



Date& Time: 22 July, 6 pm - 7:30 pm (UK time) or 1 pm (Montreal time)
Title: Movement and Intimacy: Dances in Cities, Memory, and the Aquatic Turn
Speaker: Dr. VK Preston, Associate Professor, History Department, Concordia University
https://www.concordia.ca/faculty/vk-preston.html

Summary:

Movement and Intimacy explores research-creation methodologies that bring artistic practice, oral history, and embodied knowledge into dialogue. Through two ongoing projects, I consider how movement functions simultaneously as a subject of inquiry and as a method for generating, transmitting, and preserving memory.

The presentation examines, first, **"Storytelling and Social Justice,"** a queer public history project that combines oral history, social practice, and performative city tours to investigate the histories of LGBTQ+ social spaces. Secondly, it discusses ***Falls/Chutes***, a multidisciplinary performance, installation, and artist's book project addressing intergenerational care, grief, and bodily autonomy during the Covid-19 pandemic. Drawing on experiences of accompaniment, outdoor movement, and dancing with family members during periods of confinement, the work considers how embodied practices can memorialise relationships and experiences that resist conventional archival forms.

By placing these projects in conversation, the paper argues for artistic practice as a form of research in its own right, demonstrating how movement-based work can produce knowledge about queer histories, care, loss, and belonging while creating new spaces for collective remembrance.

Speaker’s Bio:

VK Preston is an artist, cultural historian, and researcher working at the intersections of performance, archives, movement, and research-creation. Their work combines artistic and scholarly approaches to explore embodiment, memory, improvisation, and difficult histories. VK is Co-Director of LePARC, the Performing Arts Research Cluster at Concordia University's Milieux Institute, and a visiting artist-scholar in Bennington College's Dance MFA programme. Their publications and artistic research have received recognition from the Dance Studies Association, the American Society for Theatre Research, and the Canadian Association for Theatre Research.