Beauvoir/Iribarren/Dodera

Simone, mujer partida—*A Shared Monologue*

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Abstract

María Dodera's theater production *Simone, mujer partida* (2017) builds on current movements against gender violence in Latin America. Actor Gabriela Iribarren's portrayal of Dodera's Beauvoir suggests we view her via a process of interaction between internal and external dialogic selves as she seeks subjectivity—a dynamic Iribarren makes evident through the juxtaposition of ephemeral live performance and the (re)presentation of Beauvoir's life history. Her monologue is thus not univocal, but layered with multiple voices from the past and present.

Résumé

Simone, mujer partida (2017) de María Dodera s'appuie sur les mouvements actuels contre la violence sexiste en Amérique latine. La représentation de la Beauvoir de Dodera par l'actrice Gabriela Iribarren suggère que nous considérons la quête d'une subjectivité idoine de l'autrice sous l'angle d'un processus d'interaction entre les moi dialogiques internes et externes—un concept dynamique qu'Iribarren illustre par la juxtaposition de performances éphémères et la (re)présentation de la biographie de Beauvoir. Le monologue d'Iribarren n'est en ce sens pas univoque, mais composé du palimpseste des multiples voix du passé et du présent.

Keywords

Simone de Beauvoir – María Dodera – Gabriella Iribarren – monologue – Uruguay – theater – performance – Latin America – gender violence

Uruguayan director and playwright María Dodera's timely monologue *Simone, mujer partida* echoes the call of grassroots women's activists in Latin America to enact a cultural shift in the way we think about women's empowerment and the obstacles that many women face.¹ Movements such as #NiUnaMenos, #TimesUp, #MeToo, The Women's March, the International Women's Strike, and Mujeres Migrantes, among others, remind us that femicides, gender inequality, unfair labor practices, sexual harassment, misogyny, and other forms of gender violence continue to play a large and ugly role worldwide—long after many waves of feminist theory have washed over us (although clearly not all of us). They also encourage us to think about why there are so many new and urgent calls to action on the stage and in the streets. A case in point is Chile's renaming of its international airport in Santiago. In November 2018, human rights activists and feminists protested the decision by the cultural committee of Chile's lower house to rename the airport in honor of Nobel poet Pablo Neruda because of a description in his memoir of the rape he committed against a maid in Ceylon.² Earlier in 2018, student-led feminist protests

1 María Dodera, *Simone, mujer partida*, 2017, unpublished manuscript, 24 pp., transcript of the play provided to author on March 4, 2018. A video from 2017 is available online and was used for analysis of the staging of the play text in this study. See *Simone, mujer partida*, video posted by Alejandro Persichetti, 1:14:49, July 18, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nAa6ZK3woU>. María Dodera is one of the most prolific directors in Uruguay's independent theater scene. Born in 1964, she rose to prominence in the 1990s first as an actor, and later as a director. Her trademark is often staging works in alternative spaces. Her recent interests include a focus on female-centered plays such as *War, las mujeres de Shakespeare* (2015), and *Burlesque, las mujeres de Cervantes* (2016). *War, las mujeres de Shakespeare* premiered at the Festival de Shakespeare in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and *Burlesque, las mujeres de Cervantes* premiered at the Festival Internacional Cervantino in Montevideo, Uruguay. Her work with Gabriela Iribarren in *Simone, mujer partida* won Iribarren a Florencio in 2017. The Florencio is Uruguay's most prestigious award ceremony for theater, similar to the Tony Awards in the United States. The play debuted at the Teatro Solís in Montevideo, Uruguay in 2017, and represented Uruguay at the "El XI Festival Internacional Latinoamericano de Teatro Bahía" [FILTE] in September 2018. In November 2019, the monologue was performed in San Sebastián, Spain, at the Sala Club del Teatro Victoria Eugenia.

2 Charis McGowan. "Poet, Hero, Rapist—Outrage over Chilean Plan to Rename Airport after Neruda," *The Guardian*, November 23, 2018. A primary impetus behind the growing mobilization of women across Latin America and Spain was the #NiUnaMenos movement that began in 2015 in Argentina. Women took to the streets in Buenos Aires to illuminate pervasive issues of inequality and violence against women in their country. The catalyst was a tweet sent by radio journalist Marcela Ojeda regarding the brutal murder of fourteen-year old Ciara Paéz, who was beaten to death by her boyfriend after taking a medication to terminate her pregnancy. He and his mother buried her in the garden. Her death was emblematic of a rise in violence against women and femicides in recent years in Argentina and elsewhere in Latin America. Ojeda tweeted, "They are killing us: Aren't we going to do anything?" and this tweet

erupted in Chile as women mobilized for abortion rights, and the proposal to rename the airport served as another occasion to unite for feminist change. These examples remind us that women still experience inequality in political, economic, and social contexts, and, in some cases, violence, as a result of their gender, despite feminism's growing body of work and activism.

Dodera's monologue resonates with this reinvigorated debate about women's rights and gender violence in society and prompts us to think more deeply about feminism's legacy. The monologue is a "*unipersonal*" (as it is called in Latin America), which means it is performed by one person. In this piece, actor Gabriela Iribarren recreates Simone de Beauvoir's life on stage. However, Dodera suggests that any *uni*-vision of this woman (or any woman) is impossible through the inclusion of intertexts, anecdotes, letters, music, and photos from Beauvoir's life in the dramatic spectacle and through the way chronological time is compressed, re-ordered, and manipulated in Iribarren's performance. The monologue is not a typical three-act play, but instead it is made up of ten episodes with a running time of approximately an hour and fifteen minutes. Instead of a "destroyed woman" who is a victim of her circumstances (as in Beauvoir's 1967 short story "The Woman Destroyed" that shares the same title as Dodera's play), Dodera "destroys woman" as a uniform and static entity, thus opening spaces for dynamic subjectivity to take place and multiple voices to interact.³ Iribarren's portrayal of Dodera's Beauvoir invites us to view her via a process of interaction between internal and external dialogic selves as she seeks subjectivity. Iribarren's dynamic interpretation juxtaposes ephemeral live performance with (re)presentation of Beauvoir's life history. Her monologue in this sense is not univocal but layered with multiple voices from the past and present. For example, Iribarren performs Beauvoir and incorporates the French author's narrative voices as well as her own, she interacts with the director, Dodera, during the play, and she invites audience members to join her in chorus.

Dodera's monologue about Beauvoir, and Iribarren's portrayal of her, place the writer's conception of subjectivity alongside intertexts and images taken from precise moments in her lifetime. They demonstrate how this dramatic version of Beauvoir is at once constrained by historical contexts but also tran-

mobilized women to speak out. The movement has evolved beyond protests against gender violence to include demonstrations for access to safe abortions and equal protection under labor rights for women, and it has expanded beyond Argentina's borders. Hinde Pomeranec, "How Argentina Rose Up Against the Murder of Women," *The Guardian*, June 8, 2015.

- 3 Simone de Beauvoir, *The Woman Destroyed*, trans. Patrick O'Brian, New York, Pantheon Books, 1969 [1967]. Subsequent references to this work are indicated with the abbreviation wo.

scends time and space on the stage through live performance and re-presentation in the here and now. In this way, this dramatic characterization reflects and refracts the progress of feminism's evolving stances and offers audience members new ways for thinking about what it means to be a woman.

In Dodera's play, Beauvoir's life is framed by violence. The monologue begins with references to World War I and ends with Iribarren breaking the fourth wall to encourage the audience to join with her in the chorus to Annie Lennox's 2007 song "Sing." The play spans Beauvoir's birth to death, and includes excerpts from *The Second Sex*, *The Woman Destroyed*, *All Said and Done*, *America Day by Day*, *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter*, and *Letters to Nelson Algren*.⁴ Lennox's song was recorded to raise money and awareness for HIV/AIDS in South Africa, where the majority of those infected are women and children. In addition to reminding us that the category of woman is often circumscribed by societal violence and the lack of access to safe reproductive health care, Iribarren and Dodera also suggest a larger re-reading of Beauvoir's life by linking it to a contemporary context. Thus, the performative strategy of monologue enacted by what appears to be a univocal female voice is in reality cut by performative breaks in the text and performances such as the inclusion of Lennox's song. Overlapping figures, texts, and timeframes imply a monologue might instead include many voices and have new implications in 2018 when women are uniting under the #NiUnaMenos and #MeToo movements. In fact, limits to freedom and the project of becoming fully whole as a human subject are issues that Beauvoir sees as both personal and collective. "Voice" in this play becomes a site for exploring the process of subjectivity emerging within the interpretation of gendered existentialist theory that Beauvoir is known for. Later feminisms will expand the scope of existentialism to suggest that embodied, situated epistemologies are marked by intersectionality (race, class, sexuality, and so on) and each body is constituted by conditions that are only partially effective. To get to full subjectivity demands not only personal psychological work on the part of the individual, but collective work to move others toward the project of freedom.

4 Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier, New York, Vintage Books, 2011 [1949]; *All Said and Done*, trans. Patrick O'Brian, New York, Paragon House, 1993 [1972]; *America Day by Day*, trans. Carol Cosman, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1999 [1948]; *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter*, trans. James Kirkup, New York, HarperCollins, 2005 [1958]; *A Transatlantic Love Affair: Letters to Nelson Algren*, trans. Ellen Gordon Reeves, New York, The New Press, 1998. Subsequent references to *The Second Sex* and *America Day by Day* are respectively indicated by the abbreviations ss and ADD.

I believe that Dodera's monologue engages audiences because of its capacity to speak to and with contemporary movements worldwide that question practices based on gender inequality and limits to personal freedom—for both men and women.⁵ In fact, due to its popularity, Dodera and Iribarren brought the monologue back to the stage in September 2018 for another production run, and they performed it in Spain in 2019. Questions that Beauvoir raises in her work in the mid-twentieth century have yet to be answered when women's lives are cut short because of gender violence, lack of access to safe reproductive care, and dependence on systems that isolate and trap them well into the twenty-first century.

1 Existentialism, Phenomenology, and the Monologue

Although contemporary audiences might commonly associate monologue with Shakespearean soliloquy or Victorian poetic devices, its evolution from classical Greek to contemporary theater through dramatists such as Bertolt Brecht, Samuel Beckett, and Harold Pinter evokes a rich tradition of novelty and innovation that includes both authoritarian and deviant strands in its discursive techniques.⁶ Often playwrights subtly tinker with how their audiences receive storylines and understand the coherence of a protagonist's persona in a monologue through the ways they present the speaking voice on stage. Audiences may not always capture the playwright's manipulations, so it is worth taking a look at how Dodera innovates with her version of the genre.

At the surface level, Dodera's use of monologue seems an obvious choice for representing a biographical story; one woman enacts the life of another woman on stage. However, we know it must be much more when that woman is Simone de Beauvoir—as with existentialist philosophy, being and choice are, after all, everything. To tell Beauvoir's life story entails an infinitely cascading effect of what her existence means. In fact, Dodera's Beauvoir, like her real-life counterpart, asks this very question “¿Qué es ser mujer?” (What is it to be a woman?).⁷

5 Beauvoir concludes, “it is when the slavery of half of humanity is abolished and with it the whole hypocritical system it implies that the ‘division’ of humanity will reveal its authentic meaning and the human couple will discover its true form.” ss, p. 766.

6 Eddie Paterson, *The Contemporary American Monologue: Performance and Politics*, New York, Bloomsbury, 2015, pp. 33, 37; Deborah R. Geis, *Postmodern Theatrical(k)s: Monologue in Contemporary American Drama*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1993, p. 13.

7 Dodera, *Simone, mujer partida*, p. 3. All citations of Dodera's play throughout this article were translated into English by the author.

This query already implies unclear waters, and so how one might represent her, especially within the context of French existentialism and feminist theory, muddies those waters even more when layered onto contemporary settings in Latin America.

Beauvoir's training in phenomenology means that she understands the world through embodied experience.⁸ Her notions of woman as "Other" and as the "second sex" derive from her own interactions and observations of others in a gendered patriarchal culture interpreted through a Hegelian dichotomy of master-slave/subject-object.⁹ Dodera and Iribarren expand on this link to phenomenology in the monologue as they recreate her life on the stage while placing it in a new twenty-first century context in Latin America, thus tethering it to a new body (new bodies) via performance. As we will see, Dodera and Iribarren reveal multivalent openings for transformation in how we conceive women that go beyond monolithic definitions.

In *The Second Sex*, primarily, but in her other writings as well, Beauvoir answers the question of "What is woman?" by determining that she is "Other." However, as Jo-Ann Pilardi notes, Beauvoir determined that "woman is Other—but not essentially and eternally, though woman has become Other."¹⁰ This distinction between essence and becoming is key for our purposes in analyzing Dodera's monologue. In regard to the difference between men and women, Beauvoir states, "He is the Subject; he is the Absolute. She is the Other."¹¹ She argues that women have developed their consciousness in relation to the categories of flesh and object rather than as essential subjects.¹² Women are often associated with immanence while men are seen as wholly transcendent. This particular type of consciousness, according to Beauvoir, stems from the fact that, unlike other situations in which Hegel's master-slave dialectic moves between groups that vie for domination and oppression of the Other, the binary of sex or gender curiously has remained fixed.¹³ In other words, the subject-

8 Beauvoir developed her theories by building on work by her colleague and classmate, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who saw consciousness as existing with a body and dependent on, as well as interacting with, a physical world. Andrew M. Kimbrough, *Dramatic Theories of Voice in the Twentieth Century*, Amherst, NY, Cambria Press, 2011, p. 93.

9 Beauvoir explains that, following Hegel, "the subject posits itself in opposition; it asserts itself as the essential and sets up the other as inessential, as the object." ss, p. 7.

10 Jo-Ann Pilardi, *Simone de Beauvoir Writing the Self: Philosophy Becomes Autobiography*, Westport, CT, Greenwood Press, 1999, p. 28.

11 ss, p. 6.

12 ss, p. 163.

13 ss, pp. 17, 160.

object dialectic in male-female relations is unchanging.¹⁴ The result is that, as Pilardi explains, “consciousness itself is gendered as a result of patriarchal relations,” and women must liberate themselves from accepting this framework in order to conceive of themselves as also transcendent rather than merely immanent.¹⁵ For Jennifer Hockenberry Dragseth, Beauvoir’s new paradigm calls for a recognition that “both men and women are transcendent in mind and immanent in flesh.”¹⁶

An acknowledgment of how immanence and transcendence shape consciousness with regard to gender is also reflected in discussions that were taking place at the same time about consciousness and language as they relate to the connection between mind and body. Specifically, phenomenologists such as Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty explore the potential of language to reflect, enact, or enable consciousness and meaning-making. Scholars in performance studies in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries revisit the work of these thinkers because of the field’s emphasis on corporeality and the actor’s body in live performance, the incorporation of marginalized voices and perspectives, and the use of unusual performance spaces. The turn to phenomenology developed as a counterweight to traditional theater studies that legitimate elitism through literary texts, the use of hegemonic bourgeois discourses, practices that privilege the director and lead actor, and venues that require entrance fees.

During the twentieth century, an evolution began to take shape in ideas about consciousness and representation, first in regard to language and later on the stage. Whereas positivist scientific notions at the turn of the century privileged print and visual culture, a move toward embodied practice and aurality began to emerge in the twenty-first century. Voice and logos’s potential to reveal meaning in the act of being spoken form the basis for Heidegger’s theories of how language augments lived experience. Unlike his teacher Husserl, Heidegger does not believe that words represent thoughts, but rather words exist in relation to their physical existence and, as such, words like “art,” stand for themselves.¹⁷ Heidegger’s essay, “The Origin of the Work of Art” (1935), is illustrative of this point:

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- 14 Beauvoir states, “For the most part, women resign themselves to their lot without attempting any action.” ss, p. 149.
 - 15 Pilardi, *Writing the Self*, p. 29.
 - 16 Jennifer Hockenberry Dragseth, *Thinking Woman: A Philosophical Approach to the Quandary of Gender*, Eugene, Cascade Books, 2015, p. 91.
 - 17 Kimbrough, *Dramatic Theories of Voice*, pp. 83, 88.

But language is not only and not primarily an audible and written expression of what is to be communicated [...]. Language alone brings beings as beings into the open for the first time [...]. Language, by naming beings for the first time, first brings beings to word and to appearance [...]. Such saying is a projecting of lighting, in which announcement is made of what it is that beings come into the open *as*.¹⁸

As Andrew M. Kimbrough summarizes, “words elude the *mimesis* of representation in favor of the *poiesis* of nonrepresentational revealing.”¹⁹ Heidegger, although he refers to both written and spoken forms, finds that voice employs both rhythm and intonation, and voice uniquely “layers speech with the flesh.”²⁰

Performance studies critics Janelle G. Reinelt and Joseph Roach find an extension of these ideas in Merleau-Ponty’s work, and they believe his main contribution to phenomenology rests on his insistence on the materiality of the body and the lived experience of being a body-subject.²¹ Here, we see connections to the embodied material condition, namely, patriarchy, that influenced Beauvoir’s early work. Merleau-Ponty’s theories were also relevant for drama and performance studies in the late twentieth century (for critics and practitioners alike) because they speak to theater’s unique divide between written text and live performance. Through this lens, Merleau-Ponty’s work urges us to see performance as existing separately from the text because of its embodied practice. Reinelt and Roach are again helpful here:

If experience is relational, then it is constituted in the encounter between something that is always only partially available to perception, showing itself from a limited given aspect to an embodied subject who is itself constituted through its bodily orientation and its spatial, sensory, and perceptual orientation to the stimulus in question.²²

For theater and performance studies, this embodied practice means that a staged piece is never the same as the literary text upon which it is based, and no

18 Martin Heidegger, “The Origin of the Work of Art,” trans. Albert Hofstadter, in *Basic Writings: From “Being and Time” (1927) to “The Task of Thinking” (1964)*, New York, Harper and Row, 1977, 143–187, p. 185.

19 Kimbrough, *Dramatic Theories of Voice*, p. 88.

20 *Ibid.*, p. 89.

21 Janelle G. Reinelt and Joseph Roach, “Introduction to the First Edition,” in *Critical Theory and Performance*, ed. Janelle G. Reinelt and Joseph Roach, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2007, 7–12, p. 10.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 10.

staged piece is ever the same as one that precedes or follows it. There is always a gap between text and performance. As Kimbrough suggests, “language communicates *on its own*.”²³ In being spoken, words have the potential in that moment to create meaning for the mind through the body that utters them. Speech then allows a site for new thoughts to suggest themselves to the speaker, as well as to those who listen.²⁴

2 Monologue, Voice, and the Other

With connections between phenomenology and theater studies in mind, we return to the format of Dodera's dramatic work on Beauvoir—a monologue. The performance in and of itself sets up a tension between Beauvoir's published texts and Iribarren's spontaneous aural and embodied performance. In other words, “[v]ocalization has the potential to introduce novel and original expressions and meanings,” and this in turn results in the possibility that all language users can expand their ability to make meaning.²⁵ Iribarren reveals Beauvoir's own process of exploration to understand the immanence/transcendence dichotomy as it applied to her life through her writing. Performance of these texts through a live body tied to the present also prompts the spectator of Iribarren's enactment of Beauvoir to consider how to engage in a similar process. In this way, Dodera not only plays with an historical past that has already been determined and written, but she hinges performance on an ever-present now that enables room for change and evolution for her spectators. This spontaneous room for evolution in thought comes about through voice and performance. The written text transforms into a dynamic space when spoken on the stage.

Few theorists in recent years have explored the genre of monologue in as much depth as Deborah R. Geis. Her *Postmodern Theatric[k]s*, first published in 1993, still serves as one of the foundational texts for studies of contemporary monologue. Albeit decidedly time bound by its postmodernist and deconstructionist criticisms, Geis's contribution is still valuable today when we speak of “subaltern subjects”—and one can certainly count women in both the developing and developed worlds in this category as the recent #NiUnaMenos, #Time-sUP, #MeToo and other movements make clear. Women are marked as “Other”

23 Kimbrough, *Dramatic Theories of Voice*, p. 98.

24 *Ibid.*, p. 99.

25 *Ibid.*, p. 100.

in all of these worlds when harassment, violence, and inequality are present.²⁶ As suggested earlier, intersectionality expands our view of second-wave feminism by noting the various ways that oppressive systems also hinder freedom through politics regarding race, ethnicity, class, geography, sexuality, economics, and so on.

Through monologue, Dodera and Iribarren's Beauvoir occupies a singular space of power as the main speaker on the stage, yet in her monologue the Beauvoir character also opens spaces through linguistic tricks (the sort of theatrical[k]s Geis explores) that allow us to hear marginalized voices speaking through her. Geis argues that monologue has the ability to transform stage time and space into narrative time and space.²⁷ It is in this act of narration that the speaker wields ultimate (authoritarian) control over the "floor" because there is no responding other.²⁸ As a result, in monologues the character is able to redirect and manipulate the audience's attention.²⁹ The presence of an audience invokes the "telling" and "narrating" functions of monologue despite the presence of the fourth wall.³⁰ And yet, even when the monologist addresses the audience directly, spectators are not in a position to respond because they would break the dramatic frame of monologue. This leaves them to "accept their role as helpless, frozen, powerless (at least in a traditional theatrical setting)" while at the same time occupying the role of privileged confidants.³¹ As a result, monologue exemplifies a deviant form of discourse because it eschews the traditional form of dialogue on stage.

Thus, in this description of monologue we can see echoes of the frozen binary that Beauvoir's work signals between genders as the audience is cast in the role of Other, and as its members accept their position as non-essential objects beyond the fourth wall. However, we also see the possibility for the female lead in Dodera's play to assume the role of Subject. In speaking, she controls the stage in the present, and we, as spectators, see a new space for creating consciousness through her embodied practice.

Additionally, via its narrative properties, monologue allows the speaker not only to direct, but also to alter our perceptions of time and space in the staged world through speech acts. The speaker is able to "dislocate, fragment, and

26 Jill Dolan's work supports this notion. She writes, "Women always bear the mark and meaning of their sex, which inscribes them within a cultural hierarchy." *Feminist Spectator as Critic*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1991, p. 63.

27 Geis, *Postmodern Theatric[k]s*, p. 1.

28 *Ibid.*, p. 2.

29 *Ibid.*, p. 13.

30 *Ibid.*, p. 7.

31 *Ibid.*, pp. 13–14.

otherwise transform [the] perpetual present into other temporal modes" (for example, compressing, suspending, moving forward/backward, and/or transforming our sense of time), as well as change the audience's notion of space on the stage through the interplay among set and words as the speaker compresses actions into speech.³² Through speech, logos can be seen to have the properties that both Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty point to—namely, that words do not simply represent thoughts after the fact but bring reality into existence. Moreover, they depend on the context in which they are spoken because they are historically and relationally situated through the body.

As Iribarren becomes Beauvoir on stage, Beauvoir's words occupy new space when they are uttered aloud in a contemporary context through a different body—indeed, vocalization of these words creates new spaces for meaning. Geis argues that fragmented, dislocated, and marginalized subjects often use monologue to speak about their attempts to enter into subjectivity because this particular genre allows for these kinds of disruptions to standardized conceptions of time, space, and perception.³³ These linear and temporal breaks with the status quo can be read in a larger context as ruptures to societal norms and conventions. As if to support this idea of subversion, Beauvoir's epigraph to "The Monologue," the second short story of the collection in *The Woman Destroyed*, is a quotation attributed to Gustave Flaubert: "The monologue is her form of revenge."³⁴ This epigraph suggests to the reader that Murielle, the speaking voice in the monologue, takes her revenge by restricting the version of events the reader receives to her account alone. Murielle explains her side of the story as she mourns her daughter's death by pills and her partner's affair, and damns those who have blamed her for being a "bad" mother and wife. Murielle's "authoritarian" narration (to use Geis's word) disallows any response from her husband, her dead daughter, or the public. The reader is left with only her version of events. In this way, Beauvoir's epigraph suggests Murielle enacts her revenge by presenting a one-sided and biased view of her losses and failing marriage as she now "write[s] the codes."³⁵

32 *Ibid.*, pp. 10–11.

33 Monologue, like the modern novel, also calls to mind the technique of stream of consciousness that evokes a similar nonlinear interiority. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

34 *wo*, p. 88.

35 *ss*, p. 88. Beauvoir makes clear that writing and patriarchy combine to exclude women, and this is why Murielle's revenge in this narration is the subtext for "The Monologue." Murielle's sinking marriage is emblematic of a societal arrangement that Beauvoir sees as limiting women's personal freedom. The full passage from *The Second Sex* reads, "By the time humankind reaches the stage of writing its mythology and laws, patriarchy is defini-

Eddie Patterson similarly views the monologue as a useful technique for incorporating the experience of “the Other” into discourse. He states that “the process of using monologue to make marginalized experiences visible and audible (often through mediatization) is a key political dimension within this genre.”³⁶ Patterson also sees a close relationship between monologue and autobiography. Within the field of performance studies, he locates growth in biographical and autobiographical writing with its emphasis on individual voice and expression and links it with the emergence of activist, radical identity, and civil rights movements of the 1960s.³⁷ He argues that the genre of monologue re-emerges in our contemporary setting because it “intensifies fragmented language and isolated subjects of global capitalism.”³⁸ Both Geis and Patterson point to the notion of “the Other” in ways that bolster Beauvoir’s feminist ideas and Dodera and Iribarren’s characterization of her in *Simone, mujer partida*. The play spurs the audience to ask what it means to be, especially insofar as being is limited by pre-determined conditions.

Returning to the monologue text, in *Simone, mujer partida* the initial scene of the play makes evident Dodera and Iribarren’s strategy to show how Beauvoir materializes as a subject. They juxtapose ongoing work for subjectivity (a perpetual present tense of the reflexive verb “*se hace*,” which means ‘to make oneself,’ in theatrical stage time) through the use of intersecting texts and images taken from discrete moments in Beauvoir’s life, and they work with compression of time and space through narration. In this way, the dramatic Beauvoir played by Iribarren functions as a discrete historical bellwether tied to time and place but also as an ongoing measuring stick for the historical progress of woman’s capacity to become a subject.

Although this play presents us with what we assume is a lone speaking subject in a monologue, *Simone, mujer partida* is by no means a monophonic text. It is highly intertextual, and thus presents many facets of being and consciousness. The text includes sections taken directly from *The Second Sex* and “The Monologue” in *The Woman Destroyed*, photos of Beauvoir, songs (principally the “Marseillaise,” Billie Holiday’s music, and Annie Lennox’s “Sing”), poems, and letters Beauvoir wrote to and received from Nelson Algren. There are also references to *The Woman Destroyed* and other works, such as *All Said and Done* and *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter*, among others. Through these intertexts,

tively established: it is males who write the codes.” Murielle takes her revenge by writing a new code that excludes any interlocutor, such as her husband.

36 Patterson, *The Contemporary American Monologue*, p. 9.

37 *Ibid.*

38 *Ibid.*, p. 159.

Dodera and Iribarren invite other narrators onto the stage space to “speak,” and, as they do, they expand Beauvoir’s existence through embedded texts and worlds. Once more art, as Heidegger suggests, is capable of creating meaning and not merely translating it.

3 Intertexts and Staged Spaces

In the production of *Simone, mujer partida* for the Teatro Solís, which was originally performed in the Sala Delmira in 2017, images of Paris and of Beauvoir’s residences are projected onto the wall behind a desk on a small raised platform at the front of the room. This spot serves as the main focal point, but Iribarren continuously circulates through the audience during the monologue. The monologue partially consists of intertexts that follow Beauvoir’s life and career as a writer. Her life is developed episodically to cover major periods such as her childhood, her relationship with Sartre, the death of her mother, and her relationship with Algren. However, the chronology of her life is interrupted by intertexts taken from her writing and interspersed with Iribarren’s and Dodera’s own words. For example, Iribarren performs on a small platform at the back of the room with a stand holding pages from Beauvoir’s treatise, *The Second Sex*. The first time that the dramatic Beauvoir refers to the famous text, she summarizes it with one line “*La mujer no nace, se hace*” (Woman is not born, she becomes), and comments that “*Por esta frase me conoce la historia y todos a través de todos los tiempos*” (History and everybody knows me from this phrase throughout time).³⁹

In other moments, Iribarren can be seen on an illuminated “balcony” through closed glass doors where she embodies Murielle from “The Monologue” and recites her interior monologue. Here, Iribarren and Dodera use excerpts from texts but they alter them. For instance, Iribarren’s Beauvoir begins by acknowledging her role-playing and sets the theatrical premise stating, “*Voy a leerles si me permiten la historia de Murielle: La Mujer rota. Un diario que comienza cuando su matrimonio está por naufragar, en una situación de soledad y abandono*” (I am going to read to you with your permission Murielle’s story: “The Broken Woman.” A diary that begins when her marriage is going under, in a lonely situation of abandonment).⁴⁰ In this case, she uses “*rota*” instead of “*partida*,” which evokes a subtle difference of meaning between ‘bro-

39 Dodera, *Simone, mujer partida*, p. 6.

40 *Ibid.*, p. 7.

ken' and 'destroyed' and she changes Dodera's title of the monologue. When she begins to read, her words are not exactly a reproduction of Beauvoir's text. In Dodera's version, Beauvoir-Murielle begins:

Imbéciles, imbéciles, corrí las cortinas todas las cortinas de las siete ventanas de esta habitación para que pudiese entrar la luz intermitente de los árboles de navidad para que pudiese entrar la luz dorada de los faroles que ilumina el cielo plomizo para que pudiese entrar la belleza de la de esta noche de navidad, una navidad especial ¿no lo recuerdan? una navidad sin guerra, sin armas fuera, la guerra ha terminado, Francia abre sus puertas al mundo, y ya no es una cárcel.

Imbeciles, imbeciles, I opened the curtains all of the curtains of these seven windows in this room so that the intermittent light from the Christmas trees could enter the golden light of the streetlamps that illuminates the grey sky so that the beauty of this Christmas, a special Christmas, don't you remember? A Christmas without war, without guns outside, the war has ended, France opens its doors to the world, and it is no longer a prison.⁴¹

However, this version contrasts with the beginning of Beauvoir's text, which reads, "The silly bastards! I drew the curtains they keep the stupid colored lanterns and the fairy lights on the Christmas trees out of the apartment but the noises come in through the walls."⁴² Although the texts are similar, Dodera and Iribarren manipulate them in order to set up a later scene that allows Dodera to weave various references to Christmas throughout the play and link it to her own epiphany on a Christmas evening that led to the creation of this monologue about Beauvoir. A few moments later in the play, Dodera's Beauvoir tells the audience:

Me permito e invito a ustedes a tener una comprensión no pesimista de esta obra "La mujer rota" de Murielle. [...] Se trata de poner a las mujeres ante sí mismas, reclamándoles una acción emancipadora. No ofrezco soluciones, ofrezco una experiencia imaginaria, envolvente, que invita a un mundo de acción, es en el mundo de la acción, donde está la única manera de realizarse "auténticamente."

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁴² *WO*, p. 89.

I'm allowing myself and inviting you all to have an understanding that isn't pessimistic of this work "The Broken Woman" by Murielle. [...] It's about trying to put women before themselves to demand an act of emancipation for them. I'm not offering solutions, I'm offering an imaginary experience, all-encompassing, that invites in the world of action, it's only in the world of action that there is a way to "authentically" become oneself.⁴³

Here, Dodera uses her dramatic Beauvoir to direct the audience on how to understand Murielle as a marginalized voice in the context of the play and expands Murielle's plight to all women. Also, through Iribarren's multi-layered performance of Beauvoir and Murielle, we see the intersection of an imaginary world (literary story and *mise en scène*) and an active world come together on the stage as she breaks the fourth wall to address the audience. In these scenes, through a uniquely layered conviviality among director, actor, audience, and literary, dramatic, and real-life characters, this *unipersonal* opens up a shared sense of monologue through the inclusion of various voices, places, and time periods.

Iribarren as Beauvoir also uses the side of the room to play records by Billie Holiday, a singer with whom she identifies and sees as an example of feminist civil rights activism.⁴⁴ At one point, Iribarren moves to the center of the room in the middle of the audience and interacts with Dodera, who stands from her chair amid the audience and breaks the illusion of the theatrical frame by

43 Dodera, *Simone, mujer partida*, p. 13.

44 It is important to note that Holiday's music is a crucial element of the play because it demonstrates how Beauvoir's experience with the violent oppression of Jews in Vichy France and in WWII (as well as the violence of WWI) helped her see the interconnections between racism, slavery, and oppression and how these are related to the subjugation of women in patriarchal society. Beauvoir was influenced by Richard Wright's work, especially *Native Son*, and she corresponded regularly with Wright. For more information see Hockenberry Dragseth's chapter, "Gender Existentialism" in *Thinking Woman*, pp. 77–117. During Beauvoir's trip to the United States in 1947, she also visited Harlem to see Billie Holiday perform and describes the event in *America Day by Day*. ADD, p. 44. Many of these ideas are reflected in Beauvoir's later work when she recounts learning about the practice of torture, particularly bottle rape, used by the French against Algerians as a means of subjugation. Her editorial to the newspaper *Le Monde* and her book *Djamila Boupacha*, co-authored with Gisèle Halimi in 1962, emphasize that the French public could not ethically look away from torture once they knew it was being committed. Beauvoir, like many artists and intellectuals of the time, supported Algerian independence and rejected European traditions of colonialism. *Djamila Boupacha: The Story of the Torture of a Young Algerian Girl Which Shocked Liberal French Opinion*, trans. Peter Green, New York, MacMillan, 1962; "Pour Djamila Boupacha," *Le Monde*, June 2, 1960.

calling Iribarren “Gabi” and pretending to rehearse the monologue with her. The rehearsal rises to a crescendo with Dodera and Iribarren trading the words “Sos” and “Soy” back and forth escalating in volume, until Iribarren resumes the dramatic frame that separates her from the audience and returns to the front and center of the “stage,” playing Beauvoir standing by her desk. Here, this pause in the monologue and exchange of “you are—I am” seems to suggest to the audience that we might just all be in this struggle together, and yet, we occupy different perspectives depending on where we are situated. In the epistolary section of the monologue, we hear Iribarren read from Beauvoir’s letters. Most of the words belong to Beauvoir, but in some instances she quotes Algren. This section allows the audience to see a dialogue through letters exchanged between Beauvoir and Algren under the guise of a monologue format. These breaks in the monologue interrupt and dislocate the spectator from the illusion of mimesis.

The photos of the Boulevard Raspail where Beauvoir was a child or Montparnasse where both she and Sartre had each lived that are projected onto the wall of the Sala Delmira, coupled with the words that Iribarren speaks about/from Beauvoir’s life, compress time and space. As the play opens, the character Beauvoir states, “*Una foto habla del mundo. Una foto hace de mediadora. Una foto significa. Es la prueba final de un mundo dado, y la colocación de la narradora en un aquí y ahora. Todo ser humano concreto, todo objeto concreto, necesita ser singularmente situada*” (A photo speaks about the world. A photo becomes a mediator. A photo means something. It is the last proof of a certain world and the placement of a narrator in a here and now. Every concrete human being, every concrete object, needs to be singularly situated).⁴⁵ Iribarren portraying Beauvoir begins the play describing the context of Beauvoir’s life in Paris in 1908, the year Beauvoir was born. She makes clear that Beauvoir is caught between intersecting discourses and her life is framed by war—she tells us she is the child of a Catholic mother and an atheist father, she is a victim, a model student, a French citizen during WWI, and so on. These intersections, suggested by the interplay between photos and words in the opening scenes of the monologue, are augmented by intertexts and voices that enter onto the stage, and

45 Dodera, *Simone, mujer partida*, p. 1. Dodera’s use of photographs, in addition to providing documentary elements to her depiction of Beauvoir, also shares an affinity with Corinne Tapia’s curated collection at the Sous Les Etoiles Gallery, “1947, Simone de Beauvoir in America,” a photographic journey she based on Beauvoir’s *America Day by Day* that records the details of Beauvoir’s 1947 trip. Tapia’s collection was exhibited between December 2018–March 2019. For more information, see “1947, Simone de Beauvoir in America,” webpage, Sous Les Etoiles Gallery, <http://www.souslesetoilesgallery.net/exhibitions/1947-simone-de-beauvoir-in-america>.

that also invite the audience to understand its role as observing “Other” in a created and manipulated world. Brechtian breaks that distance the audience from the illusion of a confined, staged world encourage spectators to question situational and relational constraints on (their) being as well as ask how these constraints might be broken apart in the spectators’ own given world.

Music also frames the monologue. Throughout the play, Iribarren as Beauvoir erupts into verses of the “Marseillaise,” the French national anthem written in 1792 during the French Revolution. The song is masculinist because of its association with male army troops who used it as a marching song for war. In fact, in Dodera’s monologue the song is sung both in the context of World War I and World War II as Iribarren recounts periods from Beauvoir’s life. However, the French anthem is also associated with the outcomes of one of the greatest social upheavals in history that left the world buzzing over the concepts liberty, equality, and fraternity—political and social ideals that led to democratic movements for self-determination around the globe. These debates extended well into Beauvoir’s life as she witnessed the Algerian Independence movement in the early 1960s. Beauvoir was still grappling with the plenitude of these cornerstones of French republicanism in the mid-twentieth century. In the penultimate scene of the play, Iribarren once more sings parts of the “Marseillaise” as she transitions to the final scene, “*Un adios*” (A Goodbye). Her performance of the song reinforces how contemporary audiences are still engaged in the struggle to come to terms with individual freedom and its limits in 2017–2018 and beyond. The next-to-last scene is titled “*Bellas imágenes, hacia una Mujer Entera*” (Beautiful Images, Toward a Whole Woman). By the close of the monologue, the broken and destroyed woman is in the process of becoming intact or whole.

This act of rebuilding is demonstrated throughout the play as Dodera knits together pieces to make a whole. When Iribarren concludes her enactment of Murielle from “The Monologue” and re-enters the room from the balcony, she directs the audience to a new time period at the close of WWII, and she once more portrays Beauvoir. She pours two glasses of wine in the live performance and gives one to an audience member as they toast the end of the war and the Christmas season. This is the second reference to Christmas (the first was as Murielle), and here Iribarren as Beauvoir breaks the frame and acknowledges the Other through her interaction with the audience member and the wine.⁴⁶

46 This second reference is as follows: “*Hoy es Navidad; ¡Feliz Navidad! ¿Saben la noticia? [...] Hoy se acabó la Guerra y también es navidad*”. (Today is Christmas. Merry Christmas! Did you hear the news? [...]. The War ended today, and it’s also Christmas.) Dodera, *Simone, mujer partida*, p. 7. “*TOMA LA COPA. ¡Feliz Navidad! ¡Feliz Navidad! ¿Saben la noticia? Por fin*

In this instance, we see a shift from the closed world of the monologue performance in which the dialectic exists as Iribarren/Beauvoir (Beauvoir, with the audience frozen outside of the fourth wall) to an opening of the stage where the dialectic becomes Iribarren/Beauvoir-audience, and the audience becomes part of the performance.

A third reference to Christmas ensues after Iribarren reads from Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* and approaches Dodera, who is seated in the audience. Dodera stitches her own voice to the monologue in an autobiographical mode, confessing to audience members that she, too, toasted on December 24 with a group of friends, opened the second story titled "The Monologue" from *The Woman Destroyed*, and read aloud from it.⁴⁷ Dodera recounts that in that moment on Christmas Eve she decided to make this play her project for 2017 and to work with Iribarren. Dodera explains,

*Desde el 2013 vengo creando obras como "War, las Mujeres de Shakespeare", "Burlesque, las Mujeres de Cervantes", con este proyecto sobre Simone de Beauvoir se complete un tríptico. Por eso quiero dar vida [a] Simone de Beauvoir [...]. 'La Mujer no nace, se hace'. Es una frase icónica [...]. Esta frase es un reclamo a revisar toda la estructura de la sociedad.*⁴⁸

Since 2013 I've been creating works like *War, las Mujeres de Shakespeare* and *Burlesque, las Mujeres de Cervantes*, with this project about Simone de Beauvoir I am completing the triptych. As a result, I want to give life

la aviación acertó. Sí, mil aviones. Los limpiaron. Esto es el fin. Esto es el fin me dije. ¿La Guerra ha terminado realmente? Para nosotros, se acabó. (TAKES THE GLASS. Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas! Did you hear the news? Finally, the air fleet did it. Yes, a thousand planes. They cleaned them out. This is the end. This is the end I said. Has the War really ended? For us, it ended.) *Ibid.*, p. 12.

47 *Ibid.*, p. 16.

48 *Ibid.* *War, las mujeres de Shakespeare* is a play in which several of Shakespeare's most famous female characters (Gertrude, Desdemona, Juliette, Titania, and Lady Macbeth) drink tea together and converse about contemporary events using many lines from the original plays. Dodera incorporates both female and male actors in her representations of these figures and uses audiences to help her co-create the final work. For more information see Fernanda Muslera's article "La mujer uruguaya de Shakespeare," *El Observador*, June 1, 2015. In *Burlesque, las mujeres de Cervantes*, Dodera uses the concept of Cervantes's "entremés"—one-act plays performed during the intermission of a longer play that often featured popular culture in the form of working-class characters and immoral situations. These plays usually revealed an ironic and critical view of society. In Dodera's play, these women live outside of the norms of culture and are considered "liberal" because of their risqué behaviors as they await their "Quijotes," idealistic romantic knights. See María Dodera / Directora Teatral, website, María Dodera, www.mariadodera.com.

to Simone de Beauvoir [...]. “Woman is not born, she becomes a woman” is an iconic phrase [...]. This phrase is a call to action to revise the entire structure of society.

One can, of course, argue that Dodera is playing a version of herself in the play, but more importantly for this study, I would argue that the incorporation of Dodera’s voice (dramatic and/or authentically autobiographical) into the process of re-making Beauvoir highlights a complexity of self that this particular monologue reveals in conscious and evident ways. As with the “*Sos/Soy*” scene, Dodera is not only the author, she is also audience and actor. In fact, Dodera’s layering of selves and voices points to the kind of restructuring of society she highlights. Here, she assumes agency and acknowledges the intersection of multiple parts that make up a whole. Her interruption also recalls theories put forth by Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty in which voice is “layered with flesh” and how enactment can also create meaning. As Dodera erupts into speech during the play and in her toast at the holiday party, she transforms from being a passive spectator, and thus impotent, to being an active speaking agent. In thinking of Beauvoir’s quest “to become woman” as a goal in and of itself, the speech act in this case embodies the potential for bringing the thing into existence. Her own evolution as a director of plays about women and her journey to make meaning out of them as a woman herself coalesce on the stage as Dodera folds her own autobiography into the biography being recounted. She, like Iribarren as Beauvoir, has a voice to explore and create meaning for Dodera as Dodera. In turn, spectators, who sit in the audience, may find similar openings to do the same as they witness other women move from passive Other to active subject.

Therefore, when Iribarren addresses the audience directly in the final scene—first by saying “*Querido público*” (Dear audience), and then “*He juntado los pedazos, todos mis pedazos para reconstruirme junto ustedes*” (I have put together the pieces, all of the pieces to reconstruct myself with all of you)—we know that she is inviting us to think about what selves constitute the whole and how those pieces interact with each other. Here, the “Other” is used not in opposition to the subject, but rather as an integral piece at dynamic play with the whole “society” of self.⁴⁹ The lone speaking subject is a compilation of many

49 Miroslav Filip and Marie Kovářová argue that the dialogical self reflects a similar relationality among interior self-positions and the external world: “[m]etaphorically viewed, each self-position represents a specific ‘voice’ in a plurality of other voices (self-positions). The psychological phenomenon of the self is an ongoing process of conversations or dialogue among these self-positions.” “The Self Between Cacophony and Monologue: A Conceptualization and Empirical Examination of Dialogical Complexity,” *Journal of Constructive Psychology*, vol. 30, no. 3, 2017, 270–294, p. 271.

selves—each in the process of becoming.⁵⁰ In the figure of Beauvoir, Dodera and Iribarren suggest that the society of dialogic selves is a way in which we might begin to think about restructuring society in general with an eye toward understanding the complex processes at play within and between individuals that are relational and always “in-process.”⁵¹

4 Sing

The suggestion to join in a chorus to Lennox’s song is a call to re-examine essential questions about being and choice through the union of many voices. Iribarren enacts this union through her direct addresses to the audience in the last scene when she says, “*Querido público; Una actuación en vivo implica: sentir el amor dentro de mí, mujer artista, y hacerles sentir mi estima por ustedes*” (Dear audience; a live performance implies things: to feel the love I have inside, artist-woman, and make you feel the esteem I have for all of you).⁵² She calls attention to the symbiosis that occurs in live performance between audience and actor. And, yet, she also acknowledges the artificial nature of the stage: “*El teatro puede establecer límites entre escenario y público, desde el comienzo he tratado de compartir juntos esta fiesta*” (The theater can establish limits between the stage and public, from the beginning I have tried to share the party with you).⁵³ Iribarren simultaneously invites the audience to participate in the lyrics to the song originally sung in English but reproduced here by Iribarren in Spanish:

VAMOS AHORA MIS HERMANAS EN VOZ ALTA Y ORGULLOSAS A CANTAR [...]. DEJA QUE TU VOZ SEA ESCUCHADA, USA TU VOZ PARA LA LIBERTAD. DONDE QUIERAS QUE VAYAS POR LA LIBERTAD. SI. POR LA LIBERTAD [...]. CANTA MI HERMANA ... CANTA! DEJA QUE TU VOZ SEA ESCUCHADA. LO QUE NO TE MATA TE HARÁ FUERTE.

50 Hockenberry Dragseth notes that Beauvoir’s novel *She Came to Stay* is an early example of her theories on gender existentialism, and says of the protagonist that “[s]he notices other human minds observing her, naming her, and limiting her. Suddenly she finds that she is in competition with these other minds in determining how the world will be for her” *Thinking Woman*, p. 87. See also Simone de Beauvoir, *She Came to Stay*, trans. Yvonne Moyse and Roger Senhouse, W. W. Norton & Company, New York, 1990 [1943].

51 Dodera, *Simone, mujer partida*, p. 24.

52 *Ibid.*

53 *Ibid.*

NOW, LET'S GO MY SISTERS OUT LOUD AND PROUD TO BE SINGING [...]. LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD, USE YOUR VOICE FOR FREEDOM. WHEREVER YOU GO FOR FREEDOM. YES. FOR FREEDOM [...]. SING MY SISTER ... SING! LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD. THAT WHICH DOESN'T KILL YOU, MAKES YOU STRONGER.⁵⁴

With voices united, the ending of the monologue dissolves into a contemporary voice of many in unison. It does away with the artificiality of the staged world and opts for a performance that takes place in real time. Instead of ending with an emphasis on the visual stage, Dodera and Iribarren shift perspective to aurality and the power of voice as a vehicle for making meaning. Simply listening to the song implies its power is unidirectional, but by encouraging the audience to participate, its power becomes multidirectional, and Dodera/Iribarren are careful to address each woman in both the plural and in the singular, as *Hermana(s)/sister(s)* to acknowledge the individual within the chorus.⁵⁵

Finally, that Dodera and Iribarren chose this particular song to close the play carries contemporary significance because Lennox dedicated the song to advocacy and fundraising to assist women and children suffering from HIV/AIDS. In 2003, Lennox learned about the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and says she heard Nelson Mandela call it a “genocide, with women and children as the frontline victims.”⁵⁶ She decided to become an activist and launched her own campaign in 2007 called “Sing,” where she composed a song about HIV/AIDS and then invited twenty-three internationally acclaimed female artists to help her record the song.⁵⁷ Her campaign has two main areas of focus: 1. treatment and care of women and children who are infected, and 2. the empowerment of women so that they can access treatment and care, and counter inequality and gender-

54 *Ibid.* The tweet by Marcela Ojeda in 2015 that sparked the #NiUnaMenos mobilization also suggested that “they are killing us” and to stand by and not speak up will perpetuate the murder of more women. Ojeda’s call to action for women to march and speak out in unison is mirrored in Iribarren’s call to the members of the audience to become stronger through united action.

55 This participation in chorus mimics mobilization by women through movements like The Women’s March or #NiUnaMenos marches, among others.

56 The Sing Campaign, webpage, Annie Lennox, <https://www.annielennox.com/news/the-sing-campaign/>.

57 Annie Lennox, vocalist, “Sing” by Annie Lennox, with Anastacia, Isobel Campbell, Dido, Céline Dion, Melissa Etheridge, Fergie, Beth Gibbons, Faith Hill, Angélique Kidjo, Beverley Knight, Gladys Knight, k.d. lang, Sarah McLachlan, Beth Orton, Pink, Bonnie Rait, Shakira, Shingai Shoniwa, Joss Stone, Sugababes, KT Tunstall, Martha Wainwright, featuring the Generics’ “Jikelele,” Audio CD, track 9 on *Songs of Mass Destruction*, Sony BMG Music Entertainment, 2007.

based violence.⁵⁸ As her website describes, Lennox wished to write an anthem that symbolizes unity and equality through the universal language of music. Additionally, South African culture also has a long tradition of using music to create solidarity through activist songs.⁵⁹ In the same way that Dodera's play incorporates intertextual references, so too does Lennox's "Sing." The recorded version features the South African activist song "Jikelele" (which means global treatment), written and performed by the group, The Generics, all of whom are members of the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) founded in 1998. The TAC is one of the most important activist groups lobbying for prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS for all.

This particular song highlights many of the technical aspects of the staged play as Iribarren calls attention to the divide between art and audience, stage and page. However, it also unites actor with audience and invites the spectator to become one of a chorus of voices that confronts limits to freedom (here in the case of South Africa and HIV/AIDS specifically, but also through reference to contemporary movements such as #NiUnaMenos and others, more generally). Through "Sing," Dodera evokes examples of an oppressed group, the limits of global capitalism to put an end to the "genocide," and a political/cultural dynamic that relegates women and children to live with inequities generated by (neo)colonialism. Through her association with Beauvoir in the performance that precedes the song, Iribarren offers a metaphorical association with feminist theory and existentialism. In both concrete and metaphorical allusions, the audience is invited to examine, and vocalize in song, what it means to be a woman in 2017/2018 and what work is still left to be done to undo the frozen gender dialectics of male/female, subject/object. The song also incorporates intersectional associations between the legacies of colonialism, racism, and other systems that oppress. As Beauvoir notes in *The Second Sex*, women internalize the position of object. By the end of Dodera's play, the audience has the opportunity to shed its role as object, as "Other," and to become subject through performance and vocalization.

In conclusion, Dodera's monologue demonstrates how the concept of "Other" can be used for productive purposes on the stage when the speaking agent is a woman who claims the floor by speaking through many voices. In unison, many voices resist the isolation and dependence that stymies women's ability to access power within patriarchal hierarchies. To become a woman

58 The Sing Campaign, webpage, Annie Lennox, <https://www.annielennox.com/news/the-sing-campaign/>.

59 *Ibid.*

(*hacerse mujer*) implies a kinetic process—she is not an object, she is movement and she moves in relation to others; she implies change. Dodera and Iribarren's version of Beauvoir resonates with contemporary audiences because she provides a link to collective resistance and efforts to mobilize as she speaks through a shared monologue of many unique voices. Latin American audiences see these sorts of movements in their own streets, as well as on other streets around the world. By speaking up together, Dodera and Iribarren suggest that Beauvoir's project to find individual freedom is meaningful when we help others move in that same direction.