**Circumstantial Presentation of Identities: A study on the Perception of Self, Identity, and Authenticity**

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In the name of understanding that one cannot present their identity the same way in different circumstances, the dance work *Through the Woodwork* examines how one person perceives her presentation differently in various circumstances, and how to overcome unseen obstacles by reframing research in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Through dance performance, this study intends to lend greater attention to unique presentations of self and the ways in which these presentations are shaped, thereby illuminating the way presentation and perception of self manifests given a specific circumstance.

The methods for this study consisted of the introspection of a single participant who was the author, researcher, choreographer, and dancer. The procedures consisted of two separate treatment sets. Treatment 1 analyzed self-identity and a lived story through the process of Narrative Psychology. In Treatment 2, the researcher performed at four sites, one of which was not accessible due to closures of public lands in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Analyses were conducted through an introspective lens and the conceptual framework developed by the researcher, *Circumstantial Presentation of Identities* (see Figure 1). The framework specifically draws attention to self identity, self presentation, and authenticity through the lens of the performer.

Study findings revealed that the conceptual framework can be applied to challenge the presentation of self in conjunction with learned patterns and behaviors on the participant’s side. This work challenged the typical way of thinking of dance performance, social frameworks, and human interaction by delving into processing one’s lived experiences, self perceptions, and presentations while not taking into account the other’s experiences. Looking critically at one’s lived story and its impact on identity and perception of authenticity led the participant toward a more holistic view of self through dance.

This work was transformative for the researcher not only by analyzing each of these exposures which shaped her, but as a way to see how she “showed up” in each circumstance. This study and conceptual framework contributed to the researcher’s active understanding of her own life as a part of her identity, that of a researcher, a
dancer, and a creative who arrives in the present moment on the foundations of living by learning about herself, through her art.

Figure 1