

Dossier

STAGING THE UNSPEAKABLE

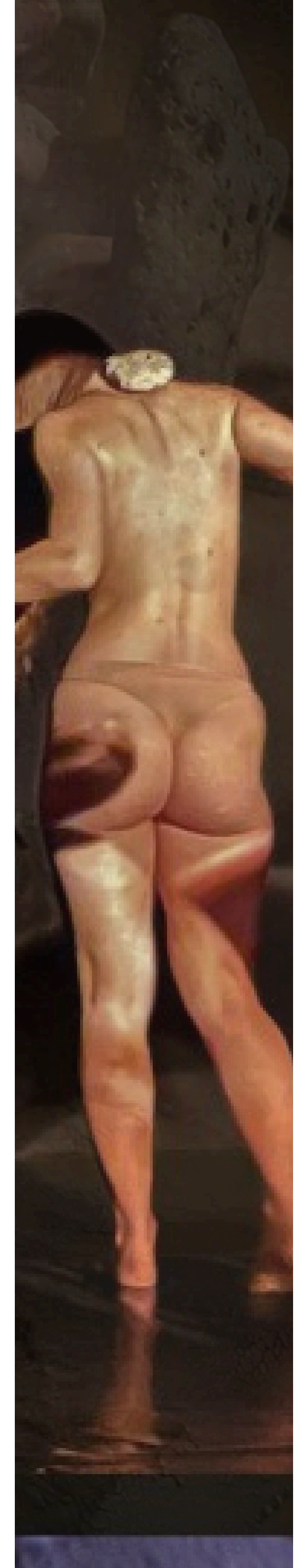
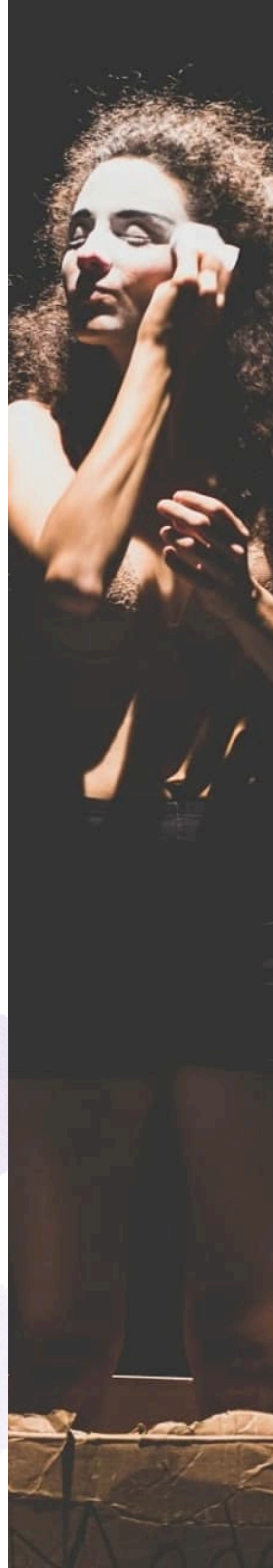
A theatrical cycle on
female sexuality

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THE PROJECT

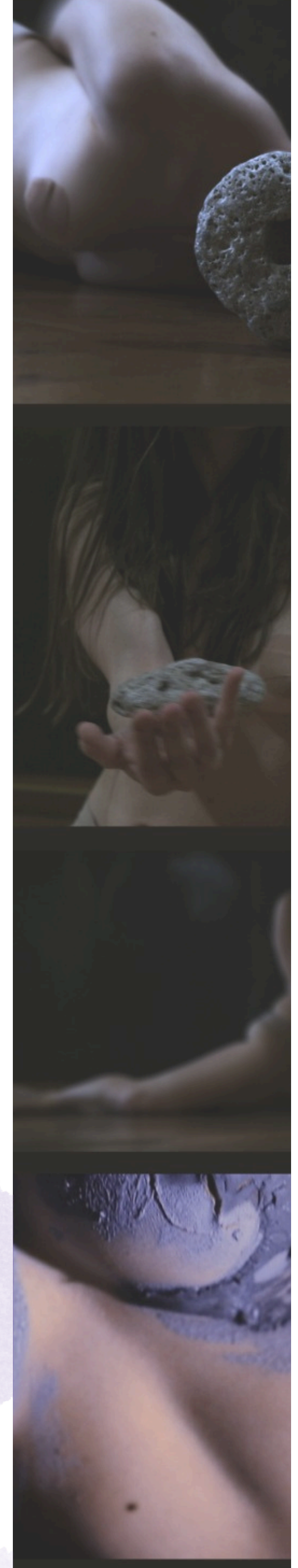
3 female artists - 3 performances - 1 common goal

Staging the Unspeakable is a multidisciplinary theatrical cycle developed by a collective of three women artists. Through the dynamic languages of clowning, cabaret, and dance, the project addresses different topics around female sexuality, confronting issues that are too often shrouded in silence — including sexual abuse, female genital mutilation, and abortion.

Rather than offering didactic narratives, the performances aim to open space for emotional resonance, critical reflection, and public dialogue.

Each of the three original stage works is embedded within a broader curatorial framework that includes artist talks, participatory workshops, and community-led events. These formats are designed to foster safe, inclusive spaces for dialogue around gender-based violence, bodily autonomy, and female pleasure—connecting artistic exploration with social engagement.

By combining bold performance with collective conversation, Staging the Unspeakable seeks not only to challenge taboos, but also to build community and reclaim agency through creative practice.



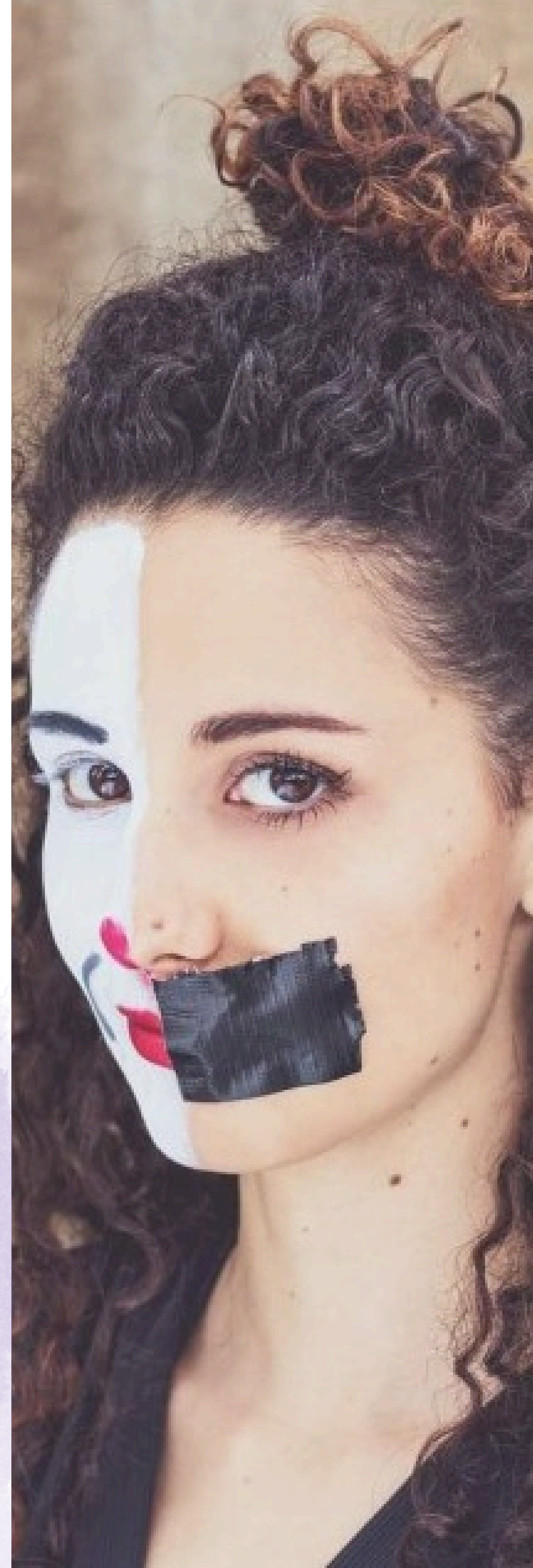
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THE PERFORMANCE & THE ARTIST

The Lesson - By Gracia Rios

Absurdity and dark humour collide in a solo clowning performance about power dynamics, the impact that mainstream pornography has on sexual education and consent and how all these elements relate to each other. With this show aimed at youngsters, Gracia Rios invites us to open both a fun and an insightful conversation about sex, approaching the topic with honesty and personal experiences relatable to us all. The show premiered in 2019 and participated in several UK festivals, such as Maiden Speech or Red Old Lion. In 2024 the performance was selected to be a part of the programme of Holstebro Pride and shown at Kondomeriet, together with an aftertalk about its creative process.

Gracia Ríos is an actor-musician from Málaga, with ten years of violin training at the Málaga Conservatoire. She later earned a Master's in Musical Theatre from Mountview Academy in London. She has performed with various Spanish theatre companies and was part of the UK tour of Giraffes Can't Dance (2019–2020). Her solo clown show on sex education, The Lesson, developed as part of her master's thesis, was featured in festivals such as Maiden Speech and Old Red Lion, earning strong reviews. From August 2022 to October 2024, she was part of the ensemble at NTL-Odin Teatret, working as a violinist, actress, pedagogue, and project leader. She recently co-founded Grapa Teatro with Pablo Lara.



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THE PERFORMANCE & THE ARTIST

MamaFesto - by Karoline Banke

Mama-Festo is a feminist cabaret blending accordion, bold vocals, and a fluorescent pink stage. The character MAMA-FESTO navigates between humor and seriousness, tackling themes like genital mutilation, female pleasure, and anger. This participatory, decolonial performance invites the audience to rebel against the current world order, incorporating multiple languages—Danish, English, Portuguese, Creole, and Spanish—reflecting about the diverse locations where it's performed. Born during the "Cyborg Experiments" feminist residency at Casa Snowapple Mx in Mexico City, Mama-Festo was first presented in open studios, then expanded at the Djintis festival in Bissau (GW), and later showcased at Holstebro Festuge in Denmark.

Karoline Leonora Seidelin Banke is a multidisciplinary artist and vocalist blending music, theatre, and visual arts. Her work explores translation across forms and materials, rooted in feminist survival strategies. A 2023 graduate of the Hamburg Akademie für Bildende Künste, she has freelanced with Nordic Theatre Laboratory–Odin Teatret since 2018. In 2022, she co-directed the music for *After War*, a co-production with KAPAP in South Korea. Karoline co-founded *Katchu Patío das Artes* (2023) and co-curated the feminist residency *Snowapple Mx* in Mexico City. She has exhibited and performed internationally in countries like Senegal, South Korea, Mexico, and Germany.



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THE PERFORMANCE & THE ARTIST

Aridità - by Giovanna Zanchetta

Aridità is a 40-minute solo performance blending dance, photography, and sound, exploring ecofeminism and the relationship between the Earth and the female body. The piece reflects on a world ravaged by human actions, with the Earth rebelling and the female body asserting its power and space in society. It incorporates a stone from the Tagliamento River (Northern Italy) as a symbol, with the performer using partial nudity to express vulnerability and strength. The performance also engages with themes of abortion, highlighting bodily autonomy and the struggles women face in reclaiming control over their own bodies. Aridità can be performed in both traditional and non-conventional spaces. It represents a poetic dialogue between nature, the body, and social power dynamics. It was last performed in Denmark as part of TRANSIT Festival (August 2025)

Giovanna Zanchetta is a Performer and Dance Creator from Northern Italy, based in Rome. She graduated in Performing Arts from the University of Roma Tre and has been professionally active since 2015, combining dance and theater. She trained in modern, classical, and contemporary dance in Amsterdam and Rome, and expanded her research into Butoh Dance and Physical Theater. Giovanna has participated in projects such as Fuga Pasolini_Ballo 1922 and presented works at major festivals like RomaEuropa. Recently, she worked on the theater production Elsewhere and the European project Spores in Denmark.



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AFTERTALKS & WORKSHOPS

Talks

After each performance, we invite the audience to join a 40-minute post-show conversation in a safe, inclusive, and respectful space. This is more than a traditional Q&A—it's an open dialogue where the artist shares her creative process and the motivations behind the work, while audience members are encouraged to reflect and share their own experiences related to the performance's themes. Honesty, vulnerability, and mutual respect are at the heart of this exchange; violence, discrimination, or hateful behavior will not be tolerated.

Workshops

In addition to the conversation, various optional workshops are offered in this programme to deepen engagement with the performance's topics. For example, The Consent Game invites participants to discuss questions cards around sexual consent and healthy, respectful practices in small groups. Other workshops include creative writing sessions centered on reclaiming bodily autonomy and pleasure, or more physical, exploratory formats focusing on embodiment and self-awareness.

Trigger Warning: We strive to create a space where everyone feels safe and supported. If at any point a participant feels overwhelmed or triggered, they are encouraged to speak up. We will respectfully accompany them out of the space and ensure they are not left alone.

