the human experience.
BLUM: You’re dealing with a political history that went sour.

ROECK: Exactly. But also one that has been reclaimed and used for empowerment. And so yeah, it’s like, even though there are such disparate attachments to the idea of “witch” there is also this really deeply rooted understanding of the archetype and, because of that, I think it can function really well as a lens for looking at parts of my life (our lives) that are hidden or secret or that we are made to feel ashamed of.

BLUM: So there is also this rotating stage. Can you talk about where that came from?

ROECK: The stage, which is this hexagonal cutout of a sunken living room is partly related to a project I did my second year at Hunter in which I turned my studio into a closet with a hidden room behind it. But this set is a bit less functional and more stylized. I want it to inhabit this place between functional set and functionless sculpture. Part of that space between the two is in its design, and part of establishing that is how the architecture around it is being used.

BLUM: You mean how you’re repurposing the stairs as seating?

ROECK: Yeah, that was the initial jumping off point for the piece. Like how could I adapt the architecture of the space to change how the piece was received or approached at various points during the show. So what I ended up with was a tableau performance for the opening. Then
during the run of the show the piece would be primarily a sculpture except for the three-night run of the play in which it would be reactivated as a stage.

BLUM: Do you have a role in the performance beyond creating and directing it?

ROECK: The script comes out of my thesis paper and throughout the paper there are these footnotes that kind of link the different narratives to things outside of themselves and to perhaps the reader’s world. So during the piece I’m going to be taking on that role and being the bridge between the audience and the performers and the kind of cultural umbrella the piece is coming out of and also running the tech for the show.

BLUM: How do you think about your relationship to the audience in making this piece?

ROECK: Well, I mean, I try not to be antagonistic but there are like maybe six people that I am specifically thinking about as I make work and a lot of the details that go into the nuances of these characters and the work are things that come out of my relationships with those people. So I’m trying to find some sort of balance between specificity and openness? Like, audiences are really hard to predict so you can’t make the work for them as a whole but if you go out performing and making specific decisions for specific people, I think that specificity translates to, you know… strangers as well.
BLUM: So, finally, how do you see this piece relating to the other work that you have made? Is there a connection beyond “witches” that you see linking it together?

ROECK: I mean, for me there are lots of links between all the little details of things and the way I’m trying to use space and passive movement but, like, I’ll quote Shirley Jackson in one piece and then use the structure of that sentence to say something else in this piece. Or, like, a person in one video will dial the phone and then in a totally separate video a person will answer it. I mean those are pretty direct links, but that’s kind of the level that it’s important for me for these things to be linked at because then it makes the village that the work is that much more of a concrete place.
Works Cited


1. Sam Roeck, December 8, 2016 - January 8, 2017, *The Three Year Clock*, mixed media, 150 x 144 x 144 inches, 2016, installation view #1

2. Sam Roeck, December 8, 2016 - January 8, 2017, *The Three Year Clock*, mixed media, 150 x 144 x 144 inches, 2016, installation view #2

3. Sam Roeck, December 8, 2016 - January 8, 2017, *The Three Year Clock*, mixed media, 150 x 144 x 144 inches, 2016, installation view (detail)
Image 1.
Image 3.