Acting Out(side) the Canadian Multicultural “Script” in Toronto’s Ethno-cultural Festivals

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Centre for Drama, Theatre, and Performance Studies
University of Toronto

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Abstract

This thesis articulates the promising disruptions of the Canadian multicultural “script” that a Brechtian dramaturgy of ethno-cultural festivals critically practices, and also draws attention to the fissures in scholarship and in the official record through which these festivals often tumble into either obscurity or reductive characterisations. Within the framework of performance studies, this thesis adapts Bertolt Brecht’s dramaturgical approach to interrogate the ways in which Toronto’s largest ethno-cultural festivals—in particular, Toronto Caribbean Carnival Festival (1967-present), Toronto International Festival Caravan (1969-2002/2003), and the Taste of the Danforth (1994-present)—produce, perform, and negotiate the plurality of contrasting and contested meanings of the Canadian multicultural “script.” Enshrining the values of multiculturalism as part of the performance of Canadian identity, this “script” was developed in stages by the Canadian Government after the Second World War, and was institutionalised in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982) and the Canadian Multiculturalism Act (1988). I employ Brecht’s Verfremdungseffekt, gestus, and historicisation to denaturalise and make visible the often unnoticed discourses of power, that shape the presentation of ethno-cultural identities at festivals, for further examination and questioning. In doing so, I illustrate that the ways in which
ethno-cultural festivals operate are not just fixed within understandings of the official multicultural “script,” but rather can, and do, change over time.

Organised around three meditations of performativity, this thesis examines how material objects like food, physical and metaphoric spaces, and performing bodies at festivals create, perform, and present multicultural identities that play into normative understandings of the multicultural “script” as well as opening the possibility of their resistance through performance. In addition to the existing critiques of commoditisation at ethno-cultural festivals, my work on the performativity of food opens up a dialogue about the other ways that the multicultural “script” contributes to the management of diversity in the nation. Foregrounding the discursive practices of space at ethno-cultural festivals, my study illustrates the ways in which access to, or displacement or exclusion from, space is a performance of power. The performing body in ethno-cultural festivals has counter-hegemonic potential that can interfere and disrupt the safe representation and consumption of the multicultural “script” that discursively reinforce unequal power relations.
Acknowledgments

This thesis is dedicated with love to my parents, Christine and Paul Taucar, and is especially dedicated to the memory of my Dad who passed away in the midst of my Ph.D. studies. Their experiences of immigrating to Canada have inspired the subject of this work in so many ways they never could have imagined. Over their lifetimes my parents, along with the millions of other immigrants, have lived, (per)formed, and profoundly changed the multicultural “script” of which I write. It is only fitting that traces of their lives and their experiences are evoked throughout this work. A part of their experience of immigration meant that neither mom nor dad had the opportunity to attend university, but they were so passionate about the benefits of higher education. All their lives they worked so hard to make sure that my siblings and I had the opportunities that they never had. For all my parents’ sacrifices and hard work, I will always be forever grateful. This thesis is for them.

I am particularly indebted to the support of my supervisor, Dr. Antje Budde, and committee members Dr. Dina Georgis and Dr. Stephen Johnson. From the first day I walked into Antje’s class in CompLit, I knew that it would be the start of a beautiful collaboration. As a boundary-challenging, avant-garde scholar, Antje has been—without an iota of a doubt—the perfect intellectual midwife for this interdisciplinary brainchild and a truly wonderful mentor. Her insightful comments have always encouraged not only the most rigorous, but also the most creative scholarship from me. I treasure most her ability to make me laugh through some of the darkest times in this process, and for helping me see the light at the end of the thesis tunnel when I needed it the most. Little could I have imagined the rich and meaningful connection initiated by the “cold call” email I sent at the outset of this work to Dina in the Women and Gender Studies department. In Dina I found a scholar and mentor whose research and knowledge, specifically her insights into feminisms, postcolonialities, diasporas and national identities, have been an asset to my project. I consider Dina as a model for exceptional teaching for her depth of subject knowledge, availability and communication skills, the way she inspires me to be a better critical thinker, and her empathy. I am thankful for the support of Stephen and Dr. Yana Meerzon who acted as my external examiner. Your thoughtful questions and ideas have helped shape this work in more ways than I can elaborate.
I am profoundly indebted to the communities that have embraced my research, granting me access to people and the processes of cultural production that are featured prominently in my work. I sincerely thank members of Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival community for welcoming me into their mas camps and teaching me about the art and culture. I give “big ups” to Thea and Dario Jackson of TruDYNASTY Carnival Inc., Louis Saldenah and his family at Saldenah Mas Band, and to designers Danzo Balroop and Dave Desvignes for taking me under their wings and always supporting my research. I am especially grateful to Michelle Reyes and her mother Dian who welcomed me into their family, shared their “culinary magic” with me, and allowed me to be their apprentice during carnival time. Dian and Michelle are a crucial part of this dissertation, which never could have happened without their support and their willingness to share what they know. I look forward to making mas with you for years to come.

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loving support of my other family—the Francis family—especially Sandra and Trevor, who always believed in me and were my biggest cheerleaders throughout this process. I am eternally grateful for their presence in my life.

Above all, my deepest love and gratitude is reserved for my partner, Simon Francis, who has always walked alongside me in this journey and offered me his strength and support in the moments when I felt I could not go on. Accompanying me to a number of festivals over the years, I could not wish for a better “research partner” to help me usher this project to completion. I turn to the lyricism of Gord Downie and The Tragically Hip to express more eloquently what you have meant to me: “I am of you / And you are in everything I do” (In View). I look forward to sharing life’s future adventures with you.
# Table of Contents

## Acknowledgments

iv

## Table of Contents

vii

## List of Figures

x

## Introduction: Towards a Dramaturgy of Ethno-cultural Festivals

1

Prelude: Performing my “Homeland Imaginary”

1

## The Contested Terrain of Ethno-cultural Festivals

3

## Current Canadian Scholarship on Ethno-cultural Festivals in Canada

5

*Toronto Caribbean Carnival Festival*

6

*Toronto International Festival Caravan*

7

*Taste of the Danforth Festival*

7

## The Multicultural “Script”

8

Contextualising *Caravan, Caribbean Carnival*, and the *Taste of the Danforth* Festivals within the Development of the Official Multicultural “Script”

9

## The Dramaturgy and Performativity of Everyday Life: Practice as Research (PaR)

Methodologies and Methods

18

A Brechtian Dramaturgy of Ethno-cultural Festivals

24

Chapter Outlines: The Performativities of Performativity

26

## Chapter 1 The Dramaturgy of Food: Consuming the “Homeland Imaginary” at Toronto’s Ethno-cultural Festivals

31

1 Introduction

31

1.1 Performativity of Food: The Table and the Stage—An Arbitrary Separation

35

1.2 Towards a Brechtian Dramaturgy of Food in Everyday Life

40

1.3 The Recipe as Script: The Doing and the Showing-Doing of Cooking

45

1.4 Hunger for the Homeland Imaginary: Memory, Loss, Nostalgia and the Trace

49
1.4.1 Making Corn Soup ................................................................. 53

1.5 Food and Multicultural Commensality: The Way to Understanding the “Other” is Through the Stomach? ................................................................. 68

1.6 Memories of [Enter Ethnic ‘Other’ Here]: The Cultural Tourist and the Hunt for Souvenirs and a “Taste of” … ........................................................................... 77

1.6.1 Cultural Tourists/Culinary Tourists in Toronto ........................................ 79

1.6.2 Constructing an “Authentic” National Cuisine ........................................ 81

1.6.3 Fetish Objects/Gestic Objects ............................................................. 88

1.7 “Greek Fries” as a Script for the “Third Space” of Cultural Hybridity ............. 92

1.8 Rebellious Performances: A Brechtian Rupture of “Authenticity” .................... 97

1.9 Conclusion: The Eaters Paradox to Consume and to Keep at a Distance at the Same Time ................................................................. 100

Chapter 2 The Dramaturgy of Festival Space: Taking up Space/Place and Dislocating Difference in the City ................................................................. 107

2 Introduction ......................................................................................... 107

2.1 A History of the Street as Stage ................................................................ 109

2.2 The Performativity of the Street ............................................................. 113

2.3 Towards a Dramaturgy of Festival Space: Place and Space ......................... 119

2.4 Taking up Space/Creating Spaces of Belonging ........................................ 121

2.5 Two Loci of Spatial Dramaturgy: Landscapes and Borders ......................... 128

2.5.1 Creating the Multicultural Landscape—Performing the Multicultural “Script” .129

The Performative Landscapes of Toronto’s Ethnic Enclaves ............................... 129

2.5.2 The Mise-en-Scène of the Multicultural City: Festivals and “Making Place” in Toronto ......................................................................................... 133

2.6 The Borders, Mosaics, and Peripheries of Canadian Multiculturalism .......... 148

2.6.1 Performing the “Cultural Mosaic” at Festival Caravan ............................. 152

2.6.2 The Boundaries of Be(long)ing at the Taste of the Danforth Festival ......... 159

2.6.3 (Power) In Relation to the Centre: The Re-routing of Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival Parades ................................................................................. 165
2.7 Conclusion: The Shifting Performativities of Festival Landscapes and Borders ........175

Chapter 3 The Dramaturgy of the Body: (Per)Forming Ourselves and ‘Others’ in Toronto’s Ethno-cultural Festivals .................................................................................................................................................. 183

3 Introduction ............................................................................................................................................................................................................... 183

3.1 Masquerade, Carnival, and Festival: Foundations for the Carnivalesque Body ..........188

3.1.1 Feminist Masquerade/Multicultural Masquerade ................................................. 192

3.1.2 The Civic Body Masquerading the Multicultural City Through Caravan, Caribbean Carnival, and the Taste of the Danforth Festivals ............................................. 194

3.1.3 The Tourist Masquerade: Spectators Enacting Tourist Fantasy ......................... 198

3.1.4 Participants’ Masquerade ......................................................................................... 204

3.2 Performances that Unmask the Multicultural Masquerade .................................... 208

3.2.1 Choreographing Dissent at Toronto’s Taste of the Danforth Festival ................. 209

3.2.2 Subversive Costumes/Subversive Bodies in the King and Queen Competition at Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival .............................................................................................................. 217

3.2.3 (Un)Discover Me: Critiquing the Discourses of “Discovery” Through Bodily Presence and Absence at Festival Caravan’s First Nations’ Pavilion “Kanata”. 231

3.3 Conclusion: Performativities of the Multicultural Masquerade and Exiting through the Gift Shop of Boutique Multiculturalism ........................................................................ 242

Conclusion ........................................................................................................................................................................................................ 249

Performing My Personal Roots/Routes of Ethno-cultural Festivals .............................. 249

Disrupting the “Mesmeric” Multicultural Traffic Flows of Everyday Life: Performative and Critical Interchanges .............................................................................................................. 251

Future Travel and Potential Destinations in Ethno-cultural Festival Scholarship ........ 258

Bibliography ........................................................................................................................................................................................................ 260
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A pot of Dee's corn soup. Photo: Jacqueline Taucar.</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Dee sets out her ingredients for corn soup. Photo: Jacqueline Taucar.</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Man sells corn soup out of the trunk of his car at the King and Queen Competition on July 30, 2015.</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><em>Messini's</em> signage promoting its &quot;authenticity.&quot; Photo: Jacqueline Taucar.</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><em>Souvlaki</em> a fetish on a stick. Photo: Jacqueline Taucar.</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Bilingual signage, use of blue and white, pillar decals on the light standards. Photo: Jacqueline</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taucar.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Monument to Alexander the Great in the Logan Ave. Parkette that serves as a beer garden during the</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Taste of the Danforth</em> Festival. Photo: Jacqueline Taucar.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><em>Caravan</em> &quot;Passport&quot; June 2002. Photo: Jacqueline Taucar.</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><em>Caravan</em> &quot;Passport&quot; stamped with &quot;visas&quot; from different pavilions. Photo: Jacqueline Taucar.</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><em>Caravan</em> &quot;Passport&quot; list of pavilions with partial map. Photo: Jacqueline Taucar.</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Bottom left is the Madinah Masjid Mosque’s minaret, visible at the eastern boundary of *Taste of</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the Danforth* festival. Photo: Jacqueline Taucar.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The end of the <em>Taste of the Danforth Festival</em> and the beginning of the Danforth-Mosaic. Photo:</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jacqueline Taucar.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Parade of the Bands on Lake Shore Blvd. with the downtown in the background. Photo: Jacqueline</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taucar.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 14: A "band crasher" or "stormer" jumping over the barricades to join the mas players. Photo: Jacqueline Taucar .......................................................... 170

Figure 15: Mas players “wining” on each other. Photo: Jacqueline Taucar ......................... 172

Figure 16: Photographer encouraging a "wine." Photo: Jacqueline Taucar ......................... 201

Figure 17: The 9/11 Truth Commission's protest at Taste of the Danforth, 9 Aug. 2008. Photo: Jacqueline Taucar .......................................................... 214

Figure 18: Thea Jackson plays the "Josephine" mas. Photo: Jacqueline Taucar ................. 221

Figure 19: Michelle Reyes playing Eve in the Garden of Eden mas. Photo: Jacqueline Taucar 226
Introduction: Towards a Dramaturgy of Ethno-cultural Festivals

Prelude: Performing my “Homeland Imaginary”

Like so many first generation Canadians, my home is filled with performances that gesture “back home,” to what my dad calls the “old country,” a place that is sensuously evoked by the sights, sounds and aromas of the kitchen, and when my parents slip into and out of the languages of their youth. I remember Dad reminiscing about being “back home” on Krk with a voice filled with longing and nostalgia about a “home” that he left almost fifty years ago, only returning for a few visits since then. In many ways, his is a memory trapped in nostalgia’s amber glow. He performs and embodies the dialectical tension between the “old country” and the “new country,” or what I call the “homeland imaginary.” Although I have only been to Krk three times, I can see the ways in which Dad’s story of immigration to Canada from Croatia affirm my connection to a place, a family, and a community outside of Canada. At the same time, however, Dad’s performances also bear the hardships of assimilation in his new home. His idealisations come into play in the face of discrimination and barriers both my parents experienced as new Canadians. Dad worked hard in one of the few jobs available to him as a new Canadian as an under-waged construction laborer. For my Dad, the process of learning English was slow and his accent always remained an auditory reminder of the inassimilable and resistant elements of his “Otherness,” which marked him as different, and symbolically reflected the ways he adheres to the “old country” or, rather, how the “old country” adheres to him.

In 1951, Mom and my grandparents came to Canada from the Ukraine, settled in the Holland Marsh, and worked in the job that was available to them—farming. The so-called mythology of the “land of opportunity” was literally restricted to the land, the dirt and soil
around which they found themselves in a community of Eastern European immigrants, working the land to make ends meet. Mom frankly acknowledges the taunts of children at school calling her “DP,”¹ which she believed meant “dirty person,” because she worked on a farm. She laughs at it now, but I ache for her. Along with other new immigrants who challenged the Anglo-Saxon status quo in the region, my family was “Othered” and considered undesirable. The traces of a “homeland imaginary” were most present in my youth, days spent with Baba, my grandmother, when we made perohy, hollupschi, and bouka, in the times I spent listening to her speak Ukrainian and trying to cobble together understanding. This performance embodied the dialectical tension between “home” and “away,” and what that represents from our very different subject positions, perspectives, and experiences of “being Canadian”—from my Baba as an immigrant and from me being Canadian-born. These traces grow fainter by the days, months, and years since her passing. My three brothers and I have more of a connection to our birth country, although we maintain and perform certain traditions in our parents’ home throughout the year in an attempt to keep the more symbolic aspects of our multicultural identity, our differences, and our past, still present in our lives.

Traces of “the homeland” are being performed in some manner on a micro level in family homes and community cultural associations, and are also replayed on a macro level in public civic festivals in the city of Toronto, the provincial legislature, and in the national political arena. My life and experience has been one of diversity. My family is multi-ethnic, consisting of Ukrainian, Croatian, Korean, Japanese, Sri Lankan, and Caribbean heritages. I live in Toronto, a multicultural city, and experience diversity walking the streets, riding the public transit system,

¹ Displaced person, particularly used with referenced to migrants forced from their homelands after the Second World War. Used as a derogatory label in countries that received migrants in this period.
and visiting the many ethno-cultural neighbourhoods. Like many other individuals growing up in the city or the Greater Toronto Area, I have distinct memories of attending ethno-cultural festivals, especially *Caravan* with my family, and what it felt like to me to understand and hold on to the fading traces of my “homeland imaginary.” Despite the multicultural appearance of the city and the illusion/mythology of tolerance and respect, in many ways racism, the containment of difference, and the firmly sedimented cultural hegemony of the dominant group persist. My dissertation seeks to interrogate the many embodied understandings—the political, the imagined, and the lived experiences—of the multicultural debate that are performed, contested, and negotiated in the ethno-cultural festival space.

**The Contested Terrain of Ethno-cultural Festivals**

> Canadians encounter each other’s multicultural mosaic tiles mainly at festivals, which are reduced to ‘simple theatre’ at the level of ‘a folkloric Disneyland’

(Zorc-Maver and Maver 20)

> Now that we have Caravan, I won’t have to think of changing my name anymore

(Letter from little girl to *Caravan* co-founder, Zena Kossar)

Darja Zorc-Maver and Igor Maver’s piercing critique above reflects the extant vein of ethno-cultural festivals scholarship, which includes Neil Bissoondath, Cynthia Thoroski, Sneja Gunew and others, that focuses on the reductive and trivialising aspects of the festivals. Drawing upon the underlying capitalist imperatives of Disney theme parks or McDonald’s fast-food restaurants in reference to multicultural festivals, these critiques envision a homogenisation process in which ethno-cultural differences are stripped of their complex or difficult aspects and are “safely” produced for mass-consumption. These criticisms explore important problems inherent in multiculturalism as manifested in festival and spectacle and are certainly valuable
considerations for my work in this study. However, such criticisms of “Disneyfication” or “McMulticulturalism” ironically suffer from a similar case of reductionism and myopia, which it criticises in multicultural festivals. This line of criticism of multicultural festivals is predominantly focused on the seeming superficiality and trivialisation of the vehicle itself, but inevitably overlooks the broader system in which that vehicle operates and excludes other potential outcomes. The second quote at the beginning of this section offers a contrasting perspective of how an ethno-cultural festival, like *Caravan*, means and operates for different participants, both insiders and outsiders. For a girl living in Toronto ashamed of her “ethnic” last name, *Caravan* provided a stage for communities to represent their “Otherness,” and, in doing so, created space for recognising subjectivities outside the dominant Anglo-British culture of post Second World War Toronto, although never in ideologically neutral conditions.

From just the above examples, on the one hand, ethno-cultural festivals homogenise and neutralise difference through capitalist production and commercialisation, and, on the other hand, they open inclusive and/or resistant spaces for the representation of “Otherness.” My thesis raises the question of how ethno-cultural festivals produce such disparate and conflicting outcomes. As an attendee of ethno-cultural festivals like the *Toronto International Festival Caravan*, *Toronto Caribbean Carnival Festival*, and the *Taste of the Danforth*, I am consciously aware that there is potential for a plurality of contrasting and contested understandings of multiculturalism at these events. I see ethno-cultural festivals in terms of what Homi K. Bhabha calls a third space, a hybrid space in which a number of competing discourses circulate, come into contact with one another, at times clash with one another allowing for a new space of cultural negotiation and representation (“The Third Space” 211). In reading ethno-cultural festivals as third spaces, it opens up the potential for both resistant and hegemonic understandings of what I call the multicultural “script” to exist at the same time in the same space.
Current Canadian Scholarship on Ethno-cultural Festivals in Canada

If scholars are not preoccupied with the superficial and trivial aspects of ethno-cultural festivals, then they tend to overlook them entirely as the paucity of Canadian scholarship in the field attests. A search of literary and scholarly databases reveal surprisingly few Canadian studies, especially ethnographic accounts, of cultural spectacle and their relationship to multiculturalism in Canadian society. Franca Iacovetta’s work, “Immigrant Gifts, Canadian Treasures, and Spectacles of Pluralism: The International Institute of Toronto in North American Context, 1950s-1970s,” examines the efforts of the Toronto Institute to re-imagine Toronto through multicultural events and spectacles, fostering inter-ethno-cultural understanding, in the period immediately after the Second World War to the 1970s. The Toronto Institute laid the initial groundwork for the success of the Caravan festival that would rise in popularity after the Institute’s demise in 1974. While Paul Bramadat’s studies (2001, 2002, 2005) of Winnipeg’s Folklorama festival argues cultural spectacles form and maintain ethnic identities, my research advances the debate in two ways: first, by contextualising the relationship between ethno-cultural festivals and multiculturalism; and secondly, by analysing how closely performances adhere to, or stray from, the multicultural policy “script.” Bramadat’s “Toward a New Politics of Authenticity: Ethno-Cultural Representation in Theory and Practice” and “Shows, Selves, and Solidarity: Ethnic Identity and Cultural Spectacles in Canada” examine how the Folklorama festival functions in the identity-formation process and briefly look at the role of commoditisation in spectacle. Pauline Greenhill and Thoroski’s (2001) and Thoroski’s (1997) articles on Folklorama further the research on ethnic identities created for consumption. Moreover, they examine the problems inherent in such an economy such as avoiding the controversial or difficult aspects of cultural difference.
Toronto Caribbean Carnival Festival

Theoretical work on Caribbean Carnival in Toronto is limited to articles in journals, with the exception of Cecil Foster’s book Caribana: The Greatest Celebration which gives an historical overview of the festival and describes the events, but remains largely a pictorial work. In 2013 an anthology of papers delivered at a conference in Toronto coinciding with Caribbean Carnival was published entitled Carnival: Theory and Practice. In this work only three submissions deal with carnival in Canada. Donna Coombs-Montrose’s article “Building the Carnival Arts in Western Canada: the Cariwest Experiment” examines carnival in Calgary, Karen Cyrus discuss the steelpan sound in “Why They Play Pan: Steel Band Communities in the GTA,” and in “Shaddowland and Ecological Protest in Carnival/Caribana,” Jerry and Leida Englar interrogate Shaddowland Theatre Company’s involvement in Toronto Caribbean Carnival. Two articles that focus on how space is regulated in Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival are Peter Jackson’s “The politics of the streets: A geography of Caribana” and Annmarie Gallaugher’s “Constructing Caribbean Culture in Toronto: The Representation of Caribana”. Both articles are useful to examine how festival space is constructed both physically and symbolically within Toronto and shed light upon the continued marginalisation of the Black community within the political landscape. Foster (1995), Rinaldo Walcott (2001), and M. NourbeSe Philip (1999) write about the role of Caribbean Carnival in the performance of Blackness in Canada. NourbeSe Philip’s essay “African Roots” in A Genealogy of Resistance is an example of performative writing evoking the tempos and rhythms of the festival while moving back and forth through time to place the event within an historical and political context. This is a good example of how writing the festival can be both academic and creative, as to not flatten the playful and performative elements of the event. Other writings on Toronto Caribbean Carnival explore the Caribbean diasporic identity (Lyndon Phillip 1996, Ramabai Espinet 1999,
Relph Premdas 2004, Camille Hernandez-Ramdwar 2006), which expands the notions of citizenship and belonging beyond the nation-state. A recurring element in the research on *Caribbean Carnival* in Toronto is race and racialisation, particularly in Gallaugher’s work which also deals with the connection to perceptions of violence.

**Toronto International Festival Caravan**

A search on scholarly databases reveals only three articles (Bramadat 2001, 2002, 2005) that mention the *Caravan* festival, albeit within a broader discussion of Winnipeg’s *Folklorama*, and a full dissertation. Veronica Patricia Truchly’s dissertation *The world on our doorstep: The politics of multicultural spectacle* explores cultural spectacles (*Festival Caravan* and *Times Square 2000 Celebration*) through the lens of ethnomusicology. Truchly predominantly focuses on the performance and reception of music at these festivals and their relationship to multicultural spectacle. My research will interrogate the intricacies of how festivals are performed in relation to the official multicultural “script” in Canada. There are vast amounts of newspaper (*Toronto Star, Globe and Mail, Financial/National Post*) and magazine (*Maclean’s and Performing Arts*) articles that celebrate *Caravan* as a tourist event which I will draw upon to assess how festivals and cultural differences are represented in the media.

**Taste of the Danforth Festival**

A search on scholarly databases reveals no articles or studies completed on this topic. There is a Master’s thesis, “Constructing of Greek Identity in Toronto,” which briefly touches upon GreekTown on the Danforth Business Improvement Area’s (BIA) initiative to promote “Greekness” through the *Taste of the Danforth* festival (Gafros 2001). I will be relying mostly on my personal experience attending the event and newspaper articles to examine how “Greekness” and the *Taste of the Danforth* festival are represented to the public.
The Multicultural “Script”

Drawing upon Richard Schechner’s argument that a script may be written, oral or embodied and outline a prescription for action, dramaturgically I see “multiculturalism” as a “script,” and as a way of conceptualising the festival performances. The legal documents and laws creating multiculturalism in Canada are “dramatic texts” or “scripts,” which set guidelines, or directions, as to how to perform multiculturalism. By “script” I do not only mean the textual record of multiculturalism such as the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism Report in 1969 (hereafter the Bi and Bi Commission) or the formalisation of legislative texts of the Canadian Multicultural Policy (1971) or the Canadian Multiculturalism Act (1988), but also refer to the physically performed normative understandings and assumptions of multiculturalism in everyday life that play off of these “official” scripts. We perform scripts, but also have the ability to adapt, interpret and enact scripts with many different meanings. I see a striking similarity between staging a script, which subtly changes each and every time it is enacted reflecting the conditions in which it is performed, and ethno-cultural festivals in the City of Toronto. In ethno-cultural festivals’ enactments, improvisations, and variations, they perform numerous understandings of multiculturalism. Seeing multiculturalism through the metaphor of the “script,” as a prescription for action, allows for re-contextualisation of ethno-cultural performances that allow for the potential of improvisation and change. In a similar manner as the theatrical script changes to reflect the different physical environments, contexts, directors, actors, designers, and materials used to bring it to life on the stage, so too does multiculturalism, reflecting the conditions in which it is produced, the participants who produce it, and those that share in its performance.
Contextualising *Caravan, Caribbean Carnival, and the Taste of the Danforth* Festivals within the Development of the Official Multicultural “Script”

Although many ethno-cultural festivals take place in Toronto annually, I have selected three festivals, *Toronto International Caravan Festival* (hereafter *Caravan*), *Toronto Caribbean Carnival Festival* (hereafter *Caribbean Carnival*),² and the *Taste of the Danforth*, which I have experienced as a participant, and whose development coincide with the development and growth of Canada’s multicultural policy in the twentieth-century. Canada is a nation of immigrants, informed by its settler-colonial histories and Indigenous exclusions, which are only now beginning to be acknowledged by the processes of Truth and Reconciliation. Established as a colony in the seventeenth-century, the territory now known as Canada was settled by both the French and the British on lands expropriated from the Indigenous people. In the twentieth-century, with mass immigration occurring after the Second World War, the Canadian government began to rethink the evolving dynamic of Canadian society in the 1960s and move towards policies reflective of cultural heterogeneity. In 1969, the *Bi and Bi Commission* published book four of its report recognising the contributions of other ethnic groups beyond the English and the French, yet still excluding Indigenous peoples, to Canada’s cultural enrichment. It is not surprising that at the same time the *Bi and Bi Commission* was coming to a greater understanding of the effects of immigration on the nation, that public displays of cultural difference were beginning to be celebrated in Toronto with *Caribana (Caribbean Carnival)* in

² Prior to 2011, the festival was known as *Caribana*, but was forced to change its name due to litigation after the festival was taken over by the City of Toronto and handed over to another group for management. The name *Caribana* is trademarked and owned by the Caribbean Cultural Committee (CCC), a group that originated the festival in 1967, and its successor the Caribana Arts Group. When control of the festival was handed over to the Festival Management Committee (FMC) in 2006, a legal battle ensued over the rights to use the name forcing the (FMC) to change the name to *Scotiabank Toronto Caribbean Carnival Festival*. In March 2016, Scotiabank officially withdrew its sponsorship of *Caribbean Carnival*. For the purposes of this thesis, I will refer to the event as *Toronto Caribbean Carnival*. 

Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival is a hybrid cultural practice, drawing its influence from the rich and diverse traditions of carnival in the West Indies and specifically of Trinidad and Tobago. As a result of colonisation, carnival traditions were brought to Trinidad with the arrival of the French plantocracy in the eighteenth century. Barred from celebrating with the white, dominant class, or in public spaces, African slaves celebrated their own version of carnival privately, appropriating and transforming the celebrations of the European pre-Lenten festival by incorporating African traditions and folk elements, and parodying components of the masquerade ball. After Emancipation in 1838, freed slaves asserted their right to celebrate Carnival, masquerading and satirising white society, publicly in the streets from which they had previously been prohibited. Carnival commenced with canboulay (from the French, cannes brûlées or burning of the sugar canes) where slaves marched through the streets with torches, drumming, dancing and singing in remembrance of the brutalities of the colonisation (Elder 49). In 1881 and in 1884, British authorities attempted to contain and restrict elements of the Carnival celebrations, which culminated in riots. Attempts to suppress Carnival and canboulay celebrations were ineffectual and Carnival became a dynamic form of performance and cultural expression across the Caribbean. In Trinidad Carnival: Mandate for a National Theatre, Errol Hill describes carnival performance practices and aesthetics as the foundations upon which an indigenous theatre and drama can be built and maintained. Carnival theatricality in the elements

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3 The Emancipation Act (1833), granting slaves their freedom, came into effect on 1 August 1834 on the condition that slaves age 6 and older would serve six years “apprenticeship” before being freed. Slavery was fully abolished in the British colonies of the Caribbean on 1 August 1838.
of masquerade, dance, song, music and language is steeped in the historical, political and social struggles of Trinidadians, and people across the Caribbean as well. As such, the performance of carnival is the performance of the nation and Caribbean identity, as Hill’s mandate suggests, the national imaginary is embraced in the theatrical imaginary. Carnival can be considered as a meta-performance that enacts nationhood, community and belonging in the numerous Caribbean diasporic places in the United Kingdom and in North America.

To commemorate one hundred years of Canadian nationhood in 1967, Canada’s federal government used grants to encourage various minority groups to showcase their contributions to Canadian society in centenary celebration across the country. In Toronto, a group of Caribbean Canadians with roots in many islands—including Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada, Barbados—came together as the Caribbean Cultural Committee (CCC) to devise a way “to best capture the spirit of the Caribbean” and portray it for a Canadian audience (Foster 21). For the CCC, Carnival was the best expression of a Caribbean identity because it is celebrated throughout the Caribbean, and incorporates the traditions of many cultures (European, African, East and South Asian, Middle Eastern) that call the Caribbean “home.” As Canada is similarly a meeting place of cultures and home to a large Caribbean community, the CCC agreed that a carnival would be central to its contribution to the centennial celebrations recognising Canada’s diversity; the festival’s scope would be pan-Caribbean including other non-carnival activities (Manning 189). Since its inauguration fifty years ago, Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival has grown in scope and size, bearing traces of Trinidad Carnival, while performing a distinct expression of being Caribbean in Toronto. The three-week festival draws over a million spectators to Lake Shore Boulevard to watch over twenty thousand masqueraders in the adult-oriented Parade of the
Bands, and ten thousand to thirty thousand spectators to see two thousand children “play mas”\textsuperscript{4} in the Junior Carnival parade.

In the same year that the \textit{Bi and Bi Commission} published Book Four of its report, \textit{Caravan} festival began celebrating the cultural gifts and contributions various ethnic groups bring to life in the City of Toronto. The \textit{Caravan} festival originated as an initiative in 1969 by the husband and wife team of Leon and Zena Kossar, who were both children of Ukrainian immigrants, grew up in the Canadian Prairies, and moved to Toronto in the 1950s. Both Leon and Zena Kossar were writers for the newspaper the \textit{Toronto Telegram}, covering cultural community events and were inspired to open the cultural happenings occurring in church basements and community centres across Toronto to a larger audience. The festival brought different people into contact, as Leon Kossar argued, “Caravan helped break down barriers by making everyone feel welcome in each other’s homes. It’s been a tremendous vehicle for building understanding among Canadians” (qtd in McCabe C3). The first \textit{Caravan} festival had twenty-nine pavilions representing the cultural capitals of some of the many different countries, or “homelands” from which people immigrated to Toronto, and yet still remain affectively linked. For two dollars, a “passport” could be purchased to gain entrance to all pavilions, where guests would be greeted by the city’s “Mayor” and “Princess” and treated to displays of folk arts and crafts, performances of traditional songs and dances, and samples of the national cuisine. In successive years, the costs of the passport would increase to fifteen dollars.\textsuperscript{5} All proceeds taken in by each pavilion would go right back into supporting the community by subsidising cultural

\textsuperscript{4} A term derived from masquerade, the masking or disguising of the self to be able to perform alternative identities. “Play mas” is the term for participants who dress in carnival costumes to celebrate and dance in the parade.

\textsuperscript{5} This was the price of the last passport I purchased in 2002.
programming and maintaining buildings that have become the centres and “spiritual homes” of community life in the diaspora.

The assertions in the political arena that a new, more inclusive model of citizen participation in larger society had to be adopted were being mirrored by the active celebration and affirmation of ethno-cultural groups in Toronto’s public spaces. These performances claimed space and recognition, and asserted difference in the then-presumed monocultural Toronto of the 1970s. Caravan, as a showcase of diversity, Toronto Star reporter Nora McCabe humorously quips, “set up the pavilions, open the doors and WASP Torontonians, who, back in 1969, couldn’t buy rye bread at their local supermarket let alone Thai spring rolls, Mexican burritos, or Ukrainian perogies, would flock in” (C3). The festivals’ beginnings can be read as a radical challenge to the cultural hegemony of Toronto in the late 1960s and 1970s. I see the Caravan festival as the beginning of a “safe” and “tame” event through which the dominant (mostly white and of Anglo-British heritage) centre could encounter difference—and their own neighbours—for the first time, but never quite on equal terms.

In many ways, I believe the guise of entertainment and spectacle allowed for an opening to create a point of contact between people in Toronto that previously had no grounds for developing relationships and understanding. It is also perhaps this mingling between ethno-cultural representation with entertainment or “spectacle” that has spurred the most vocal opposition to multiculturalism as a policy, which is often seen in terms of funding of ethno-cultural festivals. Will Kymlicka has argued that funding cultural programming, especially those that focus on inter-ethnic communication, only constituted a small portion of the multicultural budget and not the majority, which went to other programs that worked towards greater inclusion and recognition of ethno-cultural groups in Canada (45). The conflation between ethno-cultural
festivals and the commodification of cultures as Bissoondath and others have argued, overlooks the effects of capitalist forms of production and the negotiation that occurs between cultural producers and cultural consumers, which I will more closely examine in Chapter One. Yet, as I will discuss throughout this work, the failure to move away from “entertainment” has particular reverberations for how ethno-cultural festivals intersect with the multicultural “script.”

Both *Caribbean Carnival* and *Caravan* developed and grew during a phase of formalising multiculturalism in Canada (1971 to 1981) through legislative acts with the federal adoption of Trudeau’s Multicultural Policy in 1971 and the continued work towards developing formal relations between ethno-cultural groups and government. These steps towards institutionalisation are significant, constituting a uniquely Canadian form of nation-building that fomented multiculturalism as part of the Canadian identity. As Rainer Bauböck has argued, “No other Western country has gone as far as Canada in adopting multiculturalism not only as a policy towards minorities but also as a basic feature of shared identity” (93). Although there are other countries around the world in which multiculturalism is a sociological and lived reality, only Canada has institutionalised and enshrined the values of multiculturalism in their Constitution. In the institutionalisation period (1981 to the present) multiculturalism became entrenched in the 1982 *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, in which section 27 states “This Charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians.” In 1988 the Canadian government enacted the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*, which retains the emphasis on the recognition of, and support for, the right to maintain one’s cultural heritage.

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6 See the work of Emma Ambrose and Cas Mudde (2015), Richard J. Gwyn
The institutionalised notion of preserving cultural heritage forms the basis for the multicultural “script” that each festival enacts. *Caravan, Caribbean Carnival*, and the *Taste of the Danforth* festivals all carefully evoke the image of being “back home” through carefully curated representations of national identities and heritages through the selective assemblage of song and dance, food and drink, and folk art crafts. In doing so, all three festivals carefully re-create the feeling of a time and place beyond Canada’s borders. It is important to note, that these festivals produce selective portraits of ethno-cultural heritages and experiences that are unable to reflect the incredible diversity of the experiences within, and amongst, both individuals and groups in the diaspora. Moreover, the performances at festivals never render transparent the exercise of power by particular stakeholders within the ethno-cultural communities, who make the decisions of what aspects of ethno-cultural heritages are included and excluded from the representation. However, I argue that the seams of the Canadian multicultural “script” enacted by ethno-cultural festivals are exposed by the changing temporal and spatial conditions in the City of Toronto’s social, political and economic environment.

During the time of institutionalisation, both *Caribbean Carnival* and *Caravan* festivals are troubled by insufficient financial support and radical restructuring, which could be read as indicative of growing pains as both events were entering their second decade of operations. However, I perceive another aspect at play, which a new popular festival, the *Taste of the Danforth*, gestures to in its beginnings as a means to attract people to restaurants in the GreekTown area during the recession of the 1980s and early 1990s. The economic pressures during this time coupled with the fact that multiculturalism was “officially” recognised in the *Charter* and in federal policies sets the stage for shifting priorities. Simply having the right to display one’s ethno-cultural heritage was not enough to guarantee full participation in society. Rather substantive issues like persistent racism and full access to economic resources were
emerging as discourses. This shift from recognition of difference to creating economic opportunities marks a noted difference in the ways in which the multicultural “script” is performed at ethno-cultural festivals, as well as gestures to the unequal power dynamics of co-option of these events by governments and organisations as sources of economic and social capital.

The Taste of the Danforth festival’s development illustrates a neo-liberal shift in the multicultural “script” that emphasises potential for economic growth and development. The Taste of the Danforth festival was established in 1994 by the GreekTown BIA as a way for Greek restaurants on Danforth Avenue to collectively pool resources and produce an event that would advertise both the area as a destination to visit and entice people to spend money at their businesses. As I will be discussing in Chapter Two, the festival is also used as a branding tool to reinforce and ephemerally “imprint” “Greekness” on the neighbourhood. The event began humbly in the Logan Avenue Parkette on the Danforth with twenty-three restaurants setting up “tasting-tables” offering visitors a wide variety of Greek dishes (“History of the Festival”). In the first year of the festival five thousand people attended, and it grew exponentially the following year to 100 000 attendees (“History of the Festival”). With growing attendance each successive year, the festival went from operating in the Logan Parkette to closing down the length of Danforth from Broadview Avenue to the west and Jones Avenue to the east (approximately one and a half kilometres in total).

The festival now draws over 1.65 million visitors over three days on the second weekend of August, and has expanded beyond a celebration of Greek food to include participation from all the businesses, including retail, within its boundary (“History of the Festival”). Approximately one hundred restaurants sell diverse cuisines from around the world including Brazil, Cuban,
Thai, Indian, and Persian, to name but a few. In addition, the festival has a variety of cultural entertainment reflecting the diversity of the City, but also has a dedicated “Greek Stage.” There is a focus on family, incorporating activities for children such as a midway, face-painting, and craft tents. Due to its popularity as a tourist draw to the City, the festival also includes an overwhelming amount of advertisement: from free samples of commercially produced foods and other goods, promoting services (telecommunication providers Rogers, Bell, Telus, etc…), and marketing by Toronto’s professional sport team franchises. As I will be discussing in further detail in this thesis, such rampant commercialisation, while economically beneficial to Danforth business owners, has particular effects on the presentation and consumption of ethnic identities that can contribute to the reductive and stereotypical representations of “Otherness.”

While both Caribbean Carnival and the Taste of the Danforth festivals continue to flourish to this day, Caravan has not and officially ended in 2002/2003. As one critic of the now defunct Caravan notes, “some wonder about Caravan’s relevance in an era when multiculturalism has more to do with issues like employment equity, racism and rights than the predominant 1970s notions of cultural retention epitomized by church basement dances and spicy ‘exotic’ food” (Thompson A2). The right to perform historical cultural representations guaranteed in the official multicultural “script” does not necessarily facilitate or guarantee full

7 Over the years, title sponsorship has switched hands from Pilaros to Krinos who are competing importers of Greek foods in Canada. The title sponsors have a booth that display their products and often have free samples. Moreover, other commercial food producers such as Sabra foods have handed out sample packages of hummus.

8 Raptors (NBA), Toronto Maple Leafs (NHL), Toronto Blue Jays (MLB), Toronto Argonauts (CFL), and Toronto Rock (MLL) all have booths with marketing and promotional materials.

9 The Toronto SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) outbreak in 2003 effectively cancelled the Caravan festival that year, keeping most audience members at home. Only 800 visitors attended, a far cry from the over million visitors drawn in at its peak. As a result, the festival suffered a financial loss from which it could not recover, and events scheduled for 2004 and 2005 were cancelled.
participation and equality. Yet, as I will discuss in Chapter Two, there are other factors that contributed to the festival’s demise, in particular gentrification, which has radically altered the neighbourhoods and communities from which this festival sprung. I have attended these three festivals on many occasions and my familiarity with them, in addition to the way their development, growth, and decline (for one festival) intersect with important stages of the development of Canadian Multiculturalism, are compelling factors for including them in my study.

The Dramaturgy and Performativity of Everyday Life: Practice as Research (PaR) Methodologies and Methods

*All the world is not, of course, a stage, but the crucial ways in which it isn’t are not easy to specify* (Goffman 72).

While not performed indoors on the conventional stage of a Western bourgeois theatre with a defined separation between actors and audience members, *Caravan*, the *Taste of the Danforth*, and *Caribbean Carnival* festivals are indeed performances, shows, and spectacle, where “culture” is displayed for others. I see ethno-cultural festivals as carnival-like in how they operate in society. In his influential work *Rabelais and His World*, Mikhail Bakhtin argues that carnival “is by no means a purely artistic form nor a spectacle and does not, generally speaking, belong to the sphere of art. *It belongs to the borderline between art and life* [emphasis mine]” (7). There are actors in festivals, as everyone performs (both actors and audience) in one way or another. For instance, the moment a person buys a *souvlaki* at the *Taste of the Danforth* festival they arguably become a participant in the cultural show by performing a set of social relations, which can be read as dramatic action, by purchasing and consuming the material—or performance—viewed as representative of a cultural identity. Through their performance of consumption they can be “Greek for a day,” or so organisers problematically claim, and also
become a key part in the performance and negotiation of culture along with producers as I will argue in Chapter One. In this way festivals are like carnival, as “carnival does not know footlights, in the sense that it does not acknowledge any distinction between actors and spectators” (Bakhtin 7). Rather, everyone is a participant in some degree.

Often co-opted by the establishment, contemporary festivals no longer fully embody the revolutionary reversals of society’s hierarchical order that Bakhtin theorised regarding medieval carnivals. However, I believe that traces of that carnival resistance still exist in ethno-cultural festivals in performances that exceed, spill, or slip, exposing social, political, and economic relations of power. Festival participants can be performing a number of different “scripts” at the same time: a cultural tourist role in the search for the exotic, a search for community in reaffirming their identity and sense of belonging in an “imagined community,” or performing a semblance of civic duty by attending and supporting events hosted in Toronto that articulate values that are associated with multiculturalism and tolerance.

Actors and audiences, dramatic action, and scripts are elements associated with theatrical performance, but can also form the basis to examine human interaction in everyday life. In Research Methods in Theatre and Performance, Baz Kershaw defines practice as research (PaR) as “the uses of practical creative processes as research methods (and methodologies) in their own right” (64). In this thesis—which is also a performance of sorts—I see the methodological synergies between performing my role as a researcher and scholar, and the creative practice of being a dramaturg. As Patrice Pavis has noted, the different roles of the dramaturg in theatre and performance are varied. In Pavis’s Dictionary of the Theatre: Terms, Concepts, and Analysis, he outlines the different ways dramaturgs are involved in the production of theatre:

a. Selecting plays for a program on the basis of a particular issue or objective; combining and selecting text for a single mise-en-scène.
b. Carrying out documentary research on and about the play. At times, drawing up a documentary program [sic].
c. Adapting* [sic] or modifying the text…; if necessary, translating the text (or adapting the translation) alone or in collaboration with the director.
d. Determining how meanings are linked and interpreting the play according to an overall social or political project.
e. Intervening from time to time at rehearsals as a critical observer with a “fresher” pair of eyes than the director, who works on the play every day. The dramaturg is therefore the first internal critic of the performance in progress.
f. Looking after relations with a potential audience. (123)

In this dissertation, I see the potential of PaR in applying a variation of theatre dramaturgy to ethno-cultural festivals, by critically examining how meanings and representations are produced between actors and participants within the larger context of the social, political, and economic power relations.

Employing dramaturgy is not a novel approach, but rather it is significant to note that a number of different disciplines in the humanities and social science\(^\text{10}\) have adopted the metaphor of theatre and performance to produce their own dramaturgical method to analyse social interactions. As well, performance studies developed as an interdisciplinary field in its own right, which uses the lens of performance to analyse a range of embodied behaviours of everyday life. Beginning in the late 1950s and early 1960s social sciences have adopted the lens of performance and dramaturgy as a methodology to study social interactions. Perhaps most popularly explored in his dramaturgical analysis of social interactions in his seminal book *The Performance of Everyday Life*, sociologist Erving Goffman argues that individuals are “social actors” who wear different masks and perform different roles, carefully staging how one appears to control one’s impression on others (15). Although theatrical and dramaturgical metaphors had been used by scholars in numerous disciplines after the Second World War (see Burke 1945,

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\(^{10}\) Dramaturgy has been used in anthropology and ethnography, sociology and politics, architecture, digital media and technology, and even in business and health studies.
Goffman 1959, Turner 1969), performance studies developed as an academic field of interest in
the late 1960s, stemming from two streams of thought. The first stream involves the increasing
convergence between theatre and anthropology, especially in the work of Richard Schechner,
creating what Natalie Alvarez calls “a ‘new paradigm,’ an optic, and a method of analyzing
culture as constituted by performances, practices that are embodied, enacted, hailed, and
asserted” (73). Schechner’s work in performance studies drew on anthropologist Victor Turner’s
(1969, 1974, 1982) work on social drama and liminality, and the two were frequent collaborators
(1985). Other influential scholars in the field that incorporate anthropological and ethnographical
approaches include Barbara Kirschenblatt-Gimblett, David Conquergood, and Diana Taylor.
Performance studies’ emphasis on embodied practices as a way of knowing the world, breaks
with Eurocentric emphasis on written texts as official records of history and knowledge. In doing
so, performance studies emphasises performance as an epistemology, in addition to being a new
theoretical and analytical approach.

In my practice of festival dramaturgy, I see a connection between PaR and two
ethnographical research techniques: participant observation and embedded fieldwork. First, I see
a convergence between PaR and ethnography’s method of participant observation. In attending
these festivals, by virtue of being present, I enter into the production, consumption and transfer
of knowledge. At Caravan, Caribbean Carnival, and the Taste of the Danforth festivals the
methods of PaR and participant observation come together as a method that involves my body,
and the bodies of others, embodying performance techniques in order to examine how and why
bodies construct, and are constructed by, various festival practices. At the ethno-cultural festivals
in my study, I observe other bodies, making dramaturgical notes on their observed behaviours
and physicalities as well as on my own bodily practices. My observational methods are always
informed by the theatre practices of Bertolt Brecht in order to defamiliarise that which appears as natural or normal, in order to critically engage with the conditions of their production.

Second, in order to collect data I, in the parlance of cultural anthropology and ethnography, embed myself in the communities of my study by volunteering in the work of cultural production as a form of PaR. I emphasise the notion of PaR in my volunteering, where my creative practices inform my research and are also offered as contributions to the community as a way of decolonising “traditional” ethnographic methods in which the cultural knowledge and production of “Others” are colonised in the unequal power relationship between researcher and subject. I have spent six years in the workshops of Caribbean Carnival bands learning about carnival arts in a way that gives back to the communities, as I volunteer by constructing costumes for various events at Caribbean Carnival. During my time, I have worked with Thea and Dario Jackson of TruDYNASTY Carnival Inc., Louis Saldenah and his family at Saldenah Carnival, and specifically with Michelle Reyes, who plays Saldenah Carnival’s Queen of the Bands, and her mother Dian. Over the years, I have assembled both formal and informal personal interviews as well as dramaturgical notes regarding the processes of my creative practices in learning about carnival arts.

Performance studies’ engagement with theories of performativity is also critical to my understanding of ethno-cultural festivals in Toronto. J.L. Austin’s examination of “speech acts” in how the very statement of words constitutes an action that generates a transformation. Not all words constitute an action, but specific words such as “I promise” or “I forgive” constitute actions in the act of speaking them. Scholars like Judith Butler have taken up the notion of Austin’s performatives to examine the ways in which power is exercised and sustained in
society, especially with regards to gender.\textsuperscript{11} Performativity has shifted from Austin’s examination of how the very statement of words constitutes an action that generates a transformation, towards the study of the ways in which identities are constructed through iteration of cultural norms, perhaps most popularly explored by Butler’s scholarship of gender performativity. While it is generally acknowledged that we do things with words, we also do things with our performing bodies and material objects, which create meaning in everyday life. For my dissertation, I am particularly interested in how material objects, spaces, and performing bodies at festivals are used to create, perform, and present multicultural identities that play into normative understandings of the multicultural “script” as well as opening the possibility of their resistance through performance.

In situating my work within the interdisciplinarity of the field of performance studies, I recognise that the complexity of studying ethno-cultural festivals requires forging creative collaborations across disciplines. To best explicate the interdisciplinary approach of my research, I borrow and adapt Schechner’s notion of concentric circles of concentration.\textsuperscript{12} In my work, I see performance studies forming the largest framework of concentration encircling the entire study, within which is a large women’s and gender studies circle. As my research illustrates, especially in Chapter One and Chapter Three, women’s participation and labour produce much of the “cultural material” for show and for consumption at these festivals. These larger circles of performance studies and women and gender’s studies encompass smaller more concentrated circles of disciplinary focus that include anthropology and ethnography, sociology, cultural

\textsuperscript{11} See the works of Judith Butler (1990, 1993), Andrew Parker and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (1995), and Shoshana Felman (1983)

\textsuperscript{12} For further reading see Schechner’s article “Drama, Script, Theatre and Performance.”
geography, and food studies, as well as concentrated circles of theoretical focus that include Brecht’s historical and dialectical materialism, spatialisation, semiotics, and phenomenology. As such, I see my work as an interdisciplinary thesis that espouses a mixed-methods approach, using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. In addition to PaR methods, I have also conducted content analysis of newspaper and periodicals, smaller community-focused publications, organization websites, photos and videos of ethno-cultural festival, as well as examine material cultural products like food and costumes (see Chapters One and Three). The performance studies and PaR approach in my thesis serves to trouble the notion of fixed disciplinary boundaries in order to provoke critical interactions between different epistemologies and ontologies for a nuanced understanding of ethno-cultural festivals.

A Brechtian Dramaturgy of Ethno-cultural Festivals

As a PaR model for this dissertation’s critical analysis, I turn towards German theatre practitioner, Bertolt Brecht’s theories and practices of the theatre as a means of interrogating not what festivals are representing, but rather how they are doing so in order to examine the broader social, political and economic intersections of performing multiculturalism in Toronto. Brecht’s original concept of an epic theatre was specifically drawn from observing life in the street, and as such, I propose returning Brecht’s methods to the original site from which they sprung. In doing so, I see the potential for a new way of looking at performances of everyday life and in festivals that make visible the hidden power and normalised ideologies that shape and activate how we behave in society. In particular, I see three of Brecht’s techniques for the stage that have potential to be used as a critical and analytical practice: Verfremdungseffekt (V-effekt), gestus, and historicisation.
A key aspect of Brecht’s methods that is critical to my study of ethno-cultural festivals is the *V-effekt*, commonly translated as the estrangement effect, which makes visible that the processes of everyday life we take for granted as natural and immutable are actually the results of a complex history. Moreover, Brecht’s use of historicisation reveals that the complex history is not fixed, but a part of a moving dialectics in which change is possible. As Brecht argues, “What is has not always been, and will not always be so,” which is particularly relevant when examining social order as not fixed, but rather tenuously held power relations negotiated and maintained over time (*Brecht on Performance* 124). And, last, an important element that is associated with the *V-effekt* is Brecht’s *gestus*, the external signification—in words, gestures, or tableau—that in part or all together illustrates the underlying conditions of the interrelationship between individuals and society. I see the potential of the *V-effekt, gestus*, and historicisation as a critical way to denaturalise, and make visible, the often unnoticed discourses of power that shape the presentation of ethno-cultural identities at festivals for further examination and questioning.

In applying Brecht’s theories of the theatre to performances of everyday life, I see a potential to move beyond the critiques that festival performances trivialise ethno-cultural groups, and to examine such performances in relation to broader political and socio-economic conditions. Moreover, I find that there is a potential fruitfulness in approaching ethno-cultural festivals through Brechtian dialectics, which allows for multiple and contrasting positions to occupy and compete with one another in the same place. Brecht’s dramaturgical approach is important for my work on ethno-cultural festivals in order to illustrate that the ways in which they operate within official multiculturalism can—and does—change over time, illustrating that they are not just fixed in their understandings. I perceive this as a productive approach that not only allows space for the existing critiques of such festivals put forth by scholars, but also
recognises that festivals exist in shifting frameworks and discourses that allow other positions to emerge.

**Chapter Outlines: The Performativities of Performativity**

My work is organised around three meditations of performativity concerning how material objects like food, physical and metaphoric spaces, and performing bodies “do things” at ethno-cultural festivals like *Caravan, Caribbean Carnival*, and the *Taste of the Danforth*. I am particularly interested in “how” they do, rather than “what” they do, because it opens up a discussion of the means or ways in which these themes perform, connect to, and make manifest the discursive conditions of social relationships of power.

Chapter One examines the performativity of food at ethno-cultural festivals through a Brechtian dramaturgy. I find Roland Barthes particular useful as a theoretical companion to Brecht in this section, as his work in *Mythologies* Fredric Jameson argues is the “textbook ‘application’ of the [Brechtian] method to a range of social and cultural phenomena, along with a theorization of the objects of estrangement” (173). In this chapter, I link together the work of Brecht, Barthes, and Pierre Bourdieu’s notion of taste in to develop a dramaturgy of the production and consumption of food at *Caravan, Caribbean Carnival*, and the *Taste of the Danforth* festivals. Food is an important medium through which collective identities are imagined, performed, and received, through consumption.

In Chapter One, through the metaphor of a script I dramaturgically explore food in/as performance analysing one recipe each from my three selected festivals. Drawn from my experience of *Caribbean Carnival*, I examine the recipe and performance of Dian (Dee) Reyes’s “traditional” Trinidadian corn soup. Dee’s recipe and performance illustrates the ways traditional foods in the diaspora materialise the lost “home” in the host country. From *Festival Caravan*, I
examine an Indian Goan Vindaloo recipe by the “Panjim” pavilion that was published by the
Toronto Star in 1990, which was the pavilion’s debut at the festival. My discussion of Goan
Vindaloo reveals the unequal power relations and ambiguities that surround the consumption of
multicultural otherness. My last case study discusses the recipe-script of “Greek Fries” from the
Taste of the Danforth festival in relation to notions of hybridity and “Canadian-ness.” This
recipe-script opens a discussion regarding the concept of “authenticity,” and its construction, as
part of the culinary tourist’s experience. I investigate the ways in which capitalist production also
shapes a trialectical relationship between “traditional cuisine,” cultural producers, and cultural
consumers, which has particular consequences for the presentation of ethno-cultural identities
within multicultural discourse. Although, the concept of script may connote a sense of
“prescription,” I illustrate that there is room for variation, improvisation, and slippages that can
rupture and disrupt the official multicultural “script.” I argue for the potential of performative
slippages to occur, creating gestic moments that defamiliarises normalised discourses of
multiculturalism and identity.

In my second chapter, “The Dramaturgy of Festival Space: Taking Up Space/Place and
Dislocating Difference in the City,” I contend that spaces and bodies are mutually constituted
and that ethno-cultural festivals constitute a kind of performative iteration that shape
understandings of spaces. This chapter draws together Brecht’s theories of the theatre and Henri
Lefebvre’s spatial materialism. I find the synergy between Brecht and Lefebvre’s theories
especially potent in the dramaturgical analysis of the performativity of festival space at Caravan,
Caribbean Carnival, and the Taste of the Danforth festivals. Lefebvre embraces the disruptive
potential of Brecht’s V-effekt to defamiliarise the spatial discourses that appear as natural in order
to expose the social relations of power. Together their theories form the basis of my critical
spatial dramaturgy that examines how space and place are constructed and produced at ethno-cultural festivals through the trialectics of conceived, perceived, and lived experiences of space.

My case studies in this chapter are divided into two thematic topoi of landscapes and borders that illustrate the many ways spaces of belonging and dislocation are discursively produced within the multicultural “script.” For my work, the landscape is a particularly compelling metaphor to illustrate how performances at each festival ephemerally “cultivate” and “imprint” personal and cultural memories, and a set of social relations in spaces. I call these landscapes, “ethnosapes,” which perform the dialectical tension of “home” and “away,” which can produce productive slippages. In this chapter, I argue that while ethnosapes can be resistant by claiming spaces of belonging for “Otherness” in the multicultural “script,” these spaces can also be appropriated by corporations such as the City of Toronto in order to mine the potential capital of tourist destinations. I dramaturgically explore the concept of “Borders” of festival spaces—and its variations via the metaphor of the “Cultural Mosaic,” perimeters and the relationship between the centre and periphery—as performative barriers and limitations to belonging to the nation. I argue that a gestic analysis can foreground the discursive practices of space in Caravan, Caribbean Carnival, and the Taste of the Danforth that illustrate the ways in which access to, or displacement or exclusion from, space is a performance of power. The shifting aspect of both landscapes and borders suggest that they are never inert or fixed, but rather subject to changing social relations of power.

Chapter Three focuses predominantly on the performing body as a site of resistance that can spill, seep, and exceed their discursive boundaries. Linking Mikhail Bakhtin’s work on the carnivalesque and grotesque body with Brecht’s V-effekt and gestus allows for readings of the body’s potential to defamiliarise discourses that appear natural. Moreover, I argue that all bodies
(participants and spectators, as well as civic and corporate) perform a kind of masquerade, a doubling of the body, in ethno-cultural festivals that can both expose and reify existing power relations, even at the same time. Drawing upon feminist understandings of how masquerade operates, I see the potential to read performances at ethno-cultural festivals as a “multicultural masquerade,” containing both hegemonic and counter-hegemonic actions. The carnivalesque doubling of the body in masquerade, I posit, opens a way around the reductive or essentialised notions of ethnic identities that scholars like Bissoondath and Thoroski critique.

This chapter analyses three case studies from Caravan, Caribbean Carnival, and the Taste of the Danforth festivals that illustrate resistant performances that unmask the multicultural masquerade. First, I explore the affective power of disgust that the 9/11 Truth Commission induces in the Taste of the Danforth festival’s attendees, who physically recoil and move away from the grotesque and “offensive” bodies of the protestors that march the length of the Danforth. The gestic performance of the “Truthers” disrupts cultural tourists who are enacting a “bourgeois” or “boutique” multicultural “scripts” and are consuming commercialised, safe forms of cultural diversity. My second case study examines the subversive costumes and performances of “Caribbean-ness” at Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival. Performed at the King and Queen Competition on the Thursday night before the Grand Parade of the Bands, the Queen costumes I examine masquerade and parody constructions of Caribbean femininity in order to expose the gendered and colonialist power relations in Canadian society. My final case study discusses how the First Nations participants explore the notion of absence/presence in the Caravan festival with their “Kanata” pavilion in response to celebrating the 500th anniversary of John Cabot’s “discovery” of Canada. The pavilion offers audiences an alternative, decolonised perspective of “discovery” that renders Indigenous bodies visible and present and recuperates indigenous subjectivities that have been, and continue to be, erased in Canada’s colonial project. All three
case studies illustrate the counter-hegemonic potential of the performing body in ethno-cultural festivals that can interfere and disrupt the safe representation and consumption of the multicultural “script” that discursively reinforce unequal power relations.

Finally, I conclude by returning to Henri Lefebvre’s notion of the street as a spontaneous stage upon which Toronto’s ethno-cultural festivals such as Caravan, Caribbean Carnival, and the Taste of the Danforth make use as a site of performance. However, like the theatre, the street is never neutral; it is not an “empty stage,” but is filled with ideological “traffic” through which objects like ethno-cultural festivals and performing subjects must navigate. Through the metaphor of the street as a stage, this chapter encapsulates the significant arguments and issues articulated in the previous chapters along with a consideration of the implications and insights of practicing a Brechtian dramaturgy of festivals. In doing so, I not only wish to interpolate the promising disruptions of normative discourses that a Brechtian dramaturgy of ethno-cultural festivals critically practices, but to also draw attention to the fissures in both scholarship and in the official record through which these festivals often tumble into either obscurity or reductive characterisations.
Chapter 1
The Dramaturgy of Food: Consuming the “Homeland Imaginary” at Toronto’s Ethno-cultural Festivals

1 Introduction

Between my older brothers and I, there is a generation gap that manifests itself in the way we perform our Ukrainian heritage. My brothers grew up in the heyday of Trudeau-era multiculturalism, when promotion and preservation of ethnic heritages were by-words. They enacted their Ukrainian-ness by attending Ukrainian school, speaking the language or by dancing traditional steps. Arriving later on the scene in the 1980s, I cannot speak more than a few words of Ukrainian or perform any dance steps; the primary means through which I enact my Ukrainian heritage is food. On special occasions, Mom and I take the time to make the recipes my Baba, my grandmother, brought with her when she immigrated with her family to Canada on May 31, 1951. We make cabbage rolls (hollupsci), borscht, pyrohy, and babka, which are the material things that connect me to family, to a community of people, to my Ukrainian-ness. Theatrical performances depend on material objects in the same manner that, as Erving Goffman notes, we depend on props in our performance of everyday life. Our social lives and interaction are not performed in empty spaces, but are constituted physically at times with objects and things. Moreover, the links between food and enacting one’s identity are particularly salient as it is an item that is assimilated and incorporated into the body. As anthropologist, Claude Fischler asserts, food is “central to individual identity, in that any given human individual is constructed, biologically, psychologically, and socially by the food he/she chooses to incorporate” (“Food, self and identity” 275). As such, incorporation acts, in identity formation, in two ways as a marker of inclusion and of “Otherness.”
At festivals food performatively enacts identity for the community that produces and consumes it. Building from the work of Pierre Bourdieu and Judith Butler, I consider “ethnic” identity a repeated citation of corporeal and somatic schemas, a *habitus*, in which the body is read as socialised and “has incorporated the structures of the world—a field—and which structures the perception of that world as well as action in that world” (*Practical Reason* 81). Although the primary focus is gender identity, Judith Butler argues that “identity is performatively constituted by the very ‘expressions’ that are said to be its results” (25). As such, identities are socially constructed resulting from the repetition of stylised bodily acts that, over time, acquire the appearance of being “natural.” To many cultural identities and faiths, food traditions, observances and restrictions, Jewish Kashrut or Islamic Halal for example, are central ways that bind together domestic and religious life. “Unlike other manifestations of social life, which can be built and left to stand,” Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett contends that “food is perishable, ephemeral, constantly renewed” by those (mostly women in the domestic sphere) who (re)produce it in the kitchens (“Kitchen Judaism” 77). (Re)Producing culinary tradition and cuisine is what I would consider a citational performance of social life and cultural values via the highly malleable medium of food. For Butler, “citation is the process of enacting a self-identity that is linked to a wider imagined community and tradition” (McKinlay 21). The nation is an “imagined community,” as Benedict Anderson explains, because “the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (254). For individuals of a diasporic community, food items, “ethnic” supermarkets and restaurants, and traditional dishes enact variously an imagined community, the family, and a system of social and cultural values, by physically connecting with the taste and material manifestation of the stories, meanings, memories and emotions surrounding the homeland.
National identities and communities are constructed through the assembly of symbols and rituals—symbolic capital—in relation to territorial categories. For immigrants, food is a central element of their identity formation and for the community throughout the diaspora. In *Reimagining Marginalized Foods*, Elizabeth Finnis argues that:

Among migrants, the act of eating ‘ethnic foods’ can serve to maintain ethnic identity when done in private, but may also take on notions of *reclaiming* ethnic identities when eaten (and served) in public. Markers of identity and tradition may also be privately enacted when it comes to the preparation of foods, even if the foods themselves will be served publicly to outsiders or tourists. (8)

As such, when a diasporic community produces and consumes “ethnic foods,” it acts as a process or monument that preserves and consolidates the links between the community and their territory, despite the temporal and spatial distances that separate them. These particular kinds of processes are what Michel Bruneau calls a “symbolic or iconographic capital” (35). At Toronto’s ethno-cultural festivals, the culinary becomes a piece of the “iconographic” capital, through which “diasporic identity,” memory and history are transferred from one generation to the next.

As I have acknowledged in my introduction, although diasporic communities in Toronto are internally diverse, ethno-cultural festivals enact the official multicultural “script’s” emphasis on the “preservation” of cultural heritage, by carefully producing selected—and selective—representations through a number of material and performative elements. At ethno-cultural festivals, food is often used as an expression of community and identity, and is used as a means of communication to both insiders and outsiders to that community. Food is carefully prepared to produce a taste of a time and a place outside of Canada, thereby becoming a mediating object for the “homeland imaginary,” an ambivalent place that is always shifting and elusive, located in the dialectical tension between “home” and “away.” As members of the diaspora congregate and participate in Toronto’s ethno-cultural festivals, they are coming together as a community in a performative process that links them transnationally to the homeland, a territory many may never
have visited (and perhaps never will), but yet are connected to symbolically and imaginatively. Moreover, everyone who attends these festivals, both insiders and outsiders, participates in the production and transmission of knowledge.

Roland Barthes notes that “to eat is a behaviour that develops beyond its own ends, replacing, summing up and signaling other behaviours” (“Toward a Psychosociology…” 21). Food is more than just a consumable item of sustenance. It evokes memories of people, places, and events which shape an individual or group’s sense of self and belonging. As a sensual agent, food, even before it touches the lips, performs in a number of ways as a communication system, images, code of practice, situations and behaviour particularly in the construction of the nation. Building upon the work of Barthes, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett and others, I will attempt to apply a dramaturgy of food to examine the range of social behaviours expressed through food at the Taste of the Danforth, a three-day outdoor food festival in Toronto’s Greek Town, Festival Caravan, and Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival. In this chapter I will interrogate how food—its production, spectacle and consumption—is used as an epistemological device to navigate the homeland imaginary, moving beyond understanding food as sociological or anthropological, and rather ask how food performs into the discursive construction of ethno-cultural identities, and beliefs surrounding multiculturalism in Canada, in Toronto’s ethno-cultural festivals.

This chapter will first establish the theoretical grounding for understanding the performativity of food. As J.L. Austin notes that we do things with words, I would also suggest that we do things with material things, food especially. Food and identity are intimately tied together, where the ritualised production and consumption of traditional food items are critically significant to enacting one’s identity. “The repetitive cooking, baking, selling, buying and consuming” of specific (traditional) food items, according to S. Lily Mendoza and others, is a
Butlerian form of performativity that re-cites or reiterates socially established set of meanings (319). Understanding that food is more than just nourishment and functions as a signifying and performative practice, I will outline a dramaturgical hermeneutics by drawing together Brecht’s theories of a critical theatre with Barthes work on semiotics and cultural mythologies and Bourdieu’s notion of taste. These three theorists together provide the critical tools for performing a dramaturgy of food, its preparation and consumption, at ethno-cultural festivals and its relationship to broader political, social and ideological concerns. Performing a dramaturgy of food at the festivals can draw attention to the ways in which the multicultural “script” is enacted and can open a critical process to dismantle and de-naturalise its normativity.

1.1 Performativity of Food: The Table and the Stage—An Arbitrary Separation

Food festivals are/as carnivalesque experiences transforming time and space and creating collective identities. In doing so, festivals subvert the “normal order” (inviting people to visit places they normally would never go, interacting with people and foods that are unfamiliar), temporarily. Moreover, food festivals are carnivalesque spaces where self-indulgence reigns over self-control, especially when it comes to dietary control. Representing a space of time out of regular time, festivals are free from restrictions and self-discipline, in which individuals celebrate and embrace the carnivalesque, the excess, and the excitement of “direct and vulgar grotesque bodily pleasures of fattening food, intoxicating drink and sexual promiscuity” (Featherstone 13). Food is inherently festive, theatrical and performative and there is a case to be made in considering it as a performance genre on its own.

Although the senses have been isolated in order to create genres specific to each (with their own spaces, galleries, theatres, auditoriums) privileging one modality over another, at one point these elements were fused in forms like banquets and festivals where senses, and the
various media associated with them, worked together to create an experience. In most western theatre histories, the table and the stage have been separated into their own distinct artistic and creative genres, but a closer examination illustrates that this separation is arbitrary. Considered the birthplace of western theatre traditions, Athens in the Classical period (480-323) created a theatre festival to honour Dionysus, the god of wine, wine-making, ecstasy and theatre. In *Food in the Ancient World*, Classics scholars John Wilkins and Shaun Hill connect the importance of food in literary forms to the drama festival, “food plays a powerful role in Homer, the earliest literary text known to us. Later, some literary genres, such as tragedy and comedy, were linked with festivals, where sacrifice and consumption on stage reflected in coded forms appropriate to each genre what actors and audience members had been doing in ceremonies proceeding the drama” (21). Food, therefore, was not separate, but rather a significant aspect of the dramatic event. Such holistic views can be traced to the role of food in the religious order, where animal and plant sacrifices were offered to the gods. As such food plays a significant part of the Ancient Greek world-view, and their inclusion in literary forms were often used to “provide significant insight into a range of important issues, including ancient perceptions of social relations, foreigners, and even the nature of political organization” (Donahue 28).

As Kirschenblatt-Gimblett has pointed out, theatre histories that privilege sensorial separation often overlook the ways in which food plays a part of the theatrical event or context. For instance, during the medieval period, it is entirely conceivable that food was present during public Feast celebrations in the Church’s calendar, when performances based on the liturgy occurred in the public squares, which also functioned as public market spaces. Market spaces in medieval towns were cultural, economic, and social centres, and, as theatre historian Glynn Wickham asserts, were therefore “as appropriate a *platea* or acting-area for these performances as convent courtyards” (67). Significantly, Wickham notes that Autumnal Feast days of Saints
where shifted to coincide with the end of the harvest, and the festivals and “fairs which marked the successful completion of the harvest in the marketing and sale of ale, cloth, food, fuel, skins and wine against the winter” (132). In the medieval period, banquets, tournaments, and popular carnival were multi-sensory performance events in which food was an essential component. Likewise, in the Renaissance period food also played an important role in theatrical events, such as Commedia dell’arte performances in public spaces, recreating an atmosphere that was akin to the medieval fair. In Elizabethan Popular Theatre, Michael Hattaway describes the conditions within the playhouse, “with orange-sellers and fosset-women, boys bringing around beer, sellers of plays and ballads, and prostitutes soliciting for customs” (22). The sense of festivity of the theatrical event was heightened by the availability of food and the simulation of the festive market-place. The table and the stage may have been separated over time (in many theatres in North America food and drink are still not allowed in the auditorium), but they share a history and many performances are now seeking to bridge the divide (Filippo Marinetti’s "Futurist Cookbook", Karen Finley's performance art, and even the Blue Man Group). There is artfulness to food—it is just as alive and ephemeral as a theatrical experience—highly charged with various meanings and affects.

Significantly, food is a prominent feature of many rituals both religious and secular, which as performance studies scholar Richard Schechner asserts is one of the modalities, along with play, on a continuum of performance. The nuances of performing ritual or play, according to Schechner, are differentiated based on whether the purpose of the performative event falls towards religious efficacy or social entertainment (Performance Theory 116). Although, such a reading may seem to establish efficacy and entertainment as binary oppositions, these purposes are to be understood as being in flux with one another as performative events can be variously entertaining or ritualistic, or exhibit both at the same time to some degree. Whereas above I have
linked religious celebrations with theatrical productions, there are a number of ritual enactments pertaining to food and consumption that are not theatre, but nonetheless are theatrical in performance. The Catholic mass re-enacts the Last Supper where Jesus blessed bread and wine, symbols of his body and blood, and shared it among his disciples on the evening before he was crucified. For Catholic celebrants, the ritual re-enactment of the mass makes present again the absent other, in the transubstantiation of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, whose death and resurrection makes humanity’s salvation possible. In partaking of the Eucharist, celebrants are not only “gathered around the sacrificial, saving victim on the altar, but share in his redemptive work by their physical and mystical participation in his body. They become his body…” (Torevell 36). The Catholic Eucharist is an efficacious ritual performance, as Tom F. Driver argues, because it “invokes the presence and actions of powers which, without the ritual, would not be present or active at the time and place or would be so in a different way” (97). Ritual then becomes an affective performance of transformation and is an enactment of power. In terms of secular food rituals, the procurement, preparation and consumption of traditional dishes for diasporic communities is an affective performance, and experience, of making present the absent homeland and kinships in the host country. The ways in which these performances are enacted in festival situations are complicated and will be considered in further detail later in the chapter.

Shifting away from the ritual modalities of food performance, the advent of televised cooking shows and dedicated food lifestyle channels (Food Network) on cable television illustrates food performance is/as entertainment. The rise of cooking shows featuring various foods and food techniques has not led to a revolutionary increase in home cooking, but rather the spectacle of cooking is served up for consumption, which is often a surrogate for the audience’s own cooking. Kathleen Collins argues in Watching What We Eat: The Evolution of Cooking
Shows, that although viewers are enticed to perform what they see on television, few actually execute the recipes. A paradox exists, Collins notes, in that “people love to watch cooking, but it does not mean they love to cook” (136). Interestingly, Michael Pollan observes:

Today the average American spends a mere 27 minutes a day on food preparation (another four minutes cleaning up); that’s less than half the time that we spent cooking and cleaning up when Julia [Childs] arrived on our television screens. It’s also less than half the time it takes to watch a single episode of “Top Chef” or “Chopped” or “The Next Food Network Star.” What this suggests is that a great many Americans are spending considerably more time watching images of cooking on television than they are cooking themselves — an increasingly archaic activity they will tell you they no longer have the time for. (“Out of the Kitchen”)

The spectacularisation of food, through televised, print, and online media, subtly and insidiously displaces the preparation and consumption of food items in lieu of consumption of food images.

The deferral of social relationships to the consumption of images that occurs in a consumer society is indicative of what Guy Debord calls a Society of the Spectacle, in which living is displaced by having, which in turn is displaced by “appearing” (11). Food media then “encourages people to conceptualize their desires in terms of commodities and to see social connections as bonds that are formed through the acquisition and display of goods” (Ketchum 218). Commodifying food and its consumption then becomes a form of cultural capital—a culinary capital—that illustrates the power relations between individuals, which intrinsically are tied to the mode of production of material goods. Food as a commodity becomes important to my study of food at ethno-cultural festivals as “cultural tourists” seeking and consuming culinary difference constitutes a cultural capital, which raises concerns of cultural colonialism as the “Other’s” foodways are potentially exploited in the search of the “exotic.” As such, “food adventurers” (Heldke Exotic Appetites 7) potentially participate in the creation of an image of the “Other” that reinforces unequal power relations, without coming to a deeper understanding or respect for cultural differences. As such, food at ethno-cultural festivals in Toronto may
seemingly open a path to engaging with the “Other,” but ultimately fall into the pitfall of celebrating what Stanley Fish calls “boutique multiculturalism,” the overly simplistic and palatable versions of the multicultural “Other.”

1.2 Towards a Brechtian Dramaturgy of Food in Everyday Life

The links between food and performance—in art and in life—are well established in performance studies. Performance studies scholar Kirshenblatt-Gimblett recognises three points at which performance and food intersect: “First, to perform is to do…. Second, to perform is to behave…. Third, to perform is to show” (“Playing to the Senses” 1-2). Kirshenblatt-Gimblett breaks down the performance modalities of food, in which the first speaks to the very actions of making and producing food for consumption, and the second gestures to the ways that food is a medium through which cultural beliefs and social codes are enacted. The third mode illustrates the point at which both doing and showing are displayed, which as Kirshenblatt-Gimblett suggests, is the point at which the food event approaches the theatrical and spectacular for uniting taste as both a sensory and aesthetic experience (“Playing to the Senses” 3). In Toronto’s ethno-cultural festivals, all three performance modalities take place, but it is in evaluating the shift “to show” that can turn a critical lens upon the ways that participants perform the “script(s)” of official multiculturalism in Toronto.

Viewing food as—or through the lens of—performance, can open up productive framing and analytical tools, especially when employing German playwright and theatre practitioner, Bertolt Brecht’s theories of the theatre. Brecht’s work has been influential in the approach to doing and viewing of theatre, as David Barnett argues, “His theorizing is, in the first instance, a way of asking questions of artistic practice, of peeling off the veneer of what may appear to be ‘obvious’ and probing the values and interests at work” (13). In developing the Epic Theatre,
later known as dialectical theatre, Brecht pursued an aesthetic and methodology that sought to move theatre beyond its illusion and to connect events on stage to the everyday material realities of its audience. The epic theatre encourages its audience to re-view the ideological discourses, the political, social and economic forces currently at play, by illustrating and exposing the development of historical conditions, which are perpetuated to maintain a particular world-view and reality. To encourage the audience to re-examine the seemingly natural condition of events on stage and in life, Brecht employs a set of techniques such as *gestus*, *V-effekt*, and historicisation, which I argue can be applied to the reading and interpretation of events off the stage in everyday life.

Brecht’s ideas and concepts have substantially informed other theorists such as Roland Barthes, who applies the principles of epic theatre to the performance of everyday life. Barthes’s work in *Mythologies* is similar, methodologically, to Brecht in that it “makes the natural, the taken-for-granted, appear strange and remote, to establish unsuspected connections, to subvert cultural hierarchies” (Moriarty 21). In reading the actions and cultural preferences of individuals in everyday life, Barthes exhibits similar objectives to Brecht in revealing the ideological basis for particular behaviours that appear “natural,” are, in fact, serving specific social interests. For instance, Barthes examines the inherent “French-ness” of drinking wine and observing the epic Tour de France, however “the forms in which both of these things are presented in daily life reflect the structures and priorities of capitalist production” (Moriarty 21). In exposing the underlying ideological imperatives, Barthes illustrates that the world is not fixed or culturally self-evident, and opens the potential for change. The cultural and ideological coding of objects and actions constitutes a “second-order myth” that overlays objects and actions in everyday life, in which their primary meanings are not erased but rather “remains and stands as an alibi, the cover under which the second politicized meaning can hide” (Allison 157). Under this purview
food is a medium necessary to sustain existence, as well as carrying other meanings, such as national identity, which operates as a Barthesian myth and serves to normalise dominant culture and values. Barthes’ assertion about eating sugar is strikingly Brechtian in nature, insomuch as that Brecht sought to interrogate the social and political conditions that are embedded and naturalised in actions. The action of eating sugar, as Barthes notes is “an ‘attitude,’ bound to certain usages, certain ‘protocols,’ that have to do with more than food” (“Towards a Psychosociology…” 23). In this way, eating sugar would be, in a Brechtian sense, a performance externalising and physicalising socially significant attitudes and comportments, values, beliefs and tastes.

In “Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste,” Pierre Bourdieu draws the connection between taste and the formulation of “classed” body. Taste, according to Bourdieu, is “a class culture turned into nature, that is, embodied” and “helps to shape the class body. It is an incorporated principle of classification which governs all forms of incorporation, choosing and modifying everything that the body ingests and digests and assimilates, physiologically and psychologically” (“Distinction” 35). Bourdieu asserts that class taste is embodied, a habitus, that is physically manifested. Class is inscribed on/through the body, in a number of ways, including food preferences and other bodily comportments in work and leisure. While Bourdieu’s work on taste is specific to the study of the French class system, which socially and demographically differs vastly from Toronto and Canada, class categorisations are not temporally or spatially stable formations and are influenced by other factors such as gender, race and ethnicity. Bourdieu’s ideas, however, are significant to examine the relationship between tastes and the embodiment of social order. Moreover, Brecht’s theories can heuristically open a critical lens upon the embodiment and physical expression of taste in order to “defamiliarise” such
behaviours and expressions that appear natural in order to see them again amongst other associations and connections.

Often, the production and consumption of food at ethno-cultural festivals represents the palatable multicultural “Other,” containable within the tourist imagination. Commoditisation of the foodways of ethno-cultural “Others” does not critically upturn our multicultural sensibilities nor does it reflect the realities of the complex interrelationships between people that are not necessarily free from friction or tension. In formulating a dramaturgy of food and how it produces meanings at Caravan, the Taste of the Danforth, and Caribbean Carnival festivals I ask questions that serve to delve beyond and complicate the simplistic tourist “snackshots” that are produced of “ethnic cuisine.” My research questions follow a Brechtian and Barthesian methodology focusing on foregrounding the social relations involved in food production and consumption. As Barthes argues, “When he buys an item of food, consumes it, or serves it, modern man does not manipulate a simple object in a purely transitive fashion; this item of food sums up and transmits a situation; it constitutes an information; it signifies” (“Towards a Psychosociology…” 21). In attending/participating in these festivals I am most interested in interrogating three aspects of food in performance: first, the different modalities of how individuals participate in the production and reception of food; second, the conditions surrounding the production of food and how they shape the identity that food is attempting to represent; and, third, the performance of food positioned in relation to power, specifically how it re-inscribes socially dominant discourses as well as open up alternative relations to the centre. While much scholarship is focused on how people do things with words, I believe it is equally important to recognise that we also do things with things, and food, especially. Our social world is invariably linked to our physical world in which food plays a significant role.
Certainly participants and “cultural tourists” at these festivals are not Brechtian actors on a stage that are consciously exposing the conditions of the production for critically savvy audience members. However, reading and interpreting the actions, pertaining to the production, presentation and consumption of food, of festival participants through a Brechtian heuristic opens a means to work through the social and political attitudes encoded in their performances. The techniques of Brecht’s Epic Theatre are useful critical and analytic devices to re-examine the performances pertaining to food at the Taste of the Danforth, Caravan, and Toronto Caribbean Carnival, and to reveal the underlying ideological forces surrounding these festivals. In my dramaturgical analysis of food as/is performance, I will utilise Brecht’s concept of gestus, which Meg Mumford defines as, “the aesthetic gestural presentation of the socio-economic and ideological construction of human identity and interaction… the externalization of the socially significant” (144). Eating foods at festivals is not an action performed independently of social, political or economic concerns, but rather involves a myriad of complex social relations that are not ideologically neutral. Performing a gestic analysis allows for an exploration of those social relations embedded in the actions surrounding food as products of a set of particular conditions, rather than allowing them to appear as natural. Closely related to gestus is the V-effekt, a key component to the “denaturalisation” or “defamiliarisation” of conditions, beliefs, and social relations that appear to be natural in order to be able to see them again with critically fresh eyes. The act of eating goes beyond natural, physiological need, and the V-effekt mobilises a critical distance to see and compare performances surrounding food amongst new relations and conditions. And finally, Brechtian historicisation is an important technique to draw upon to show that social relations a part of a moving dialectic and that present social arrangements and institutions are to be seen as historical, transitory, and subject to change. With regards to food at Toronto’s ethno-cultural festivals, historicisation can intervene in the discussion surrounding
“authenticity” and its fetishisation by disrupting the notion of a fixed, “authentic” essence, allowing for the potential to change.

1.3 The Recipe as Script: The Doing and the Showing-Doing of Cooking

In 2010, Toronto theatre artist Jovanni Sy produced a one-man show entitled A Taste of Empire based on a traditional Filipino dish called rellenong bangus, which is a stuffed milkfish. Sy turns the St. Lawrence Market’s display kitchen into the set of a fictional cooking show demonstrating “Imperial Cuisine.” The cooking show also becomes a vehicle to hawk the corporate merchandise (cookbooks, knives, and, ironically, meal supplement powders) of his boss, executive chef Maximo Cortés, whose megalomania and greed are displayed for the audience in an introductory video sequence. Such marketing reflects the way in which the cooking show on lifestyle networks such as the Food Network has become a bigger business venture than just demonstrating cooking techniques and sharing recipes, but rather have transformed into half-hour to hour long commercials for spin-off commodities (branded cookware, bakeware, cookbooks, restaurant franchises and foods) for celebrity chefs including, but not limited to, Rachel Ray, Jamie Oliver, Emeril Lagasse, and Gordon Ramsay. Reminding the audience that the medium of the cooking show is never neutral, but rather layered with neoliberal corporate ideologies, Sy takes the traditional recipe for Filipino rellenong bangus and traces back each ingredient to reveal the Imperial discourses and the global flows of capitalism that are imbedded in the dish. In doing so, Sy performs a form of Barthesian “demythologising” or a Brechtian “estrangement” in order to dismantle the seemingly natural social and political discourses that sustain cultural hierarchies and specific social interests.
Sy intervenes in the cooking show model, slicing and dicing through imperialist and capitalist ideologies—in addition to his ingredients—as he tells the audiences about the global flows of each ingredient in his recipe for *rellenong bangus*. For instance, the *sofrito* stuffing for the *bangus* is made from an aromatic mixture of onions, garlic, and tomatoes and speaks to the legacy of Spanish colonialism. Tracing the tomato first to South America where it was domesticated by the Aztecs, Sy follows the global flow of the tomato being distributed around the world by Spanish colonisers in the sixteenth-century, and examines the rise of the use of the sticky sweet condiment ketchup in the dish after the nineteenth-century annexation of the Philippines by Spain to the United States (*A Taste of Empire* 13). In a similar fashion, Sy examines the garlic revealing its roots in Central Asia, and distributed, “by one of the great seafaring empires: the Phoenicians, the Greeks or the Carcinogens” in 2000 B.C. to the territories now recognised as Spain and Portugal (*A Taste of Empire* 16). However, the history of garlic does not end there as Sy reflects upon the contemporary farming and economic practices utilised by Chinese producers of garlic in order to flood local markets in North America with inexpensive garlic while local producers in the “farm to fork” movement are priced out of the market, claiming “doesn’t it make more sense to save your hard-earned money?” (*A Taste of Empire* 16). Sy draws attention to the foods consumers place on their table and the ways in which consumers are unaware and/or complicit in the existing system of production built on oppressive structures. By performing the recipe, Sy leads his audience through the dramaturgy of a national cuisine from imperial ingredients, to pot, to table, to our mouths, revealing that we are consuming more than just food, but rather all the ideological and capital conditions of its production.

*A Taste of Empire* uses a recipe as a dramaturgical foundation for its script, and in many ways a recipe and a script have many potential resonances as texts for performance. Both a
recipe and a script may be written, oral or embodied and outline a prescription for action. To view a recipe through the dramaturgical lens of a “script” can open up ways of conceptualising the performance of food. In “Drama, Script, Theatre, and Performance,” performance studies scholar Schechner recognises the historical and archaeological evidence that illustrate performative practices such as dancing, masking, impersonating humans, animals and spiritual beings, and enacting stories. Reconsidering the western theatre tradition that privileges the concept of drama, Schechner introduces “script” as another concept to be included in the “performance,” “theatre,” and “drama” model (“Drama, Script…” 5-6). In considering the performance of Paleolithic rituals Schechner avoids the term “text,” which signifies written documentation, but rather uses the term “script.” For Schechner, scripts “mean something that pre-exist any given enactment, which act as a blueprint for the enactment, and which persist from enactment to enactment” (“Drama, Script…” 6). A script is the pattern of the enactment that can be embodied and transmitted to others, that, with the development of writing, reconfigured the active sense of “script” into the textual document of “drama.”

Drawing upon this distinction, I consider a recipe as a form of script that, although can sometimes be found as a textual document, always retains its active form. I view a recipe as a form of a script that guides an improvised performance, and that improvisation is both the result of, and means for, interpreting the recipe. Scripts are not fixed by any one interpretation/form of presentation, in a similar manner that a recipe can be recreated a hundred times and always be slightly different depending upon the conditions in which it is prepared. A recipe is not just a narrative and a story, although it can and does bear traces of someone’s or a group’s narrative, because to interpret the recipe as only a narrative or story can lead us to an ahistorical viewpoint which fixes understandings. Rather, through a dramaturgical lens, a recipe-script can be enacted and re-interpreted by cook-performers who enter a dynamic and dialectical relationship with the
text. Wesley Vander Lugt’s observations are particularly salient with regards to relating the concept of “scripts” to the process of cookery. Building off of Schechner’s theories, Vander Lugt asserts that, “If scripts are understood as patterns of doing, then scripts are lived, practiced and embodied traditions that persist through time, despite local variation” (16). Recipes are often transmitted between individuals, in an embodied performance that relies on the practice of skills and the physical and intellectual knowledge of materials such as ingredients, tools, tastes and textures. As such, a recipe—like a script—is a communal process that involves a number of actors/participants, a setting, and props.

In the next three sections of this chapter, I will be turning a dramaturgical lens onto three distinct recipes, corn soup from Toronto Caribbean Carnival, Goan Vindaloo Curry from Festival Caravan, and “Greek Fries” from the Taste of the Danforth festival. Dramatically, these recipes function as scripts whose interpretations and performances can open up ways of critically engaging with food and reveal the underlying process of constructing, enacting, and mobilising a national cuisine within the discourses of Canadian multiculturalism. Each recipe coincides with a particular thematic exploration that speaks to the way in which food figures into the construction of national identity for both migrant and cultural tourists.

In the first section, I will explore the “Hunger for the Homeland Imaginary” in making and consuming corn soup within the context of Caribbean Carnival in Toronto. Corn soup is a traditional “carnival” food, affectively and intimately linked to playing mas in the street, and each family has their own recipe tied closely to their memories of “home.” In the diaspora, making traditional foods, such as corn soup, is one way that “home” becomes material in the host country; it is a practice that connects all three festivals, and becomes a means for interrogating the processes of belonging to or being excluded from the nation.
In “Multicultural Commensality,” I explore the ways in which commensality (the coming together to share a meal) at food festivals can open up a productive vantage point to consider “the countervailing imperatives of multiculturalism, globalization, and transnational flows of labor, goods, services, capital, information, and images” (Dayal 159). This section examines the underlying imperatives of Toronto Star’s publication of an Indian Goan Vindaloo recipe representing Caravan pavilion “Panjim” that reveal imbalanced power relationships and the ambiguities of multicultural consumption.

The final section “Memories of [enter ethnic ‘Other’ here]” examines the role of cultural tourists and food adventurers and their engagement with the “Other’s” food. Examining the recipe of “Greek Fries” from GreekTown’s Taste of the Danforth festival, reveals the role of food in (re)constructing and mediating cultural differences. Moreover, the “Greek Fries” recipe opens a larger discussion surrounding food and the performance of “authenticity” in a culinary tourist or food adventurer’s experience at these festivals. Viewing each recipe—corn soup, Goan Vindaloo, and “Greek Fries”—as scripts, dramaturgically opens up ways of considering the performative nature of food and the multiple roles it enacts for migrants, cultural tourists/food adventurers, and the nation.

1.4 Hunger for the Homeland Imaginary: Memory, Loss, Nostalgia and the Trace

In his renowned work Swann’s Way: Remembrance of Things Past, Marcel Proust writes about the evocative and affective memory, and physical response, unleashed by a single bite of a madeleine:

I raised to my lips a spoonful of the tea in which I had soaked a morsel of the cake. No sooner had the warm liquid with the crumbs touched my palate than a shudder ran through me and I stopped, intent on the extraordinary thing that had happened to me…. And suddenly the memory revealed itself. The taste was that of the little piece of
madeleine which on Sunday mornings at Combray … when I went to say good morning to her in her bedroom, my aunt Léonie used to give me, dipping it first in her own cup of tea or tisane. (“Overture”)

For Proust, a crumb, soaked in tea, alone is enough to evoke a host of memories surrounding his youth and aunt, which play out in his mind’s eye like a scene from the theatre, and are articulated through a bodily and visceral response. In this passage, Proust’s childhood and home is made manifest and alive again, all in a single bite.

Such culinary phantasmagorias are common, especially among migrants, who, for various reasons, are dislocated from the “homeland” and feel dissociated from the host country. In such cases, food can create connections and a sense of belonging. “People’s visceral experiences of food—the tastes, the textures and aromas—can,” as cultural geographers Robyn Longhurst, Lynda Johnston and Elsie Ho argue, “tell us a great deal about their emotional and affective relations with place. This is, perhaps, especially the case for migrants, because food can help people feel at home, it can prompt them to miss home, and it can be a bridge to a new home” (333). In the diaspora food becomes a symbolic and iconographic capital that connects its participants to a “home,” from which they are spatially separated, as well as bearing the marks of the place of settlement. In Culinary Fictions: Food in South Asian Diasporic Culture, Anita Mannur examines the connections between food, identity and place. Mannur’s book unites her personal experiences as a diasporic child “who learned to eat Indian food everywhere but India” with a desire to understand “the powerful place food occupies in our cultural imagination” (“Culinary Nostalgia”). Mannur discusses the longings and nostalgias evoked by food and its ability to create spaces of belonging when “away.” Drawing upon the work of sociologists, cultural anthropologists and cultural geographers and food studies scholars whose works specifically study the role of food in people’s lives, I employ the definition of nostalgia that Stanford food studies scholar, Mark Swislocki articulates in his work Culinary Nostalgia.
Swislocki defines nostalgia as “the recollection or purposive evocation of another time and place through food” (1). The modus operandi of ethno-cultural festivals that use food as a communicative medium is precisely to evoke another time and place, which I read as performing into the official multicultural “script.” In this chapter, I see food as an epistemological and performative entity to navigate the “homeland imaginary” that moves beyond understanding food as sociological or anthropological in nature.

There is a striking similarity in the staging of a script, which subtly changes each and every time it is enacted reflecting the conditions in which it is performed, and the making of a “traditional” recipe in the diaspora, which, in its enactment, improvisation, and variation each time it is made and consumed, performs a third space that brings together “home” and “host” country. In viewing the recipe as a script and food in/as performance, I see a productive means of disrupting essentialised understandings associated with food in its role of identity construction, in particular the notions of “authenticity” and “national cuisine,” by foregrounding the relationship between cultural producers and consumers. The process of making “traditional” foods for festivals is always embodied and marked by nostalgia and longing for people and places, and in many ways food can become a fetishistic object in the diaspora in dealing with the loss and dislocation from “home.” I am not making a blanket statement regarding all people in the diaspora, but rather I am focusing upon those who have an active interest in representing and consuming “the nation” through food at the festivals. In this way, they are invested in invoking a “homeland” that is only rendered present through the production and consumption of food items. In doing so, food becomes a fetishistic device that surrogates for the perpetually displaced home. In Caribbean Carnival, Caravan, and the Taste of the Danforth festivals, making and serving “traditional” dishes such as corn soup, piroshkis, and loukoumades are socially and affectively tied to family and community, history and the nation(s). Moreover, by dramaturgically analysing
the production and consumption of such recipes provide insights into how “traditional” cuisines perform into the discursive construction of ethno-cultural identities and beliefs surrounding multiculturalism in Canada in Toronto’s ethno-cultural festivals.

Examined through the lens of Sigmund Freud’s theories of fetishism, the production and consumption of “traditional” cuisine becomes a way of maintaining a connection to the lost “homeland.” Fetishism is more than just a sexual practice, asserts Ellen Lee McCallum, “it also has epistemological consequences, insofar as it frames knowledge and belief about sexual difference for the fetishist. Through this interpretive framework, the fetishist comes to know the world and to construct a sense of self in relation to that world” (1). For Freud fetishism originates in loss, the loss of the mother’s phallus which the little boy thought was there, and refuses to surrender (152-3). The longing and desire for the lost object of pleasure is preserved and recreated in the establishment of the fetish, which is continuously being displaced. As such, the fetishist has a vested interest in reclaiming and valorising that which is lost and can never be found.

The creation of food as a fetish object in the diaspora is a complex process. Food is the mediating object for the “homeland imaginary,” a place that is always shifting, dislocated and elusive. As Proust’s madeleine illustrates, food is a fleeting entry point into the pleasures of the past and place that only exists in the moment of the taste and cannot be conjured otherwise. Similarly, for diasporic migrants displaced from home, preparing and consuming food from the lost homeland can materialise and make present, albeit temporarily, that which is lost. Yet, performing the fetish is inherently ambivalent in its nature. On the one hand, creating and maintaining a desire/longing for a fictional or imaginary “Other” home displaces the migrant from situating within the host country. A host country that fails to eliminate barriers to inclusion
perpetuates alienation and feeds desire for the homeland imaginary, and is thus able to insidiously maintain unequal power dynamics. On the other hand, in a complicated way food also plays a role to maintain individual subjectivity, through which, preferences, preparation and consumption of cultural and ethnic foods can be mobilised as a defence mechanism against homogenisation within the host nation. Maintaining individual subjectivity also implies a complicity in their self-distancing from the nation. Within Canadian multiculturalism, I see this ambivalent process working in the way that diasporic bodies are simultaneously located both within and outside of the nation and, as such, belonging can only ever be partial. While difference is celebrated as a key component of multiculturalism, the unpalatable elements will forever be excluded from becoming part of the nation, thus exposing the quandary of diversity.

1.4.1 Making Corn Soup

For diasporic communities, regional food items, food stores, recipes and traditional dishes perform on a number of different but interconnected levels, enacting community/national narratives and family/personal histories. Every family has their own “secret recipe” and ingredients as well as stories, meanings, memories and emotions surrounding their traditional foods. Identifiable “national” cuisines bring together families, individuals and communities who share, and are complicit, in the perpetuation of the mythology uniting foodstuffs and the nation. In working with the Reyes family in mas camp during the Toronto Caribbean Carnival, the matriarch of the family Dian (Dee) brings traditional foods in to sustain us as we work long hours on the Queen mas costume for her daughter Michelle. For me, Dee’s corn soup has become inextricable from my experience of Carnival in Toronto. Warm and spicy, hearty and sustaining for the long nights spent constructing and decorating Michelle’s costume, corn soup is always served with a side of stories from “back home” and from carnivals past.
In the moment when we stop our work on the costume to share a meal in commensality, we build community and have a “lime.” A lime occurs when people of West Indian descent gather and traditional foods are being made and marks a shift from “work time” to “leisure time.” Although there is “work” to be done in a mas camp, it is couched within the period of Carnival, which marks a time of freedom and loosened restrictions of everyday life. According to Phillip Scher, liming is a “productive” aspect of the mas camp, in which people socialise, talk, reminisce and immerse themselves about issues important to the community, especially carnival. At mas camps food and drink is always an integral part of the lime and barbeques are brought on site and home-cooked food like corn soup or rice and beans/peas (pilau) can often be found in

**Figure 1: A pot of Dee's corn soup. Photo: Jacqueline Taucar**
someone’s lunch or dinner. Sharing in food and carnival work bring people together and build social capital. “Developed through a history of interactions, social capital,” Ruth Clark and Reccia Charles point out, “refers to the acquisition of information and resources leveraged from personal and direct relationships” (301). Coming together in commensality forges social relationships and opens an opportunity for storytelling and instruction, especially when it comes to the food we are eating together. Dee carefully explains to me the levels of flavours in the dish, interweaving stories from “back home” as well as explaining her personal experience, and I, her audience member, take in her performance and watch as her body language changes and how she mimes actions in the kitchen.

Dee welcomes me into her home kitchen on August 10th, 2015, shortly after Carnival has wrapped up in Toronto, to show me how to make corn soup. The afternoon is a family affair as her daughter, Michelle, drops by so we can catch up on news from the Carnival weekend and she too can watch and learn. The recipe is not written down, but rather is an embodied act that integrates national, community, family and personal narratives. Dee’s performance is a mixture of instruction, storytelling, humour and improvisation all told through her gentle Island lilt. Dee’s language vacillates between a collective “we,” that is associated with belonging to the larger community of “the islands,” and a more personal “I,” that recalls family and her individual experiences. Such swings between collective and individual identity mark the connections that exist for “home.” Often Dee’s instructions refer to “back home” or she uses phrases like “in the islands, ‘we,’” reflecting a communal identity. Where she diverts to the personal “I” refers to her signature twists in the recipe. Incredibly organised and prepared, Dee presents all her ingredients on plates, chopped and prepared for adding to the pot that for me invokes the format of a televised cooking show.
Figure 2: Dee sets out her ingredients for corn soup. Photo: Jacqueline Taucar

With an ease in her physicality that underscores how ingrained the process of making corn soup is in her muscle memory, Dee quickly begins adding ingredients into a cast iron pot on the stove top. Over medium heat, she begins adding her aromatics, onions and garlic, to the hot oil in the pot and begins to sauté them. Dee’s performance of corn soup intersperses cooking instruction and tips, with anecdotes from “the islands,” and personal family stories often sparked by certain ingredients that she is adding to the pot. As she incorporates her salt beef, she turns to me and explains that in many other recipes for corn soup in the islands, salt beef is not included; this is her specialty, she says with a grin. “This is my secret, anything I’m cooking, rice and peas,” Dee continues, “I add a little piece of salt beef and it gives it a special flavour!” (“Corn
Soup” field notes). She quickly adds the rest of her ingredients to the pot, split peas, cubed potatoes, creamed corn, water, fresh corn chopped into inch thick rounds, and various spices, and lets it simmer to allow for the flavours to meld. As the pot bubbles away, Dee interweaves stories from “back home” involving other traditional dishes from Trinidad such as pilau. Pilau connects Dee to a time and place to picnics and to carnival where she and her family would carry a pot of pilau to sustain them in their outing. Such bursts of nostalgia in recounting her memories attempts to re-member that which is gone, to bring the past into the present, and invoke a part of “back home” here in Toronto.

Dee’s performance is not a monologue, but rather she incorporates her audience into her act. Drawing me, the audience member, into her performance, Dee often presents me with something, an ingredient or a traditional dish, that I have not encountered before and asks me, “Do you know what this is?” The questions serve to set me up as a student, sometimes humorously when we work at mas camp, as other people, who have insider knowledge, come over to our section to see what Dee is dishing out and take pleasure in watching my “education” as I attempt to guess what the fare is or what an ingredient can be used for in a dish. As a participant in her performance of making corn soup at her home, she uses my position to demonstrate her cooking knowledge through a comically Socratic method. With a smile resonating in her voice, Dee pulls out a bottle of Angostura Bitters, “Do you know what this is? Angostura Bitters! Have you ever used it?” I engage in the performance and admit I have never used Angostura before, and have only a glimmer of an idea that it is used in some cocktails. My limited knowledge of how to use Angostura Bitters, allows Dee to perform and illustrate her culinary virtuosity. With a conspiratorial tone and a small hint of pride in her voice, she explains, “This is also a secret thing! In a lot of foods you put in a dash of it…in cooking it is quite nice too, because what it is is spices. Angostura bitters is actually made from spices from the islands”
She gives the bottle a hearty shake into the pot of corn soup proclaiming, “The secret would be a dash!” The use of Angostura Bitters, or “spices from the islands,” gives the essence—the taste—of “home” and a familiarity to the dish.

As Dee goes through the recipe, she discusses the variations amongst the different ethno-cultural groups, suggesting that the nation as imagined through “traditional” cuisine is much more complex and heterogeneous. While she prefers salt beef to flavour her soup, Dee notes some groups use pig tails, in particular those descended from African slaves. However, Muslim Trinidadians would not eat pig tails according to Haram dietary restrictions and would then use a different protein as flavouring for their soups and dishes. The corn soup recipe is more than just making food or about personal or family identity, but rather constitutes part history lesson and reveals information regarding Trinidad’s ethno-cultural, social and economic differences inherent in the ingredients and flavour profiles. In this way, Dee becomes a kind of Brechtian cooking instructor who peels back the socio-economic concerns of the recipes and foods that are made, and especially how they are made. Noting that people who did not have much money, “in the islands, we have a lot of people who are poor,” they have to make due with off-cuts of meats to flavour their foods such as ox tails, “pig snouts, pig tails, hooves, or a little piece of cod fish like that” (“Corn Soup” field notes). As Brechtian chef/actor, Dee draws out and elaborates on the socio-economic realities surrounding these ingredients, based on lived experiences, “people maybe have meat once or twice a week. It’s very expensive, so they get a little piece of something to flavour their foods” (“Corn Soup” field notes). For Dee culinary resourcefulness is a point of pride and illustrates the way inventiveness is possible under severe restrictions.

Using inexpensive cuts of meat marks a Bourdieusian mode of “distinction,” in that food preferences are an embodied form of class. However, food markers of class are very fluid and
change or can become obscured over time and place. In *The Practice of Everyday Life: Volume Two Living and Cooking*, Michel de Certeau and Luce Girard note the mutable aspects of cuisine:

In the end, every regional cuisine loses its internal coherence, this money-saving spirit whose inventive ingenuity and rigor make up all its strength; in their place remains only an insignificant succession of ‘typical dishes’ whose origin and function are no longer understood, much like certain well-known picturesque sites that weary tourist groups pace through without being able to understand what they were for. (178)

The distinction becomes further blurred in a Canadian context where the rendering elite of such off-cuts in gourmet and upscale restaurants, which specialise in charcuterie and snout to tail cuisine, at astronomical prices, co-opt and obscure the humble roots and the economic inequalities inherent in the use of such ingredients.

In Dee’s performance a conversation around a can of tinned cream corn jars me out of my complacency. As a Canadian, my assumptions surrounding canned vegetables were laid bare as Dee observes, “in the islands they normally use the fresh corn and blend it, whatever is cheaper, because this,” gesturing to the tin of creamed corn, “is quite expensive in the islands” (“Corn Soup” field notes). In the local supermarket, I have access to creamed corn at a cost of $0.78 a can, which, when compared to the labour of getting fresh corn, shucking the leaves, cooking, removing the kernels from the cob and blending them to make creamed corn, seems to me to be the most economical in terms of dollars and time. Dee’s revelations draw attention to the unequal access of goods and materials between countries that belie the deeper legacy of colonialism.

Even after achieving independence, former Caribbean colonies continue to struggle under the neo-liberal, neo-imperial pressures of a capitalist, world economy. With the unstable geopolitical environment of the Cold War post-independence, Caribbean nations sought the infrastructural, technical and economic assistance of old (European) and new (United States)
imperial powers, willing to perpetuate unequal power relationships via exploitation and dependency. Post-independent Caribbean nations are still bound institutionally and ideologically to imperial forces under the appearance of “modernisation,” “development” and “globalisation,” and although the plantation system has ended, Multi-National Corporations continue patterns of exploitation. Free trade agreements and the opening of new markets between the Caribbean and western economic powers, West Indies scholar Norman Girvan argues, are not always mutually beneficial as the effect “further strengthen the position of the U.S. and EU corporations in exploiting the markets, labour and natural resources of Caribbean countries; placing local firms at a considerable disadvantage” (“Colonialism and Neo-Colonialism in the Caribbean: An Overview”). Dee’s performance and commentary navigates and makes visible meanings behind the ingredients that are used in Trinidadian traditional foods that may not be otherwise apparent or obviously communicated in a single bite. In attending Dee’s performance, my experience of eating corn soup is not just tied to passive gustatory and sensory pleasures, but is affectively linked to a sense of community, Dee’s stories of “back home” and to Carnival in Toronto.

Accepting the fluidity of the recipe and accounting for group and individual differences within a national cuisine, Dee encourages me to use her recipe for corn soup as a fluid guideline and to adapt and change according to my taste. When it comes to texture, Dee suggests, “If you like thick soup, let it boil down, if you like thin soup, add more water” (“Corn Soup” field notes). Such directions highlight the notion of recipe as script where different actor/cooks bring out different characteristics of the recipe in terms of flavour, heat, ingredients, preparation and style all according to personal background, experience and preferences. A recipe is rooted in oral culture like folk stories and jokes, as Susan Leonardi argues, and “Like a narrative, a recipe is reproducible, and, further, its hearers-readers-receivers are encouraged to reproduce it and, in reproducing it, to revise it and make it their own” (344). As the theatrical script changes to
reflect the different directors, actors, designers, and materials used to bring it to life on the stage, so too does the recipe, reflecting the conditions in which it is produced, the cooks who produce it, and those that share in the feast.

As scholars Karin Vaneker, Sneja Gunew and others have argued, food provides comfort and a sense of belonging, especially in the host country where acceptance and incorporation into the host culture is not a simple or quick process. Vaneker notes that “migrants may have a stronger than typical appetite for familiar foods, ingredients and dishes, and having access to such foods can provide a sense of belonging” (89). I would like to add that it is more than just access to and consumption of familiar foods that produces a sense of belonging, but also the act of making recipes—the doing of cooking—that performs and embodies family, community, history and identity. *Caravan* provides an excellent example of how the doing of cooking is rooted in community. Each pavilion’s food is created by members of the ethnic community in church or community halls and offers an opportunity for individuals to come together socially.

A publicity article “Caravan crew assembling piroshkis” in the *Toronto Star* opens a window onto the process of creating food for *Caravan’s* Russian Volga pavilion, all of which largely goes on behind the scenes. The article takes the reader into the kitchens of Christ the Saviour Russian Orthodox Cathedral on Manning Avenue, and focuses on the group of “Babas”\(^{13}\) that assemble *piroshkis*, dough stuffed with ground meat or cabbage. Stasia Evasuk writes, “It’s happy work as the women babble to each other in their native tongue of old Mother Russia. And it’s obvious they enjoy each other’s company. You can tell by their laughter” (J4). Evasuk develops a picture that shows the way that making food creates community and draws

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\(^{13}\) *Baba* is Russian for grandmother.
people together in a festive atmosphere. The volunteers are able to speak their first language, share stories and jokes together, drawing links between individuals and creating social capital. Such a joviality and common work brings about a sense of nostalgia, which I would argue is the product of loss of home and the marginalisation experienced within the host country. The atmosphere created in the kitchens of Christ the Saviour is similar to that of a “lime,” which occurs in Caribbean Carnival workshop mas camps. In the kitchens individuals from the Russian diaspora are able to come together, building a valuable social network and therefore social capital, through the enunciation and performance of belonging through the practice of making material culture.

The work and atmosphere that occurs in mas camp is comparable to that of the volunteers gathering in Christ the Saviour’s kitchens, because they are both working in support of larger community projects that of Carnival and Caravan, respectively. The piroshkis the Babas make are being sold at Caravan, which shares the culture and food of Russia with “visitors” or “cultural tourists,” who may not otherwise have the opportunity to engage with it. Their piroshkis are also sold in the parish hall after mass each Sunday and the proceeds are channelled back into the community to fund church initiatives (Evasuk J4). Community-building and supporting appear to be a common aspect amongst all three festivals, especially when food is involved. At the Taste of the Danforth festival the kiosk run by the Greek Community of Toronto, a registered non-profit charitable organisation serving Torontonians of Greek heritage established in 1908 and incorporated in 1965, appears to operate one of the only non-commercial or non-retail food booths at the festival. The food at the booth is made by volunteers, largely women, from the group, in the community hall’s kitchen. The money they raise from the three-day event is channelled into cultural programming and activities such as language, arts and
heritage events that serve the greater Greek community in Toronto by providing “an environment for Greek culture and heritage to flourish” (“Greek Community of Toronto”).

Throughout all three festivals I see a convergence between gender and the production of food at the community level. At the *Taste of the Danforth* the majority of retail food operations that have booths are operated by male staff, especially when grilling or barbequing is the cooking method involved. Such division of labour, in terms of cooking methods, reinforces a gendered reading of cooking practice that meat is masculine while *loukoumades* are for ladies. Significantly, at the Hellenic community booth at the *Taste of the Danforth* the gendered division of labour is likewise reinforced as male volunteers operate the grills that cook *souvlaki*, while female volunteers help serve and prepare other items such as salads, savoury pastries like *spanakopita*, and sweets such as *baklava* and *loukoumades* for customers.

Such gendered labour divisions also suggests that “traditional skills” in cookery, particularly with regards to pastry skills, are largely passed along female lines, underlining that women are seen as the producers and keepers of culture. Stephen Steinberg writes about the relationship between food skills and women in “Bubbie’s Challah.” In a Proustian evocation, Steinberg reminisces about his Grandmother’s bread: “How after all did my grandmother acquire her culinary magic? It required an elder not just willing but determined to share her powers with a neophyte. And it required an upstart who craved to follow the path treaded by forebearers” (296). In his article, Steinberg makes clear that “traditional cookery” is not just about the recipes or set of tools, but rather an embodied practice and performance that rely on skills and memory.

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14 *Loukoumades* are traditional Greek pastries that are deep fried balls of dough, soaked in honey syrup. There are a number of variations on the honey syrup depending on regional cuisine. At the *Taste of the Danforth* *loukoumades* can be purchased at the community booth at 6 for $3.00.
To make traditional foods is a performance of remembrance, because its action recalls again all previous performances. It bears the traces of that all which has come before. In discussing the elements of traditional cooking, Steinberg illustrates “some of the larger identity issues embedded in the relationship between people and their socio-material environment, in this case a set of relatives and a set of kitchen tools, flavours and ingredients” (qtd in Sutton 299). The relationship between people and socio-material environment is evident in the way that Michelle Reyes attends her mother’s cookery demonstration of corn soup and the generations that work side-by-side in producing food at the Caravan festival.

At Christ the Saviour, Caravan volunteer Olga Boozylo remarks on the matrilineal nature of her cooking knowledge. Boozylo, who has been making piroshkis for Caravan for twenty-two years, notes “my mother used to make them back home in Minsk (Byelorussia) and I learned from her” (qtd in Evasuk J4). Boozylo’s words “back home” are evocative and full of longing, especially since she has been living in Canada for a significant period of time. Piroshkis are a material link to a place (Minsk) and a person (Mother), both of which are remembered, reconstituted and re-performed in the making of the food in Toronto, Canada. The proud lineage of mother to daughter knowledge is reaffirmed by another volunteer at the pavilion, Galina Komarow (seventy-two years old), “I make piroshkis for Caravan to help my Church survive. My mother, Zinaida Martemianoff who died in church last year at age 96, used to make them for Caravan” (qtd in Evasuk J4). Komarow’s intentions are two-fold: first, her work serves the greater community; and, secondly, read as a means of honouring and remembering her mother’s dedication to her community by making food.

The notion of “traditional skills” is in fact a fluid performance through which, building from the work of Bourdieu, cooking knowledge becomes a part of bodily habitus, and those
performance skills may take a long time for the body to acquire. In *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*, performance studies scholar Diana Taylor articulate that embodied practices produce and transmit knowledge in what she calls the “repertoire.” I see “traditional cookery” as part of the repertoire, an an embodied performance and practice, which, as Taylor argues, “have always, played a role in conserving memory and consolidating identities” (xviii). The notion of memory is inherently part of this process in which the skills are practiced over a number of years and become what memory studies scholar Paul Connerton calls “habit memories” that are “acquired in such a way as to not require explicit reflection on their performance” (102). Connerton’s work draws us close to questions of enculturation, as taste and skills are embodied and performed by repeated practice to the point at which they appear natural and thus “appear as a mark of distinction” (Sutton 301). In making corn soup, it is a mark of distinction for Dee to perform by feeling or tasting, as she notes “I don’t go by measurements, if you notice I just put a little bit of this and a little bit of that,” (“Corn Soup” field notes) which is a source of consternation for her children who attempt to make Dee’s dishes. As Dee has made corn soup for years, her virtuosity is highlighted as she notes, “I don’t usually have to taste because, whatever I make I know” (“Corn Soup” field notes). For the volunteers working on *piroshkis* for the Volga Pavilion, their evident skills and expertise in production is a point of distinction. In a period of four hours (from 10:30 am to 2:30 pm) the crew can assemble 900 *piroshkis* (Evasuk J4). Such production can only be achieved by acquiring the bodily memory, the *habitus*, through years of learning with family or in the community. There is a nostalgic desire for home that is partially fulfilled by preparing food the way their mothers prepared it, and to keep tradition alive in hope of passing it on to the next
generation a sense of “identity.” The desire and nostalgia for home also manifests as a challenge to the homogeneity of globalisation that emphasises fast, processed, packaged foods.\textsuperscript{15}

Nostalgia and longing are often linked with food production and consumption. Terms such as “soul-food,” “comfort-food,” and “happy hour” are some of the phrases that reveal the profound connections between food, memory and emotions. In her book *Food, the Body and the Self*, sociologist Deborah Lupton argues that:

> food and eating, are intensely emotional experiences that are intertwined with embodied sensations and strong feelings ranging the spectrum from disgust, hate, fear and anger to pleasure, satisfaction and desire. They are central to individuals’ subjectivities and their sense of distinction from others. (36)

Comfort food often is used to describe a traditional food that is deeply vested with emotional sentiment and nostalgia for the consumer. What constitutes “comfort food” may vary according to individual and culture, but unvaryingly feeds an emotional rather than physical need based on a nostalgic remembrance of the past.

Nostalgic representations of food act as what scholar Diane Negra calls “a channel for sincerity and emotional expressivity” (62). For Negra food becomes an ideal fetish object. Because of its intimate relationship with the body, food takes “up the place of sexual desire and hint[s] at the character of the experience of unified identification” (Negra 69). The fetishisation of food and food preparation work to recuperate the ethnic family and sense of community, which as Negra asserts is “endowed with emotional expressivity lost in the late-twentieth-century white U.S. consumer culture” (62). Fetishistic representations of food are produced out of a

\textsuperscript{15} The resistance against fast and processed foods (“reheat and eat”) is not limited to reclaiming ethnic or cultural food identities as in the “slow food” movement, but can also be seen in healthy eating movements that focus on notions such as whole foods and clean eating. I see both types of shifts as part of a larger measure to reconsider food preparation and consumption not as secondary concerns to work and leisure, but rather as integral aspects of everyday life.
longing and desire to recuperate something lost (home or family), that is already always shifting and being displaced just out of grasp, therefore remaining unfulfilled and incomplete. However, such fetishisation results in minorities in the diaspora being externally represented as ahistorical and static (as in the work of Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992) thus leading to what Sneja Gunew calls “compensatory nostalgias” that encourage the strict formations and observations of traditions, seen particularly in preserving religious beliefs (Haunted Nations 17). In some cases there is the potential to enact a hyper-ethnicity in which the performance of identity becomes fixed in such a way that diasporic bodies display and enact an excess of identification, a “more than” back home. Marina de Camargo Heck examines this process of enacting excess in her article “Adapting and Adopting: The Migrating Recipe,” which examines the eating habits of immigrants within a host culture. She found that, “the need to maintain a traditional identity within a foreign country is so strong that food may develop a mythical status, a ‘more authentic’ flavor, than actually found in the country of origin” (de Camargo Heck 208). The notion of “authentic flavours” or an “authentic cuisine” figures prominently in my discussion of “Greek Fries” at the Taste of the Danforth festival, which reveals both social and economic imperatives that I will explore in greater detail later in this chapter. Cooking practices, traditional cookery skills and foods become integral resources to maintain identity and subjectivity in a globalising world.

The nation or “home” as imagined through cuisine is a complicated and multifaceted process that vacillates between the affective experience of community, of family and of the individual. Actual diets of people in Canada or anywhere for that instance are not stable and fixed, and also reflect incredible regional differences. A Greek Canadian may not always eat souvlaki, mousaka, and saganaki every day, but reserve such menus for family times, or special occasions, or community events. In my family home, we only make cabbage rolls for special
occasions and holidays, having them on average less than half a dozen times in a year. The first and second generation Canadians in our family have greater acculturation to western cuisine and culinary methods versus traditional cuisine; our family rarely hand-makes *pierogies* anymore, as it is far more convenient to purchase them pre-made from the local Ukrainian church or pre-packaged from M&M meats. Recent case studies explore the changing dietary patterns of immigrants in the diaspora, outlining certain conditions for adoption or resistance to dietary acculturation. In their study of Montreal Haitians, Marie-Claude Désilets et al find that “Subjects with a more ‘Western’ diet type were younger and tended to have spent a higher proportion of their lifetime in Canada; they also had a significantly higher SES score”\(^{16}\) (459). Older subjects who have spent less of their lives in Canada firmly resist dietary acculturation and maintain a more traditional-based diet. Food consumption of traditional items, more than anything else, may be a performance of nostalgia rather than an accurate depiction of how ethno-cultural groups, especially second or third generations, in Canada actually live.

### 1.5 Food and Multicultural Commensality: The Way to Understanding the “Other” is Through the Stomach?

Using the trope of the world on a plate, festivals can be read in the context of the Canadian nation and multiculturalism as an attempt to negotiate the sense of contemporary multicultural identities in Toronto. Food is one way through which ethnic identities and subjectivities have been imagined in multiculturalism’s interest in navigating difference (racial, ethnic, and/or cultural). Although many critics discount ethno-cultural festivals as “ethnic spectacle,” they are worth a closer look for as anthropologist Tan Chee-Beng asserts, “Commensality beyond the domestic sphere is political” (19). The process of being invited to

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\(^{16}\) Socio-economic status score.
feast at the communal table is performed at each festival, where commensality is an extended invitation for intercultural communication, can be read as a form of soft power. As people eat foods that are unfamiliar to them, they may begin to develop favourable impressions of the culture that produces such cuisine, yet such optimistic and utopic views must be tempered, critics point out, as multicultural consumption does not necessarily lead to dismantling systemic racial, cultural or ethnic discrimination. Encouraging people to come to the table of “imagined commensality” (see the work of David Bell and Gill Valentine Consuming Geographies) of multiculturalism, the Toronto Star published a recipe for Goan Vindaloo from Caravan pavilion “Panjim” representing the Goan region of India. However, examining the recipe-script printed by the newspaper reveals that such invitations to commensality are never politically neutral cultural negotiations, but rather uncover unequal power conditions behind translation and adaptation for the dominant culture. The spectacle of celebration may overshadow or obscure significant social, political, and economic interests at work in the festivals, but those interests merit investigating as they reveal the insidious ways that diversity is being managed within the host nation.

Food plays a critical role in Caravan, Caribbean Carnival, and the Taste of the Danforth festivals in communicating aspects of national culture and is often the most popular aspect. As I have pointed out previously, coming together to share a meal is not a neutral activity but rather is a means to develop both symbolic capital and build social relationships. Drawing upon her personal dining experiences, Lisa Heldke links cultural capital to the consumption of exotic foods, “I was motivated by a deep desire to have contact with, and to somehow own an experience of, an Exotic Other, as a way of making myself more interesting” (Exotic Appetites xvi). While festivals with food as a component may encourage a kind of cultural colonialism through the exploitation of the “Exotic Other” in accruing cultural capital, there is also potential for marginalised populations to build community solidarity, and presents one medium through
which to wrest control of their representation. Mannur argues that “food is part of what makes populations celebrate multiculturalism. For through multiculturalism, populations of color transform the landscape of their communities with the positive addition of ‘exotic’ flavors and palatable difference” (*Culinary Fictions* 224). Certainly, the proliferation of cultural neighbourhoods in Toronto establishes a support system for community members and new immigrants and creates access to goods and services from outside the homeland. Such “ethnic landscapes” establish pockets of belonging and familiarity in the host country that, upon landing, can be unaccommodating and unaccepting. Festivals within community boundaries can serve as a public invitation to interact and engage with the “Other,” albeit not always on an equal footing. The “festive” atmosphere, as Bakhtin has written, eliminates inhibitions and breaks down social barriers encouraging connections that perhaps would not have otherwise occurred outside of “festival time.”

These ethnic neighbourhoods, with their affiliated shops, restaurants, and services, also serve to enhance the cultural capital of the City of Toronto. The number of “ethnic” restaurants contributes to the reputation of a “world class” city like Toronto, contributing to a sense of culinary cosmopolitanism. This sense of culinary cosmopolitanism is a bragging point, a tacit exclamation to the world of “Look how diverse we are! The world is at your doorstep, or at least a TTC trip away.” Certainly, such a reputation adds to Toronto’s cultural cache on a world stage and acts as an incentive to import and sustain culinary diversity. The City’s impetus to support and brand areas with their ethnic identities poses important questions. What does the proliferation of many different cuisines tell us about Toronto and Canada’s politics? How is food and politics discursively linked together? The way food plays into politics is quite subtle and foodways scholars (see the work of Gabriella Lukacs, Shaun Naomi Tanaka, and C.L. Reynolds) have examined such linkages under the rubric of soft power.
First coined and popularised by American political scientist Joseph S. Nye, soft power refers to the “other face of power” that resorts to co-option of hearts and minds, through cultural seduction and attraction to achieve specific political outcomes instead of force or coercion through economic or militaristic measures (5). While certainly this is not a new concept, it hearkens to ideas of cultural imperialism and Antonio Gramsci’s notion of cultural hegemony, both of which intersect on many points with the concept of soft power that is often used as a euphemism for such terms. As soft power harnesses the influence of emotions and affects in order to attract and persuade others, food and soft power seemingly work naturally together, in particular when the ideological or mythological elements in food products are subtly and implicitly coded as Barthes has illustrated in his work. To simplify the process, culinary soft power works in this manner: I eat new foods from different cultures, I become familiar with these different foods, I then like these different foods from different cultures, I develop a favourable opinion of the different culture, and I incorporate into my everyday existence. In other words, soft power is what is often called the battle for hearts and minds in a post 9/11 world. As Claude Fischler notes, the eater incorporates the symbolic properties of food as well as being integrated into a particular food culture. Marginalised foodways, Finnis notes, “may become increasingly central to mainstream consumption behaviors, sometimes quickly and sometimes gradually…, processes that can be about both the “gastronomic memory of diaspora” (Holtzman 2006: 367) and culinary integration and experimentation” (Finnis 9). Through the performance of food diversity, Canada becomes a bastion of tolerance and becomes a model for its citizens to incorporate the values it seemingly espouses – multiculturalism.

Living in Toronto opens up options for a host of different cuisines that have now become integrated into my food culture as a normalised and accepted part of my culinary landscape so to speak. For instance, ten years ago, sushi was not a regular part of my diet and now I consume it
once a week. My culinary landscape involves Indian, Greek, Japanese, and Thai food more regularly than the Ukrainian dishes that are a part of my heritage. Culinary soft politics can then play into the goals of multiculturalism and tolerance in this way through a normalisation process.

But the question remains whether or not unequal power relations and substantive concerns of equality and integration can be addressed through the soft power of my consumption of "ethnic" foods and culture without the exercise of hard power. To eat ethnic food may establish a shallow relationship or surface understanding of cultural differences that does not necessarily lead to a deep understanding. We eat and then go home without actually being asked to engage or examine unequal power dynamics that is represented in food production. It is also important to ask what foods are included or excluded within a particular cuisine and to what end? How is local-business interests promoted and served? Does this detract from the ability of Culinary Soft Power to produce a cultural diplomacy? This speaks to underlying social and political forces at work in food production and consumption. To eat is not a benign act, but serves a number of functions and acts as a way of knowing the world. Food is consumed and becomes a part of the political discourse. Such questions reveal the key problem of carnival and festival at play—the pressure valve that gets released that allows for difference to appear front stage for a time, but then recedes back to its place after the carnival is over. Nothing substantively transforms in the performance of the “boutique” multicultural “script,” where the appearance and “show” of tolerance and diversity is privileged and celebrated over challenging and creating lasting change to the existing barriers to inclusion in society such as racial and ethnic discrimination, gender, and class.

With the establishment of various ethnic restaurants on the Danforth, the festival has opened up beyond the scope of Greek food and reflects the changing demographic of the Danforth area and the expanding tastes of participants. Over one hundred food vendors
participate in the three day festival offering such diverse fare as Brazilian, Thai, Cuban, pub fare, and Sushi. The Taste of the Danforth festival is often recognised by the organisational body and participants alike as reflecting Toronto’s multicultural heritage and creating understanding between communities. Attending with her family, Andrea Smart affirms “These festivals are so important because they teach us about other cultures and let us experience those cultures in all of their glory” (Menon A16). Moreover, Sue Zindros owner of Mezes restaurant on the Danforth upholds that the success of the festival is a “testament to the success of the multicultural nature of Canadian society” (Karastamatis TO1). Such claims to multiculturalism need to be interrogated.

A part of what made Caravan such a success in Toronto was that it was able to give cultural tourists as well as “natives” a gesamtkunstwerk—a total artwork through the synthesis of performative forms that constitute a cultural community. Food acts as the most accessible gateway to the local culture. As such, food at Caravan was affordably priced, usually five dollars or less, and would provide a full meal of delicacies to enjoy while taking in the stage show. To further the outreach to audience members, some pavilions would have a collection of traditional recipes compiled by local community members as a way of reinforcing the soft politics of the cultural festival. As audiences purchase foods unfamiliar to them and enjoy them along with the entertainment, they begin to develop favourable attitudes towards their “cultural neighbours” that they may not have personally fostered outside of the festival atmosphere. Selling cookbooks at the festival and publishing recipes in newspapers such as the Toronto Star allows for the process to continue outside of festival time and into their experience of everyday life.

During the lead up to Caravan, and indeed throughout the week-long event, the local daily the Toronto Star often featured tempting descriptions of foods available at pavilions, as
well as sharing the pavilion’s recipes. To introduce the debut of a new Goan pavilion “Panjim” at Caravan, the Toronto Star reprinted a recipe for Goan Pork Vindaloo from the pavilion cookbook with an adaptation by Jean Andrade, who was on the food committee for “Panjim.” Reading the recipe as a script along with descriptions of its “setting” gives insights to the cultural narrative being woven for Toronto audiences. As the article explains prior to the recipe Goan cuisine is a hybrid of Portuguese and Indian influences, as Goa was a Portuguese colony for 450 years. Goans are described as a hospitable people with a “rich culture” and the article uses terms such as “exotic,” “traditional” and “fiery” to describe the food and drinks available at the pavilion for consumption. Such terms establish a tone and expectation for the culture and plays into touristic fantasies of the “Indian Other.”

The sharing and dissemination of the Goan Vindaloo recipe in the Toronto Star can be seen within the larger framework of multiculturalism which emphasises the sharing and preservation of heritages. The article serves as an archive that preserves this recipe in the official record and allows it to be circulated and shared amongst its readership, some of whom may have never encountered Goan cuisine and may be encouraged to try it. The recipe is as follows: heat oil in a pan until hot and add six onions thinly sliced, seven chopped garlic cloves, and one-inch piece of ginger chopped. Sauté until browned. Make a paste by grinding eight cloves of garlic, one-inch piece of ginger, ¾ teaspoon ground cumin, ½ teaspoon of turmeric, ½ teaspoon black peppercorns, and ½ to 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper. Add the paste along with two pounds (approximately one kilo) of cubed, lean pork to the pan and cook for ten minutes. Add two cups of water and simmer, partially covered, until mixture thickens and is tender. Add two fresh green chili peppers, chopped, 2 tablespoons of vinegar, ½ teaspoon of tamarind paste, and ¼ teaspoon of granulated sugar, and a ¼ teaspoon of salt. Simmer and stir occasionally for ten minutes. The curry is served with rice and makes enough for six or seven people. The article also notes that
“the original version uses more than three times as much cayenne and fresh hot peppers. With Jean Andrade’s help, we cut back on the heat for those who don’t enjoy food quite so fiery” [my emphasis] (McGrath B9). Acknowledging the editing of the recipe that occurred, by the author or the editor at the paper reads as a Brechtian moment to me, disrupting the discourse around multiculturalism and signaling a more complex relationship between dominant culture and “Otherness” in Toronto at the time.

The spice-level adaptation gestures to the underlying issue surrounding the palatability of “Otherness” that it must live up to expectation of being “exotic” and “spicy,” but not too exotic or spicy that it alienates the dominant culture and/or offends its palate. Building from the work of cultural theorist Frank Wu, anthropologist Tulasi Srinivas argues that “our ideas of diversity conflict with our actual practices of tolerating diversity, and what the mainstream might consider intolerable, unethical, unpalatable, and inedible, determines what we eat” (366). In countries with large migrant populations as Canada such as Britain and the United States, there has been movement to adapt and contain the more extreme elements of the “Other’s” foodways. For example, in the 1920s and continuing through the post second war years the Young Woman’s Christian Association (YWCA) created institutes that centred upon the contributions of ethnic cuisine and cookery to American society and provided programs to assist “immigrant women to ‘develop a better insight into adjusting their food habits to those of America’” (Gabaccia 137). The movement to adapt to the host-country’s palate came to the forefront in Britain’s culinary discourse in 2001 with Robin Cook, then foreign minister, announcing chicken tikka masala as “the new national dish of Great Britain” (Collingham 2). The critical response was fast and furious as food critics charged that the dish was a “British invention,” and “not a shining example of British multiculturalism but a demonstration of the British facility for reducing all foreign foods to their most unappetizing and inedible form” (Collingham 2). The effects of
“cutting back on the heat” of the Goan Pork Vindaloo recipe is similar in process to the YWCA institutes for assimilating immigrants into American foodways or the way that dominant British tastes shape the production of “Indian” dishes as a means of making the “Other” palatable.

The city’s multiculturalism enacted in ethno-cultural festivals celebrates “symbolic,” or what Stanley Fish calls “boutique,” forms of multiculturalism that often overlook and gloss over the difficult realities of racism, prejudice and the lack of substantive gains in creating equal opportunities or removing of barriers to full participation in society. Boutique multiculturalism, Fish contends, characterises a superficial engagement with the ornamental and superficial elements of the “Other” in which boutique multiculturalists can “admire or appreciate or enjoy or sympathize with or (at the very least) ‘recognize the legitimacy of’ the traditions of cultures other than their own” (378). Such tolerance of other cultures, however, does have limitations when certain values, beliefs, or actions “offends against the cannons of civilized decency as they have been either declared or assumed” [my emphasis] (378). Mannur argues that in a post 9/11 world:

brown bodies are paradigmatic instances of excess: after all, the archetypical figure of the ‘terrorist’ is nothing if not an excessive aberration against all that is palatably American. Thus, while food is often the most palatable index of alterity, the signs of excess that lend an ethnic flavour to culinary traditions—spiciness, pungent odors, sourness—need to be strategically manage in order for Indian food to be rendered palatable. (Culinary Fictions 186)

Negotiating a politics of palatability is fraught for racial and ethnic groups, inasmuch as the terms of which are disproportionately determined by the dominant culture. Culinary palatability, however, does not mark a tolerance for the ethnic and racialised bodies that produce that food.
1.6 Memories of [Enter Ethnic ‘Other’ Here]: The Cultural Tourist and the Hunt for Souvenirs and a “Taste of”…

Ethno-cultural festivals involving food as a component—such as Caravan, Caribbean Carnival, and the Taste of the Danforth—transmogrify whole neighbourhoods, enclaves, and communities into flavours, tastes, and textures. These “tastes,” or what Bell and Valentine call “snackshots” (173), are triggers serving as a reminder, a memory, or a souvenir that re-members a host of sensory phenomena—sights, sounds, smells, feelings—constituting a community. Since these tastes are traces of the homeland imaginary, in a neighbourhood constructed out of an “imagined community,” they serve to question the notion of “authenticity” blurring the line between “original” and its endless traces. The question of authenticity is particularly pertinent in festival performances and reception of ethnicity, particularly in moving beyond questions of whether or not a product or performance is authentic. Rather examining the conditions in which the term is used, and more specifically how it is mobilised and for what purpose, reveals social, political and economic manifestations of power and knowledge.

This section focuses on the roles of cultural/culinary tourists or “food adventurers,” as well as cultural producers, in these festivals and the various ways “authenticity” is mobilised. I will examine the potential for rebellious performances that question the discourse of “authenticity” in order to examine the intersections of power and knowledge. The recipe for “Greek Fries” from GreekTown’s Taste of the Danforth festival reveals the role of food in (re)constructing and mediating cultural differences, and opens up a discussion regarding the “scripts” of authenticity and of hybridity within the “ethnic” festival. By employing a Brechtian dramaturgy that incorporates a Barthesian de-mythologising in my analysis of these festivals, I explore the potential to transition from a passive consumer to a critical eater, drawing attention to the conditions surrounding the production—and performance—of “authenticity” at the festivals.
A growing field of study examines the performative nature of tourism, which draws attention to the linkages between tourism and everyday life. In his landmark book on tourism, *The Tourist Gaze*, John Urry points out that much of the time we are tourists in everyday life. Within an increasingly spectacularised society, saturated with signs and mediatised spaces, the ability to visually consume “other worlds” from the comfort of our own home through television and the internet (see the proliferation of travel twitter or Instagram accounts) is possible. Moreover, everyday spaces are spectacularised within the City of Toronto through festivals and special events that “generate pleasurable experiences which are different from those typically encountered in everyday life” and “part of that experience is to gaze upon or view a set of different scenes, of landscapes or townscape which are out of the ordinary” (Urry 1). As such festivals enable locals to perform the role of “cultural tourists” within their own city, to enter “Other” neighbourhoods and experience something out of their ordinary, and consume not only foods, but also the visual imagery of “Otherness” to nourish the cultural imaginary.

A distinctive area of study within cultural tourism that concentrates on culinary tourism is relevant to my work on the dramaturgy of food at festivals. Culinary tourism, first developed as a concept by folklorist Lucy Long, is defined as “the intentional, exploratory participation in the foodways of an other—participation including consumption, preparation, and presentation of a food item, cuisine, meal system, or eating style considered to belong to a culinary system not one’s own” (21). For Long, food plays a varied role in tourism as a “subject and medium, destination and vehicle” (20). Similarly, to Heldke’s concept of a food adventurer the culinary tourist explores the foodways of others, as well as using food as a medium to experience the “Other’s” culture. Whereas Heldke sees the food adventurer seeking to expand their own cultural capital, Long opens up the potential for agency within culinary tourism as communities use food to present their stories and “to construct marketable and publically attractive identities” (20).
Ultimately for Long, culinary tourism “is about the experiencing of food in a mode that is out of the ordinary, that steps outside the normal routine to notice difference and the power of food to represent and negotiate that difference” (20). Toronto’s ethno-cultural festivals such as Caravan, the Taste of the Danforth, and Caribbean Carnival are ripe stages for culinary tourism as spectacular, festive spaces are created out of the quotidian of everyday life, allowing individuals, both tourists (local and from afar) and producers, to enter a relationship with difference through the most accessible medium, food.

1.6.1 Cultural Tourists/Culinary Tourists in Toronto

Festivals allow individuals to step into the role of cultural and culinary tourists” to “visit” ethnic neighbourhoods and to literally consume them. Practicing culinary tourism, however, is never a neutral act, often involving tacit power plays and ideological positionings. In “Eating the Other: Desire and Resistance,” bell hooks writes that consuming “Otherness” is a function of power and privilege, as “ethnicity becomes spice, seasoning that can liven up the dull dish that is mainstream white culture” (366). As an encounter with difference, eating ethnic food is a way to incorporate “Otherness” into the body and to assimilate it. According to Claude Fischler, food has a symbolic potential and is important to identity formation at both individual and collective levels. Fischler’s notion of incorporation sees that the symbolic elements of food—the culturally ascribed properties—are ingested and internalised by a person, analogous to the manner that nutrients are absorbed by cells and tissues (“Food, self and identity” 280-281). As such, Fischler asserts that the eater incorporates symbolic properties of food, as well as being integrated into a particular food culture. Fischler’s argument is instructive when taken into account that when one eats food, one also consumes the mythologies and ideological values that culturally are imbricated in that cuisine. However, I would argue that the incorporation is never fully complete, because eating is never politically neutral or on equal terms with the “Other.” As Donna
Gabaccia argues, “We quite willingly ‘eat the other’—or at least some parts of others, some of the time” (9). Moreover, the politics of incorporation is troubling, as historian Samir Gandesha notes, for its close ties to colonialism, being “understood both as subsumption or co-optation of surplus that lies at the political economy of imperialism… a reduction of what is different to the same; the reduction of the Other to the status of the “other” as what is simply the antithesis of Western identity” (14). Yau Ching explores this reductive processes through a discussion of Chinese food in America, noting that “we Asians become the food we… eat; the image of a racialized food reinforces the stereotypes of the Asian Body, smooth and soothing” (Ching 33). Food metonymously stands in for the body of the “Other,” where it is easier/safer to consume difference than interact with difference on equal terms. The culinary tourist then engages in “Otherness” in predominantly safe, palatable ways that eliminates much of the difficulties of difference through processes of commodification.

The ethno-cultural festivals discussed in this study are staged as tourist experiences, and encourage locals to perform as tourists in their own city. Caravan’s publicity articles in Toronto newspapers are particularly layered in evocative tourist language, encouraging citizens to travel the world without leaving home. The Toronto Star published an article with language that plays on the tourist imaginary, “For nine days wannabe world travellers can fantasize by experiencing the cultures, crafts, music and food of the four corners of the earth. You can return to some of your old favourite international cities as well as enter exotic and exciting new worlds” (“A taste for everyone…” A6). The Taste of the Danforth also encourages non-Greek culinary tourists to eat, drink and be “Greek for the day” (Taste field notes). As you walk down the Danforth during the festival, when food is served you can hear the occasional cry of “Opa!” and other festival participants will respond in kind or with some laughter (Gulamhusein A9). In a similar way, at Festival Caravan’s Blue Danube Pavilion audience members are encouraged to raise their beer
steins and sing-a-long to “Ein Prosit” in order to be initiated into the culture (Caravan field notes). Such performances of “ethnicity” are superficial, temporary, and limited to festival time, and I question how completely non-Greeks or non-Germans can be incorporated into, and fully understand, the nuances of a “national” cuisine, especially given the very selective and stereotypical food choices, and rituals surrounding them, at these events.

Such invitation to perform “Greekness” or “German-ness” to everyone, both in-group and outsiders, through food consumption and select “rituals” opens a critical discussion regarding the performativity of “ethnic” identities. Devoid of historical or geographical linkages, tourists and local Greeks or Germans enact stereotypical performative markers, and in doing so reveal the ways in which “ethnicity” is not a given, but rather a socially constructed series of acts and styles. Consequently, Fischler’s notion becomes problematic and complicated as food and identity play out at the highly commodified Taste of the Danforth or at the “boutique multicultural” Festival Caravan.

1.6.2 Constructing an “Authentic” National Cuisine

Part of what makes these ethno-cultural festivals as compelling tourist events are the ways in which authenticity is staged for public consumption, especially through a national cuisine. In “On Culinary Authenticity,” Arjun Appadurai argues that authenticity “measures the degree to which something is more or less what it ought to be. It is thus a norm of some sort. But, is it an imminent norm emerging somehow from the cuisine itself? Or is it an external norm, reflecting some imposed gastronomic standard?” (25). Authenticity is a socially constructed set of norms for a particular time and place, often used to establish boundaries and exclusions pertaining to specific objects and identities, the processes of which are practices of power and knowledge that are frequently obscured so as to seem natural. In addressing the question of how
particular foods are selected to represent the nation, many scholars have turned to Appadurai’s work on Indian gastronomy as a model for, “what might be expected to occur with increasing frequency and intensity in other societies, having complex regional cuisines and recently acquired nationhood, and in which a postindustrial and postcolonial middle class is constructing a particular sort of polyglot culture” (“How to Make a National Cuisine” 5). Examining the development of Indian cookbooks, Appadurai identifies representational strategies in constructing a national cuisine that, on the one hand, attempts to acknowledge regional and ethnic differences, while, on the other hand, aspires to some sense of unity. As a result, constructing a national cuisine reduces distinctive regionalisms “into a few ‘characteristic’ dishes, which frequently are not, from the insider’s perspective, the best candidate for this role” (“How to make a National Cuisine” 17). The elements that constitute a “national” cuisine are arbitrarily and culturally constructed, based on unequal access to power and resources that result in privileging some perspectives and subject-positions within the nation over others.

Appadurai’s work is salient with regards to the role food plays at Toronto’s ethnocultural festivals. He illustrates that “the definition, selection, preparation, serving, and promotion of a designated authentic cuisine is a deliberate construction of national food culture, determined, not because some foods naturally or logically belonged to that category, but because some decision maker or body of decision makers so determined” (Richmann Kinneally 35). Although some food kiosks can be found at Caribbean Carnival festival, usually focusing on highly portable items such as “Jamaican patties,” doubles, or jerk chicken, there is less emphasis on commercial food experiences.
Rather, the majority of Carnival spectators tend to bring home cooked foods to eat at various carnival events (including the grand parade, King and Queen competition and Pan Alive show). I would argue that, on the one hand, spectators bring home-cooked foods for economic reasons, as demographically the Caribbean community face more barriers in advancing their social economic status, and, on the other hand, as a nostalgic enactment of “home” and personal identity, as I have illustrated earlier in this chapter in my discussion of corn soup. The Caribbean, and Trinidad specifically, is demographically diverse and is often imagined as a “Callaloo,” a nationally emblemic dish in Trinidad in which the recipe is re-interpreted and re-imagined through the cultural and ethnic influences that inform one’s identity. Those influences are incredibly varied, as Stuart Hall points out, the Caribbean is a space of cultural hybridity where
people from around the world came together “None of the people who now occupy the islands—black, brown, white, African, European, American, Spanish, French, East Indian, Chinese, Portuguese, Jew, Dutch—originally ‘belonged’ there. It is the space where the creolisations and assimilations and syncretisms were negotiated” (“Cultural Identity and Diaspora” 438). Dramatically, the decentralised and individualised nature of food at the Caribbean Carnival festival reflects the diverse cultures and ethnicities that collectively make up the “Caribbean” that eludes and evades efforts of a homogenising commercialisation at the present time.

Whereas defining a national food at Caribbean Carnival is fragmented amongst many stakeholders along familial and ethnic lines, Festival Caravan presented a “national” cuisine with more centralised decision making. Each country’s pavilion was organised by an ethnic community group that would delegate responsibilities, such as food, entertainment, and material culture displays for education and souvenirs, into separate committees. As a result, a small group of individuals then become the primary stakeholders in making decisions regarding the definition, selection, preparation and presentation of a “national food culture” for each pavilion. For a nominal fee a “tourist” at the pavilion could sample from “a varied banquet of national delicacies” (Rasky D1), usually consisting of a couple of options for appetisers, four or five main courses, and three or four choices of dessert. While a national cuisine has been whittled down to a manageable menu that volunteers could mass produce for Caravan “tourists,” the fare was remarkably varied offering a reflection of the diversity within the nation that included a combination of items that created and reified culinary stereotypes, as well as some adventurous cuisine that, perhaps for some outsiders, pushed boundaries and are difficult. Writing on the culinary delights of Festival Caravan, Frank Rasky lists the traditional dishes from various pavilions with a description of main ingredients. At the Filipino pavilion, Manila, Rasky suggests trying the “outstanding” lumpia prieto, a “long, thin, deep-fried Filipino egg roll, filled with a
spicy mix of ground pork, chopped shrimps and vegetables, and served scrumptiously crisp” (D1). Rasky plays on the touristic desire for exoticism by providing the foreign names of dishes, but assuages fear of “Otherness” by listing ingredients in English or by reassuring tourists that ethnic dishes “have been tamed down for the sake of our finicky North American taste buds” (D1). Caravan’s approach to food, is dramaturgically speaking, more structured than that of Caribbean Carnival, as physical and performative markers of cuisine, along with the performance, material and visual culture displayed at the pavilion, are carefully curated in order to represent national heritage and culture.

At the Taste of the Danforth, restaurateurs are the primary stakeholders with a vested interested in promoting their cuisine, first, to make money over the three-day festival, and, second, to develop a clientele from festival goers who will return to the restaurant after the festival is over. These two conditions appear to have self-limiting potential, and reveal the process of negotiation between culinary producers and consumers of how certain food items become standardised at the festival. Maximising profits means focusing on one or two different “tastes” that most appeal to consumers. The festival in its nascent years offered quite varied tastes that reflected the diverse regional cuisine of Greece. In the Logan Street parkette, local restaurants produced foods according to their speciality: some focusing on mezes (dolmades, saganaki), coastal fare with emphasis on seafood such as grilled octopus, main courses (mousaka), grilled items such as souvlaki and quail, and desserts (loukoumades and baklava).

With the increasing popularity of the event, the menu has shifted from representing the diversity of a national cuisine to a few characteristic dishes that trade on recognisable (marketable) culinary stereotypes. For example Astoria, a Greek restaurant on the Danforth, runs a popular booth at the festival offering only one option: pork souvlaki. In focusing on only one product, Astoria cuts down on potential costs by eliminating additional food-waste, and is able to
maximise profits by efficiently pushing out pork skewers to hungry customers who are faced with growing queues and protracted wait times that are endemic at this popular festival. Over the course of the weekend Astoria sells approximately 20,000 skewers (Agrell TO6) and charges three dollars a skewer or two for five dollars. At the end of the weekend, Astoria grosses a minimum of $50,000 on skewers alone, not counting what it makes in serving sit-down customers in its restaurant. Certainly, the choice to switch from a large menu to one or two food items is not accomplished independently from the “tastes” of consumers who participate in determining what gets sold at the festival by spending their “tourist dollars.”

Apropos of the manner in which a national cuisine is constructed, the notion of authenticity and, specifically, how it is mobilised at the festivals, requires closer inspection. Rhona Richman Kenneally writes about the way authenticity was invoked in relation to food at Canada’s Expo 67, an event Toronto’s Caravan festival was modelled after, that exhibited cultures from around the world. Expo 67 invited nations from around the world to display their cultures in pavilions, in which a full restaurant operated as one of the ways audiences could engage in the constructions of authenticity and national identity. Richman Kenneally writes that, “In one way or another, the beacon of authenticity is often invoked, say through advertisements for a restaurant whose cuisine might well be unfamiliar to prospective diners, as a reassurance that the meals served there conform to some privileged understanding of traditional cooking methods, ingredients, and so on” (34). Certainly, Toronto’s Caravan festival operated along similar lines, and audiences attending pavilions and consuming “traditional” delicacies were also surrounded by various accoutrements and performances of ethnicity that, all together, contributed to support the aura of an “authentic” national display. Authenticity is invoked in marketing in the competition for “tourist” dollars, especially in instances where ethnicity has been commodified into a sale-able product.
As a prime example of this kind of marketing, Messini’s, a restaurant on the Danforth, explicitly labels itself as “authentic” on its signage and in showcasing the food item they are famous for, “authentic gyros.” Authenticity becomes a discursively real practice that assesses meaning and values. To be “authentic” is associated with positive implications while inauthenticity has false and/or negative connotations. For Messini’s it is a good business practice to lay claims to authentic cuisine, because the impression is that the item sold is something that is considered “original” and “true” to the culture.

Figure 4: Messini’s signage promoting its "authenticity." Photo: Jacqueline Taucar

Heldke argues for an understanding of authenticity that is rooted in experience, based on the perceiver and the context in which an item of food is consumed. Rather than “the notion that properties of a dish inhere in the dish, independent of any perceivers,” Heldke asserts that taste and/or flavour is the “property of the experiential work of the cuisine” that originates in the “understanding that all works of cuisine involve transactions between dish (cook) and eater—and calls us to attend to the particular kinds of transactions represented in the cross-cultural experience” (“But Is It Authentic?” 389-90). In light of Heldke’s perspective, culinary tourists on the Danforth can experience “authentic” Greek Gyros, because they are consumed in an environment conditioned by the producers, the mise-en-scène of “GreekTown,” and the culture
of “multiculturalism” in which the tourist (and “authentic” Greek gyros) live. Conceptualising authenticity as an experiential practice, shifts the discussion from making value judgements of whether or not something like gyros falls within an arbitrarily set paradigm of “authentic Greek-ness,” towards an examination of the construction of gyros itself as a reflection of cultural processes, behaviours and performances, as well as of systems of power and knowledge. While authenticity of a cuisine may suggest an historical, cultural and geographical situated-ness, global flows of people and goods occur, tastes and regional distinctions are fluid, as well new technologies and techniques emerge, and food trends come in and out of fashion.

1.6.3 Fetish Objects/Gestic Objects

Love is full of eating fantasies, of cannibal desires. (de Carmargo Heck 209)

In working through a Brechtian dramaturgy the main question shifts from “is it authentic” to “why is it authentic, and for whom, and what ends up being excluded?” In doing so, the focus is placed on the social relationships behind the construction of “authenticity.” This Brechtian approach turns a critical lens toward examining how the social practices of authenticity are implicitly linked with the exercise of power and knowledge. Those few individuals who have the ability to influence and delimit what constitutes an authentic national cuisine, privilege some forms of knowledge and being over others, as Appadurai has examined in his study on Indian cuisine and cookbooks. Defining culinary authenticity involves sedimenting specific practices, techniques, materials, ingredients for a particular group in time and space to the exclusion of all other variations. Such processes are not politically, socially or economically neutral, but rather have the ability to shape identity, history and knowledge for particular gain. A Brechtian dramaturgy of how an authentic national cuisine is performed through culinary components of
festivals such as the *Taste of the Danforth, Caribbean Carnival*, and *Caravan* allows for a closer examination of the way social power is expressed and manipulated.

As one of the most popular food items at the *Taste of the Danforth*, I view *souvlaki* as a Brechtian *gestic* object that performs a particular set of relationships between cultural producers and cultural tourists. *Souvlaki* is a popular fast food item that consists of skewers of grilled meats, usually pork, chicken or lamb that is served with *tzatziki*, a yogurt-based sauce, either on a pita or with a side of potatoes. At the *Taste of the Danforth* festival, *souvlaki* is one of the most popular food items and is sold for three dollars a skewer or two for five dollars. The citation of particular food “norms” such as *souvlaki* at the *Taste of the Danforth* serves to sediment and naturalise the image of *souvlaki* as “traditional” and “authentic” to the festival itself.

![Figure 5: Souvlaki a fetish on a stick. Photo: Jacqueline Taucar](image)

Semiotically, the repetition of *souvlaki* (signifier) as “Greek food” (signified) at the Greek festival establishes a layer of association with a notion of “Greekness” (sign). Such an association is an added layer, in a process of what Barthes calls mythology in which a myth “has in fact a double function: it points out and it notifies, it makes us understand something and it
imposes it on us” (Mythologies 155). As such, *souvlaki* becomes “Greekness,” although not an accurate depiction of the varied and regional differences within the national cuisine, through the repetitive performance (and consumption of) culinary norms at the *Taste of the Danforth* festival. *Souvlaki* as a performance of “Greekness” reflects the state of relations between tourist consumers and “ethnic” producers, gesturing to the economic and social relations behind the image of meat on a stick. Food production at festivals can reinforce limiting stereotypes where the diversity within ethnic cuisines is narrowed down to a few characteristic dishes. As the *Taste of the Danforth* illustrates, certain recognisable elements, such as *souvlaki*, are popularised and sold, contributing to the essentialisation and hegemony of identity through foods.

With regards to ethnic cuisine, authenticity is one means by which identity construction and validation occurs, and it is a complex negotiation that occurs between those who produce food and those who consume it. Often the experiences and perceptions of the consumer often prescribe the construction of “authentic” cuisine in events such as the *Taste of the Danforth*. The role of the cultural tourist and, specifically, that of the culinary tourist, involves an appetite for the exotic and the tourist gaze. With the performance and repetition of these recognisable food images and practices, the audience engages in a performative act of identity formation through the tourist gaze/or stomach in this case—they are reaffirming their own identity and demarcating other people's identity through consumption. As a result, tourism commodification is problematic at these festivals, troubling the notion of identification and authenticity. Ways of life, traditions, and the complex symbolism which support these things are imagined and transformed into

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17 For instance, Greece has an incredibly diverse cuisine that encompasses the distinct food culture of ethnic-religious groups, such as the Jewish community in Thessaloniki, and regional differences, notably between coastal and inland cuisine. In the Greek diaspora, the specificities and the regional differences of Greek foods are subsumed under a more generalised banner of Greek or further reduced into a pan-national Mediterranean category.
saleable products for tourists and are produced and performed for touristic consumption. The “traditions” and “authenticity” marketed and sold at these festivals then, I would argue, are not derived from a static past, but are consciously shaped by present conditions and relationships between producers and consumers.

The conflation of *souvlaki* with “Greekness” mobilises desire and promotes fantasies of Greece and “Greekness” that consumers desire, and, as a result, encourages their perpetuation. *Souvlaki* then becomes the ultimate fetish on a stick, but when read through Brechtian *gestus* allows for a closer examinations of social relations. In capitalist modes of production, Marx sees the commodity as an item that has transcended beyond its use-value, linked to the physical labour that has produced it, towards an affective and sensuous understanding that links the commodity-object to ideological or illusory meanings that shape social life. In this process, the commodified object is layered with symbolic codes that are irresistible to consumers. “Exotic” goods materialise the “imaginary Other” and create a desire for consumption. Goods that structure subjectivity suited to its consumption and in doing so create an endless desire for it. As such, consumption of exotic fare at *Caravan* (such as *perohy* or *curry*) or at *Caribbean Carnival* (such as spicy jerk chicken or Jamaican Patties) are fetishisations of “Otherness” where culinary tourists see their consumption imbued with social capital and imbricated with discourses of cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism, occluding conditions of oppression, exploitation, and exclusion involved in its production. Recalling hooks’s argument, indulging in an “Other’s” cuisine can spice up bland “white” culture and can be read as culinary colonialism. hooks claims that “the over-riding fear is that cultural, ethnic, and racial differences will be continually commodified and offered up as new dishes to enhance the white palate – that the Other will be eaten, consumed, and forgotten” (380). Or, in other words, consuming the “Other” is a process that oscillates between exoticisation and exclusion, of attraction and repulsion. However, it is
possible to mobilise performances that intervene and disrupt the existing power relations, to perform critical eating rather than passive consumption.

1.7 “Greek Fries” as a Script for the “Third Space” of Cultural Hybridity

At the Taste of the Danforth one of the most popular food booths is Messini’s whose specialty is “Authentic Gyros” and “Greek fries” which is clearly emblazoned on its signage. Greek fries are of particular interest for their playful appropriation of the “traditional” Québécois dish poutine. Developed just outside of Montreal in the mid-1950s, poutine is a “traditional” Quebecois dish that unites hand-cut French fries with gravy and fresh cheese curds that has gained traction around the nation as quintessentially “Canadian.” The Greek fries dish takes the script for French-Canadian poutine and performs it with difference creating a new mythology with regards to “Greekness” in Canada. Using a base of fries Messini “Greek-ifies” poutine by substituting feta for cheese curds and exchanging an oregano and olive oil dressing for a “traditional” brown gravy. The flavours—feta, oregano and olive oil—are recognisable “characteristics” of Greek cuisine. Feta cheese is a product protected designation of origin (PDO) by the European Union, since 2002, recognising the regional and traditional production of feta cheese as particular to Greece in a similar manner that sparkling wine from the Champagne region in France can only label its product as “Champagne.” The etymology of oregano comes from the Greek words for mountain, “oros,” and joy, “ganos,” referring to the ubiquitousness of the herb as mountainside groundcover (Hutson 123-4). In Greek mythology, oregano was created by the goddess Aphrodite and is associated with happiness and is used in many traditional Greek recipes. Olive oil is an integral aspect of everyday life, permeating Greek culture, history, and religion. In ancient Greece olive oil was more than just food, it was used as part of ritual anointing bodies, for medicine and for cosmetics (Clodoveo et al 1063). Today, olive oil is an
important aspect of the Greek economy, which is the third largest producer of the commodity and has European Union PDO recognition for its outstanding quality (Dinnie 141).

Food is often the most recognisable medium through which ethnicity and identity is enacted and negotiated, however any “original” or “traditional” dish or food item is subject to global flows. Staples such as sugar, tea, rice are prime examples of the ways that food items and knowledge are mobile, in a similar manner that people are migratory, and can take root culturally and ideologically in other places and cultures. Moreover, as food items move across borders and cultures their understandings are not transported intact, but rather are subtly transformed and altered by the new conditions in which they can now be found. The examples of indigenised foods with exotic origins are legion such as the use of tomatoes and pasta in Italian cuisine, Britain adopting curry as its “national dish,” and the “invention” of chop suey in California illustrates the way “Chinese” food became an integral part of American food culture. While Homi K. Bhabha’s work on hybridity predominantly focuses on post-colonial literary cultural production, the notion of food and cuisine itself as a cultural text is, by and large, left off the table. However, food and cuisine is exemplary of Bhabha’s notions of cultural hybridity, in that cuisine is the very result of cultural mixing rather than of fixing. Food can, and has, become a third space of hybridity that can negotiate new meanings and understandings. Foodways scholars Chua Beng Huat and Ananda Rajah argue that “food, cooking and cuisine in general constitute in long-term human history a cultural field in which cross-fertilization, appropriation, re-appropriation, infusion, diffusion, absorption, invention, bricolage as well as doctrinaire, essentialised gastronomic ideas and practices all proliferate with hybrid vigour” (164).

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18 See the work of Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*, regarding the commodity of sugar and its role in the West, Sarah Rose’s work on English Imperialism and tea in *For all the Tea in China*, and Julian Roche’s *The International Rice Trade*. 
Recalling Jovanni Sy’s play “A Taste of Empire” discussed at the beginning of this chapter, the traditional Filipino dish *rellenong bangus* is the very result of Spanish Imperialism and the resultant trade of goods around the world. Mass migration, especially after the Second World War, created need for imported goods and ingredients from the “home” countries in the “host” countries. Once “exotic” items can now be found in the aisles of mainstream supermarkets as diasporic communities create community and belonging through traditional dishes such as corn soup. As cities are increasingly cosmopolitan centres, reflecting the crossroads of ethnicities and cultures, the cross-cultural experience of fusion foods such as “Greek fries” are ripe with the potential of what Jean Duruz calls “‘infidelities’ and ‘drifts’” (49) across cuisine that allow for a re-consideration of existing borders of what constitutes “Canadianess” or “Greekness.” With the advent of the World Wide Web and the proliferation of digital media, in particular applications such as Instagram, Twitter and Pinterest, food images and recipes from around the world are widely disseminated at the touch or swipe of a finger. What was once local is now globally accessible for visual and physical reproduction and consumption.

*Poutine* has the potential for to become a vessel for which multiple identities are articulated through class, race, ethnicity and age. Important to note, *poutine* has only been around for fifty-eight or fifty-nine years, whereas Canada as a nation has been around for almost 150 years, and is in fact regionally and demographically complex. I attribute *poutine’s* rise to prominence as “Canada’s National dish” to three factors that also opens it up its potential for variation and mixing. First, *poutine’s* branding as a “national dish” is inextricably linked to stereotypical images of Canadiana. The association between Canada, Hockey, winter sports and *poutine* were fomented in the cultural imagination during the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics, when international media asked Canadian athletes what was their favourite “Canadian food” and
the majority interviewed answered with *poutine*. Even before the 2010 Vancouver games, at the Washington D.C. Canadian Embassy’s Canada Day Party in 2008, an invitation featuring French explorer Samuel de Champlain holding a bowl of *poutine*, traded on stereotypical images of Canada’s colonial history (Gohier “My Canada Day includes poutine”). Ultimately as a symbol, *poutine* reinscribes traditional/conservative narratives of the nation, in which images of a white, masculine, settler colony are privileged along with the images of Canadian wilderness and hockey.

Secondly, a strong association exists between poutine and youth culture. Major purveyors of *poutine* such as New York Fries and Smoke’s Poutinerie outlets are strategically placed to capture a youth demographic in mall food courts, movie theatres and Club/entertainment districts outlets, food trucks (often are at concerts and events). As such *poutine* is viewed as low culture street food, walking the line between comfort food for after partying, and a masculinist extreme food setting the stage for adventurous variations.

Thirdly, as an extreme food, *poutine* has the potential for experimentation and “bougie-fication” as evidenced by Canadian Celebrity Chef, Chuck Hughes, defeating Bobby Flay on FoodNetwork’s *Iron Chef America* with a plate of Lobster *poutine*. In Montreal alone, there are a number of restaurants that focus on the upscaling of *poutine* (Montreal smoked meat, *poutine italienne, Au Pied du Cochon's foie gras poutine*) with both gourmet items as well as ethnic variations. Significantly, an annual nation-wide event occurs in Canada called *La Poutine Week*, in which upscale restaurants across the country develop a signature poutine with gourmet toppings.

*Poutine*, I would argue, is a vehicle for hybrid expression – in that a “Canadian” dish can be reinterpreted along so many different migrant foodways, a malleability that can allow for a
sense of belonging, to see one’s cuisine as a part of the nation. As Watson, the super-computer, has illustrated in Canada’s *La Poutine Week 2015*, *poutine* is an exceptional vessel through which fusion or hybrid-identities can be performed and reimagined. Watson helped restaurant chefs across Canada create flavour combinations based on the local demographics of their region or city (Pelly “La Poutine Week…”). For example, based on Watson’s analysis of Toronto demographics, Chef Michael Garrett created a South Asian/Caribbean fusion poutine topped with jerked bait-fish and a spicy South Asian-inspired curry (Pelly “La Poutine Week…”). While there is an appeal to the “authenticity” that plays on the “traditional” elements of French fries, gravy and cheese curds, there is also an appeal to difference, which perhaps reflects a lived experience of many Canadians who are surrounded by a heterogeneous menu that no longer is (or, perhaps more accurately, never was) dominated by British-Anglo or French influences.

Served in one of the diverse cities in Canada, “Greek fries” on the Danforth plays on both the traditional and the urge to be different by incorporating Greek flavours, resulting in a fusion unites both “Greekness” and “Canadian-ness” in an imagined commensality. However, I am critically aware of the way boutique multiculturalism and culinary tourism play out in the consumption of “diversity poutine,” in that it is also considered “exotic” and “Other,” and consequently that “difference” is placed outside of the nation.

The trend towards fusion-hybrid versions of *poutine* is significant and raises questions regarding both the resistance and permeability of boundaries. The variations of the *poutine* script in Canada allows for thinking beyond the boundaries of the nation as a fixed and stable category. As *poutine* is appropriated and redefined through the multiple cultural and ethnic cuisines, a potential understanding for the mutual construction of self and other emerges that is complex. Ethnically diverse groups can see themselves constructed within the cuisine of the nation, and vice versa dominant culture can open up to “Otherness” in an imagined commensality. The
explosion of cooking shows and books examining fusion styles, Mannur argues, “remaps and reterritorializes the easily constructed homologies between nation and cuisine, often imagining an end to the viability of the ‘nation’ as a culinary discursive possibility” (*Culinary Fictions* 184). Fusion food is celebrated as positive elements of cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism, and indexes both producers and consumers of hybrid fare as familiar with different ethnic cuisines from either their experience of migration or of everyday realities living in ethnically diverse communities. As such, “fusion cuisine, an innovative approach to cooking, is arguably all about celebrating the ways in which foods intermingle to carve a space for new tastes and flavours; as such, it offers intriguing possibilities for thinking through the politics of palatability in racial-ethnic-culinary frame” (*Mannur Culinary Fictions* 186). Fusion, however, is never a neutral act, but rather belies the ways in which inclusion is often on dominant “white” culture’s terms of palatable-ness in which too much heat, or too much difference, must be tempered in order to be assimilated, or fetishised for its exoticism as I have previously discussed.

1.8 Rebellious Performances: A Brechtian Rupture of “Authenticity”

While “authenticity” may be used as a form of cultural capital and distinction, especially in capitalist consumer culture, performative interventions that create a critical distance from, or performances that draw attention to the production of “authenticity” can reveal the ways in which the discourse is constructed, and disrupts its naturalisation. By applying a Brechtian dramaturgy of food, I see potential for performative interruptions in the performance of identity that illustrate that identity is not a closed or fixed entity, but rather a fluid practice. Although *Caravan, Caribbean Carnival*, and the *Taste of the Danforth* festivals cite historicised, folkloric images of ethnic identities by preparing and serving “traditional” foods in carefully constructed environments that are meant to represent national culture and heritage, slippages and fractures
materialise that draw attention to food and the discourse of authenticity as a manifestation of a set of social relations and practices. Moreover, variations or improvisations that occur in the performance of recipe-scripts can reveal shifting social conditions, defy hegemonic constructions of ethnic individuals and groups, and undermine stereotypes. Such performative slippages are *gestic* moments creating a kind of Brechtian *V-effekt* that defamiliarises the familiar, and thus an opportunity for a critical rather than passive consumer emerges.

*Caravan* depicted historicised images of ethnicity, the conditions of which are prescribed by Canada’s policy of multiculturalism that valorises displays of “heritage.” As previously described, *Caravan*’s pavilions carefully constructed displays of ethnic identity out of carefully assembled material culture and practices for a paying audience. For instance, the Polish pavilion “Krakow,” located on Beverly Street in the Polish Cultural Centre (Polish Combatants’ Hall), welcomed passport holders at the door with the “city’s” “mayor” and “princess,” who is specifically dressed in traditional garb (a peasant blouse, with an elaborately embroidered corset-vest, a lace apron over a full skirt with bright floral motifs, and a floral headdress with flowing ribbons). Tourists are then ushered into a hall—past table of souvenirs including traditional embroidery, folk art crafts, and musical recordings—with multiple tables set up around a main stage and a buffet area, the delectable aromas of which envelope the entire space and everyone in it.

Similarly to the volunteers for the Russian pavilion at the Christ the Saviour Russian Orthodox Cathedral discussed earlier in this chapter, food at Krakow was carefully prepared by volunteers at the Polish Cultural Centre, uniting the community, mostly women, in making traditional fare in the way their mothers and grandmothers had taught them. Joanna Kates of *The Globe and Mail* interviewed some of the women making food for the Krakow pavilion, who
immigrated just after the Second World War. The article elaborates on the important role the community plays in their lives and how Caravan plays a supporting role. For instance, the proceeds from selling food at Caravan helped to provide the Polish community with language and arts programming, youth clubs, and help for newly arriving immigrants (Kates C11). That year, volunteers made approximately 2000 nalesniki, crisp-fried meat-filled crepes, and 13,500 pierogies, along with borscht, cabbage (kapusta), sausages and pastries, to feed the hungry tourists that they estimated will visit the pavilion (Kates C11). Interestingly, Kates’s article discusses the home-made pizza and quiche that Stemia Szychowski, the food volunteer organiser for the pavilion, made to feed her volunteers, “for none of them can stomach nalesniki any more” (Kates C11). The inclusion of non-traditional Polish foods ruptures the historicised depictions of Polish ethnicity, a gestic moment that opens up the potential for enacting “Polish-ness” in the diaspora beyond stereotypical images of pierogies and kapusta. Moreover, the desire for “non-polish” foods illustrates the ways in which even new Canadians adapt/adopt, appropriate, and re-contextualise the myriad foodways of a diverse city into their own dietary habits in the diaspora.

While Kates’s article about making food for the Krakow pavilion introduces a gestic rupture that happens out of sight of the Caravan cultural tourist, I am also interested in the performative potential of inadvertent slippages that occur in their sight. An incident that occurred at Caravan 1989 in the Krakow pavilion disrupted the carefully curated performance of “Polishness.” In the Toronto Star article “Caravan calls ’89 fair a success,” Daniel Girard writes about the juxtaposition between the tourists who go to Caravan pavilions to taste the diverse menus of the various ethnic communities that are putting their culture on display for others, and a group of Polish dancers who wanted to eat something other than traditional Polish foods. “After performing at the Krakow pavilion’s children’s day program,” Girard writes, “the young dance troupe had their minds set on pizza. ‘We tried to wait as late as possible, but there were
still visitors here when delivery guys started arriving. I think they found it weird to see pizza in a Polish pavilion,’ said Krakow ‘princess’ Christine Kwiatkowski” (Girard A25). I am particularly drawn to Kwiatkowski’s description of this incident as being “weird” and read it as a Brechtian gestus that disrupts the naturalised images of “Polishness” constructed and performed by individuals at the pavilion. The disruptive pizza illustrates that this generation of young “Polish” dancers have varied tastes extending beyond “Polish” foods, creating a performance that exceeds the festival’s “Polishness.” Somehow, Kwiatkowski, and the cultural tourists who found it “weird to see pizza in a Polish pavilion,” expected the depiction of a “pure” or “authentic” identity. Drawing attention to the very illusion of the staging, the pizza delivery fragments the appearance of “authenticity” at the pavilion, illustrating that the physical style of “ethnicity” is more complex and not safely contained within the curated boundaries of the festival, or even within the limits of the multicultural “script.” The gestic-pizza-object draws uncomfortable attention (for the pavilion princess and tourist witness) that folkloric, “ethnic” identities are performed for audiences—and not an actual condition of their everyday life—shattering the veneer of difference and exoticism.

1.9 Conclusion: The Eaters Paradox to Consume and to Keep at a Distance at the Same Time

Food is a subtle form of communication that, while it may serve biological needs, is also a conduit of political, social, and economic discourses. Food is a compelling signifier of cultural norms and values, functioning as important agent by which complex relationships between the centre/margins, self/other, and local/global are negotiated. By reading food as a form of communication and as a performance, eating becomes an act of reception. As such, the meanings and understandings associated with food and cuisine are polysemic, dialectically shifting as a result of the complex relationships between producers and consumers. Applying a dramaturgy of
food, developed from the methods of the trifecta of Brecht, Barthes and Bourdieu, to *Caravan, Caribbean Carnival*, and the *Taste of the Danforth* opens an approach to evaluate the role food plays in (un)marking and characterising bodies—and their position in relation to others—in Canada’s multicultural society.

The culinary tourist’s sampling of culturally diverse food stations and booths at the festivals altogether produce an image of elsewhere and “Otherness,” which are (in)formed by both imagination and memory, and mediated by both the local and the global. The sampling of the experience, and the personal narrative that accompanies it, speaks to an event whose materiality escapes us, generating nostalgia for an unattainable initial experience. The taste is an ephemeral “souvenir” which, as Susan Stewart argues, represents the gap between self and other that always remains because it is an endless trace that continually displaces the notion of an original (77). Food, as with performance, is an ephemeral, multi-sensory experience, with us for a short time before being vanishing. Despite “cultural tourists’” ability to ingest and consume the products of the “Other,” the distance between self and other is materially and socially (re)produced.

The way food is divided and organised into categories is a reflection of social relationships. In his work on taste, Bourdieu argues that consumption is an act that both classifies objects while it “classifies the classifier” (6). Richard Wilk builds on Bourdieu’s work arguing that the categorisation of food also implies a categorisation of people. In doing so, “this dynamic means that in a single society or social group at any moment there are popular and unpopular foods, but because of social competition and the instability of social boundaries, food taxonomies instantly change, and foods or dishes may switch positions in those taxonomies” (Wilk 21). Wilk’s discussion of the potential for the changing status of ethnic cuisine, for the
unpopular to become popular, however, is complicated by commodification in capitalist consumer culture. Ethnic food, as symbolic capital, acts as a form of soft power through attraction, which can serve to create favourable perceptions of the “Other” through the temporary community established in the collective consumption of the “Other’s” food, incorporating the experience into their bodies. Culinary tourists and food adventurers may adopt a roving, cosmopolitan appetite, an act that belies a position of privilege and power, in order to elevate their social capital. Turning ethnic foodways into a commodity problematically pairs away cultural specificity and produces socially constructed representations of the imaginary “Other.”

Ethno-cultural spectacles like Caravan, Caribbean Carnival, and the Taste of the Danforth use food as an accessible entrance into the culture of “Others.” Although many critique the multicultural food festival as a superficial event, Uma Narayan argues that a food festival is “one of the rare public events where one is visually, viscerally, and positively conscious of the range of diverse ethnicities and identities that in fact constitute us as a community” (185). As such food festivals represent ethnic and cultural differences with positivity in light of recent events in Canada that often mark the bodies of “Others” as undesirable such as the proposed development of a tip line for “barbaric cultural practices” by the Conservative Party and the vandalism of mosques in light of the current Syrian refugee crisis.

The positive image of commensality at festivals is clearly insufficient to eliminate racism and the substantial social, political and economic barriers that ethnic groups and individuals experience in society. Notions of appreciation, tolerance and openness to difference are active performances in the consumption of ethnic food, which feeds the symbolic and material practices of multiculturalism. An appreciation or acceptance of the “Other’s” cuisine is an affirmation of (boutique) multiculturalism, but neither does it mean an acceptance of the racialised or ethnic
bodies that produce that cuisine, nor does it mean breaking down barriers to equity for those bodies. The difficulty with the happy images of multiculturalism created by such festivals, Mannur argues, arises when “the culinary is acceptable only when it performs the work of affective fulfilment within multiculturalism to produce a kind of palatable rendering of difference, one in which the excesses of difference are carefully excised to produce a sanitized narrative, enabling rather than disruptive of forms of consumption” (Culinary Fictions 224). The politics of palatability often excludes, tempers, and adapts that which is too different in order to fit in with dominant (white) culture.

While these critiques are consequential, they tend to overlook the potential for resistant readings and performances at these festivals that question normative multicultural understandings. Viewing food through Brechtian theory opens a space to see food-objects, such as *souvlaki* and “Greek fries,” as *gestic*-objects that are physical manifestations of social relationships between cultural producers and consumers. In doing so, the sedimented and naturalised assumptions surrounding “authentic” and “national” cuisines are disrupted and revealed as social constructs conditioned by political, social and economic forces. Using the metaphor of a theatrical script opens up a dramaturgical approach to recipes, their production and consumption. As a script, the recipe becomes a fluid practice that bears traces of what has come before, yet open to present and future variations and improvisations.

Dramaturgically, viewing festivals through the metaphor of the recipe-script—corn soup, Goan Vindaloo, and “Greek Fries”—reveals the ways food performs for migrants, cultural tourists/food adventurers, and the nation. Traditional recipes, such as Dian Reyes’s corn soup, are marked by memories and imaginations of “home” that, when made in the diaspora, become a performance that negotiates belonging and exclusion in the host country. The recipe for Goan
Vindaloo, published in the *Toronto Star* to promote the *Caravan* pavilion “Panjim,” reveals the politics of palatability where the spice is adapted to suit the tastes of dominant culture. Embedded in the way the “Other’s” cuisine is presented to the dominant culture reveals specific biases and assumptions regarding that culture. Goan Vindaloo in the *Toronto Star* reveals the limits of tolerance with regards to a culture’s “spiciness” which is an apt metaphor for a cultural difference. A dish, and therefore the culture represented by that dish, must somehow be tempered to adjust to the palate of the dominant centre, it must be exotic but not too spicy, muted but still different. The hybrid-fusion turn in cooking, evidenced in the “Greek fries” adaptation of Québécois *poutine*, illustrates the potential to dismantle hegemonic stereotypes of a masculine, white, settler-colonial, hockey-winter-wilderness-loving nation. In doing so, hybrid interpretations of “traditional” *poutine* carve spaces for envisioning difference as part of the nation. Dramatically, these recipe-scripts reveal significant insights about culinary encounters, and about the construction of self and other within a Canadian multicultural context.

The production and the consumption of foods in festivals are not just simplistic “snackshots” of the “Other,” but rather reflect a complex relationship between the diaspora, the homeland imaginary, and the host country. Although many critics focus on the lack of political efficacy or the reductive stereotyping that occurs, I see the ways ethno-cultural festivals generate significant productive outcomes. Ethno-cultural festivals contribute to community-building and provide social supports in, and for, diasporic communities that may elude them in the host country’s dominant culture. This is most clear in the way the Toronto Greek Community organisation mobilises support for a large booth at the *Taste of the Danforth* and uses the proceeds to provide educational and cultural programming for Greeks in Toronto. Moreover, volunteering generates both communal and affective alliances most visible in *Caravan’s* example of women at the Christ the Saviour Church. As they prepare *piroshky*, they laugh, and
share stories, and come together as a support system. Groups, and individuals like Ida Kasplzak from the Polish Caravan pavilion, were able to recuperate a sense of home and family, especially after suffering the tragic losses of loved ones and forced-exile as a result of war. Similarly, the productive element of the “Lime” in carnival mas camps illustrates affective alliances and supports, especially important when barriers to equality still exist for racialised groups and individuals. These examples provide an alternative perspective on the festivals in that they serve to promote affective alliances for communities in order to disarticulate the cultural commodity from practices that define it solely in terms of its exchange-value.

Bakhtin’s notion of carnival is instrumental here to examine the dynamic processes and reversals at play within a cultural script, such as a festival or recipe, as the object can be both hegemonic and counter-hegemonic at the same time depending on how it is used, and, by whom. Thus, the meaning of ethno-cultural festivals cannot be limited to, or reduced, to superficial readings focusing on “cultural tourists” temporary engagement with “exotic Otherness,” but must also take into account the affective investments that empower communities with strategies that define a level of opposition, and most importantly, survival in the host country. Festivals and recipe-scripts also create a space where diasporic bodies can produce and represent themselves, albeit not in conditions of their own choosing. Dee’s performance of corn soup illustrates the way that food becomes an important vehicle for affirming individual identities, and invokes a resistance the homogenising effects of dominant culture. Food becomes a way of maintaining culture abroad and becomes a performance of belonging.

A closer consideration of food in/as performance illustrates that the conditions surrounding production and consumption at ethno-cultural festivals are far more complex than originally thought. While nations may be imagined through cuisine, that cuisine is less
homogenous than originally envisioned and outwardly promoted. Individual or group variations problematise attempts to fix the culinary nation in a universal, and open up the potential for fluidity, improvisation and difference. The dramaturgy of food in ethno-cultural festivals becomes a means of interrogating the construction of the nation. Viewing how food is mobilised at festivals through the lens of theatre and performance studies, allows scholars to rethink the intersections of performance, taste and culture, and how they may be read in different ways.
Chapter 2
The Dramaturgy of Festival Space: Taking up Space/Place and Dislocating Difference in the City

2 Introduction

When performance artists Coco Fusco and Guillermo Gomez-Peña exhibited themselves as “Undiscovered Amerindians” in a cage outside of a museum in response to the Columbus Quincentenary celebrations in 1992, they transformed the street into a stage. For two years (1992-1994), Fusco and Gomez-Peña performed in public spaces (Covent Garden in London, England) and in the street outside various museums such as, The National Museum of Natural History at the Smithsonian in Washington D.C., and the Field Museum in Chicago, to name a few of the significant locations. Their performance revealed the performative nature of public spaces, and, in particular, the normative understandings of museum spaces. The “Couple in a Cage” performance suggests the capability to infiltrate institutional space and cause a Brechtian disruption within the locale of the museum that critically unmask its normalised understandings. The disruptive potential of Fusco and Gomez-Peña’s performance has inspired me to reconsider Toronto’s ethno-cultural festivals, Caravan, Caribbean Carnival, and the Taste of the Danforth, as performances that use the street as a stage, to perform spatial infiltrations into normalised/ing discourses of Canadian multiculturalism.

In this chapter I will develop a dramaturgy of space that builds on the theories of Bertolt Brecht’s epic theatre and Henri Lefebvre’s spatial materialism. The theories of Brecht and Lefebvre have a natural affinity with one another as both theorists are interested in dialectics and

19 Formally the piece is known as “The Year of the White Bear and Two Undiscovered Amerindians Visit the West.” For the purpose of this chapter, I will use its colloquial name for the piece “Couple in a Cage.”
capitalist production, in theatre and space respectively, in relation to society. Theatre and space are not natural entities, but rather are constructed and shaped reflecting social relations of power. As I have argued in the previous chapter, performers and participants at Toronto’s ethno-cultural festivals are not Brechtian actors. However, I am invoking Brecht’s techniques as a critical and analytical practice to interrogate the intersections between space/place and the social, political, or economic relations of power. In layering Lefebvre and Brecht’s theories, I see the potential to critically engage with the construction of space and disrupt habituated and seemingly natural spatial realities. Lefebvre saw the capacity of Brecht’s work to challenge “everyday life” under capitalism, in “the bureaucratic society of controlled consumption” (Everyday Life in the Modern World 68). In The Critique of Everyday Life, Lefebvre discusses the possibility to transcend “everyday life” through the oppositional characteristics of carnival and the “reverse images” inherent in Brecht’s epic theatre (23). Recognising that the familiar often goes unquestioned or unchallenged, Lefebvre sees a disruptive potential in Brecht’s ideas of the V-effekt, that is, to make the familiar strange. For Lefebvre it is in “that consciousness of alienation—that strange awareness of the strange—liberates us, or begins to liberate us from alienation” (The Critique of Everyday Life 20). It is a “dialectical twist” that only a process of alienation can beget a path to “dis-alienation,” as Ben Highmore observes, “only by defamiliarizing the everyday that the everyday can be recognized as alienation” (143). Using both Brecht and Lefebvre’s work opens the beginnings of a critical practice and analysis of festival space that engages the underlying, often naturalised, fields of social relationships and power in the performance of official multiculturalism.

Employing this spatial dramaturgy, I will examine the performativity of space at Caravan, Caribbean Carnival, and the Taste of the Danforth festivals through the thematic topoi of landscapes and borders. In many ways, all three festivals open up spaces—or rather take up
space—for the recognition and assertion of cultural differences in Toronto, and, in doing so, are mobilised in different ways to enact the multicultural "script” and perceptions of Toronto as a multicultural city. Performing from within the diaspora, each festival creates ethnic landscapes in the city by performing traces of the “homeland,” and reconfigures the boundaries and relationships between Canada and other places. Thus, spectators/visitors come to a greater awareness of the complex connections and divergences between the two. Caravan, Caribbean Carnival, and the Taste of the Danforth spatially engage the multicultural “script” through creating spaces in history for the contributions of various under-represented minority groups to Canadian society, which can create spaces of belonging and community within the city. I am particularly interested in the dramaturgy of socially activated and constructed space that can, in different ways, create the possibilities for both belonging and alienation, even at the same time. Examining the borders and peripheries of the festivals opens a discussion regarding spaces for presence and/or absence of “Otherness” within the nation.

2.1 A History of the Street as Stage

In Western theatre history, prior to the development of a theatre-specific architecture, the street or the public square had been the site of theatre and performances. In ancient Greece the agora, literally the “gathering place” or “assembly,” was the heart of everyday life where numerous public activities—social, governmental, commercial, military, and sacred—were enacted. The agora provided the essentials for life through the marketplace as well as various services, “from haircutting to the teachings of Stoic philosophy,” to government offices and temples and monuments iterating “religious, cultural, and moral values from every corner” (Crouch 190). As the centre of civic and spiritual life, the agora was the stage for a myriad festivals and rituals the largest of which being City Dionysia. Music and dance competitions were central to this festival and large choruses would perform dithyrambs, a choral poem sung
and danced in honour of the god Dionysus. Because these ritual performances took place in the midst of—rather than separately from—everyday life, the spatial boundaries between spectators and performers were informal and less fixed. Consequently, “the informal act of watching in a participatory mode developed,” as Elaine Aston and George Savona argue, into “the act of watching in a contemplative mode, and of marking out a formal space for spectating, as reflected in the evolution of the sophisticated, horseshoe-shaped amphitheatres” (113). The development of theatre-specific architecture reorients audience behaviours from active participation to passive spectatorship, aligning with the shift from ritual to drama.

Although theatre and performance increasingly become situated within specific spaces and architectures, there are a few examples, medieval pageant plays and mystery cycles as well as *Commedia dell’arte* in the Renaissance, where the street or public square are stages. These theatrical forms are, notably, popular entertainments to reach the masses. Moving outside of the Church-space, where people are also active participants in ritual performance, medieval theatre brought Biblical representations to the masses in the streets and marketplaces of cities and towns. The moveable stages of medieval pageant wagons created a processional form of theatre, in which the entire town or city could be reimagined as a stage. The spatial boundaries between performers and audiences were both fixed, delimited by the pageant wagon space, and fluid, as actors would step off the wagon to intermingle with people in the street and marketplace (Aston and Savona 113).

The Renaissance period saw a revival of the Classical theatre of ancient Greece and Rome in form and in architecture. In Vincenzo, Italy, the Olympic Theatre is an example of an existing hall remodelled along classical models from Greece and Rome, which incorporated
architectural elements such as the elaborately decorated background façade, the *scaenae frons*\(^{20}\) (Hight 129). The architecture of early-modern English playhouses such as the Globe or Curtain evokes the shape of the Greek amphitheatre. The circular or octagonal theatres were built with a stage jutting out into the “pit” around the three sides of which groundlings paid a penny to stand and watch performances. The circumference of the playhouse held two tiers of gallery seating where those who could afford to pay could sit. The upper tier known as “the lord’s room,” was incorporated into the stage in later theatres for those of rank to be visible on the sides of the stage (de Banke 29). Fixing theatre architecture, according to Aston and Savona, corresponds with segmenting the audience according to social hierarchies. As Greek theatre architecture developed, the social status was fixed in the seating hierarchy with religious, military and government officials taking precedence over other citizens. The legacy of stratified seating appears in the history of Elizabethan theatres as the spatial order reverses, the groundlings are displaced to the heavens as the elites descend into pits, and reaches an “apotheosis in the bourgeois theatre of the last century which, in design and function, worked towards excluding all but the wealthier classes” (Aston and Savona 133). As a result, theatre space is a physical manifestation of social relationships and becomes a site of a reaffirming and passive spectatorship for upper classes.

The development of a bourgeois theatre in the eighteenth and nineteenth-centuries solidified a conventional understanding of theatre and performance spaces and further distanced the relationship between the actor and the audience with the development of the naturalist\(^{21}\)

\(^{20}\) The *scaenae frons* design of Roman theatres was influenced by the Greek *skene*. It had a dual function as a dressing room for actors as well as background scenery.

\(^{21}\) Naturalism originated in the 1880-1890s as an aesthetic movement that attempted a “photographic” depiction of reality. The movement is connected to positivist thinking and advocated a very scientific method to view society in a
concept of the fourth wall. Rediscovering the street and other non-traditional performing spaces for their art, twentieth-century theatre artists, such as Augusto Boal, Bread and Puppet Theater, and The Living Theatre, challenged traditional theatre conventions to “break the fourth wall” in order to redefine the relationship between spectator and performer, artifice and the “real.” Beginning in the 1960s and 1970s, this movement was heavily influenced by performance art, agitprop, alternative, and guerrilla theatre, revisiting the theatricality of the street as a means to protest the socio-political system and to reimagine oppressive power structures (Cohen-Cruz 1).

Yet it is important to note that while theatre has developed specific architecture, there has always been performance in the streets in the form of popular entertainments, carnival, parades, festivals, as well as protests and other forms of expressive behaviours meant for spectatorship. The street transforms into the largest stage, as performance studies scholar Richard Schechner observes, as people “en masse” take over the street, and celebrate “life’s fertile possibilities” (“The Street is the Stage” 197). In doing so, Schechner reflects, “they put on masks and costumes, erect and wave banners, and construct effigies not merely to disguise or embellish their ordinary selves, or to flaunt the outrageous, but also to act out the multiplicity each human life is” (“The Street is the Stage” 197). The borders between theatre and everyday life are increasingly permeable in the way that theatrical and performative lexicons are incorporated into deterministic way (Pavis 236). The naturalist actor must identify with their character on stage and create an illusion of reality through mimetic representation.

22 The fourth wall is an established convention of modern realistic theatre, naturalism, in which an “imaginary” wall separates the audience from the action on the stage.
a variety of activities from the way outdoor seating at Parisian bistros face outwards to observe the street to political rallies and sporting events.

2.2 The Performativity of the Street

Space is not fixed, but an experienced, lived, and constructed phenomenon. Lefebvre posits that “(social) space is a (social) product… the space thus produced also serves as a tool of thought and of action; that in addition to being a means of production it is also a means of control, and hence of domination, of power” (The Production of Space 26). Space is social, as theatre scholar David Wiles explains, because each society produces its own space in both a mental and a physical sense. Space is always produced, in the sense that it is always a set of relationships, never a given, inert or transparent, never in a state of nature untouched by culture – there is no such thing as an “empty space” (10). Wiles refers to theatre practitioner Peter Brook’s assertion in The Empty Space that “I can take any empty space and call it a bare stage” (9).

Whereas Brook discusses space in the practical sense of transforming any open area into a possible performance space, Wiles moves into an abstract frame in which he considers that open areas are not located in vacuums, but rather are invested with cultural, social, political, historical, economical, and personal meanings and values. A performative space then can be understood as one that engages the body, and its performance, in the production of knowledge and power relations.

Performativity has experienced a number of shifts from J.L. Austin’s examination of “speech acts” in how the very statement of words constitutes an action that generates a transformation. Not all words constitute an action, but specific words such as “I promise” or “I forgive” constitute actions in the act of speaking them. In performance theory, performative is used to describe the performance aspect of any object or practice under consideration (Loxley
140), including the study of the ways in which identities are constructed through iteration of cultural norms, perhaps most notably explored by Judith Butler’s scholarship of gender performativity (see Butler 1990, 1993). While it is generally acknowledged that we do things with words, we also do things with our performing bodies and material objects, which create meaning in everyday life. Likewise, as Lefebvre argues, space is also constituted by our actions in everyday life. “The pre-existence of space,” Lefebvre writes, “conditions the subject’s presence, action and discourse, its competence and performance” (The Production of Space 57). At the same time, bodies and their shifting relations with one another, also shape space, illustrating that space is not fixed, but rather a process subject to transformations. Space, John Lutterbie explains, “is a product of the interrelation of forces that comes into being only through its production” (125). Consequently, space is performative, that is, constituted as an effect of its iterative performance(s). As such spaces and bodies are mutually constituted. Space can do things; it can structure meanings, and different spaces engage bodies in a multitude of meanings.

Building from Butler’s work on the performativity of gender in Gender Trouble, in which she argues that gendered identities are formed by reiterations of particular behaviours, I assert that spaces, such as the street, are likewise filled with meaning by the repetition of actions, which Butler calls the “citation” of particular norms. While walking down the street pedestrians perform according to a set of established rules. Pedestrians walk on the sidewalk and obey the traffic signals (walk or do not walk) when they come to an intersection. The performance of gender, however, is not a voluntary choice for Butler, who locates the construction of the gendered, sexed, desiring subject within what she calls "regulative discourses," borrowing from Michel Foucault’s Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison. These “regulative discourses,” also called "frameworks of intelligibility" or "disciplinary regimes," decide in advance what possibilities of sex, gender, and sexuality are socially permitted to appear as coherent or
"natural" (*Gender Trouble* 179). In a similar fashion the rules of the street are constituted through laws and are policed, automobiles on the street and pedestrians on the sidewalk, but during festival time structures of the street can be overturned. Repetitive inscriptions upon spaces activate the space, but spaces can be performed in different ways where the logical order is reversed and pedestrians can take over the streets. Lefebvre argues that the street is rife with a spontaneous energy that is politically potent, because “power regards spontaneity as the enemy” (qtd in Merrifield 51). The street is an arena of society not completely occupied by institutions.

Andrew Merrifield builds on Lefebvre’s theory, arguing that:

Institutions fear the street: they try to cordon it off, they try to repress street spontaneity, try to separate different factions of protesters in the street, quelling the apparent disorder, seeking to reaffirm order, in the name of the law. From street level, from below, contestation can spread to institutional areas, above. (51-2)

Significantly, Lefebvre finds a promising practice in Brecht’s work on epic theatre, which takes the street for its model, to defamiliarise the normative and natural aspects of everyday life.

As a theatre practitioner, Bertolt Brecht recognised the inherent performativity of the street, taking inspiration and using the street to talk about his vision for an epic theatre structure. In “On Everyday Theatre” and “The Street Scene,” Brecht discusses the connection between “the events of real life and their emerging or potential ‘readability’ as contradictory constructs, as revelatory or the way social processes can ‘appear’ in the detail of human behaviour” (Whybrow 15). Developing a theatre practice that evokes the performance of an eyewitness describing a traffic accident to bystanders on a street corner, Brecht attempts to emphasise the performance as a repetition of actions, “and does not pretend to be the actual event” (“The Street Scene” 121). For Brecht, however, it is not enough to merely demonstrate what has happened, but rather the performance has implications for social justice by revealing the ideological stakes behind the event. The street demonstrator does not transform into the people he or she describes, and the
performance does not “cast a spell” over his or her audience (“The Street Scene” 122). Such distance, rather, allows critical space for the spectators’ opinions and perspectives, even dissent, regarding the demonstrator’s take on the events (“The Street Scene” 122). The street scene illustrates the basic tenets of epic theatre. First, the street scene employs V-effekt, a technique that creates a critical distancing. Second, and related to V-effekt, there is gestus, a technique that renders visible social attitudes. Third, the street scene illustrates that the character and the actor are clearly not one entity, and that the events on stage are not “natural” or fixed, but rather subject to social discourses of power. The street opens up ways of seeing and experiencing as a number of people can witness the same event from a myriad of different perspectives, which are shaped by their own personal experiences, ideologies and class position.

The epic model of theatre attempts to move away from the representation/artifice of a naturalised bourgeois theatre, to reflect the presentational, witness-reporter or citational aspect inherent in street performance. Not only is Brecht’s street scene a model “a means of questioning the dangerously mesmeric ‘traffic flow’ of life as it is represented to us” (Whybrow17), but also can provide a means for us to critically re-examine and rupture the naturalised experience of the street. Brecht acknowledges the inherent fluidity and flexibility of the street and attempted to bring that awareness to his conception of theatre that draws direct links to everyday life. Lefebvre also sees the performative possibility of the street “The street is spectacle, almost solely spectacle, but not quite, because we are there, we walk, we stand still, we participate. The person in a hurry does not see the spectacle, but is part of it nevertheless” (“The Social Text” 91). In, Brecht, Lefebvre finds a practice that defamiliarises, in order to draw attention to, the conditions—the spectacle—of everyday life.
Returning to my inspiration for a spatial dramaturgy, Fusco and Gomez-Peña’s counter-discursive “Couple in a Cage” makes the museum space “strange,” allowing for a closer examination of its production. Encasing themselves in a ten by twelve foot cage, the couple presented themselves as two previously undiscovered specimens of the Guantinaui people while performing “traditional” and ridiculous “native” rituals in outlandish “native” garb. Gomez-Peña dressed in an Aztec breastplate and leopard-skin wrestling mask, while Fusco donned a grass skirt, leopard-skin bikini top, a ball cap, and sneakers. In a Brechtian turn that illustrates social relations as part of capitalist production, for a small donation Fusco would perform “traditional” dances to rap music, or Gomez-Peña would tell stories in a nonsensical language, or the couple would pose for souvenir pictures. These performances were not advertised to add to a sense of exploration and an element of surprise which, as Fusco noted, “people’s defense mechanisms are less likely to operate with their normal efficiency; caught off guard, their beliefs are more likely to rise to the surface” (“The Other History…” 558).

By employing the space and performativities of the museum, Fusco and Gomez-Peña were able to put on display the persistence of colonial attitudes today, and specifically deconstruct the museum as a space that encourages and conditions the colonialist gaze. Fusco and Gomez-Peña’s performance illustrates Lefebvre’s conceptualisation of space as a complex social construction, exposing how the museum space conditions social practises and perceptions. In the absence of advertising, I would suggest that the institution of museum space is viewed as a “truth-space,” filled with facts, dates and objects pertaining to human civilisations, which, in turn, conditions visitors’ performances and perceptions. Moreover, Fusco and Gomez-Peña appropriated the language and the site of the museum to stage their own display. Consequently, as the film of the performance art piece revealed, “many of their visitors thought they were real” Amerindians on display and not actually viewing a performance, very much to the surprise of
Fusco and Gomez-Peña (*The Couple in A Cage*). Reactions of visitors varied from being interested in the life and culture of the previously undiscovered Amerindians that belied racist and imperialist attitudes, to outrage that individuals would be caged to the point of withdrawing donations to the museum, to scepticism of the display (*The Couple in A Cage*).

The performance attempted to challenge visitors to reconsider the museum as, what Steven Lavine and Ivan Karp consider, a site of an interpretation, reflecting the cultural, historical, institutional, economic and political contexts of the people who create the exhibits (1). The attempt to critique museum from within, or in its close proximity to, the institution of the museum may have undermined the clarity of the performance. That is to say, that the subtle and also not so subtle satiric ways that Fusco and Gomez-Peña attempt to draw attention to the role museums have played in colonisation as preservers of appropriated objects from elsewhere, is overlooked, because visitors to museum spaces are not expected to perform deconstruction, introspection or debate the exhibits and objects before them, or even see them as constructed by people who have, but the museum space conditions visitors to expect exhibits that rely on storytelling. Museums are places invested with particular meanings and understanding, which equally perform and are being performed by visitors. Moreover, the museums physical space and its exhibits are constructed in such a way that the objects cannot talk-back or look-back to the viewer, thus encouraging the visitor to perform in specific ways, as a receptor of information rather than a participator in the dialogue of history. The performance of gaze in the museum is unidirectional from visitor to object which illustrates a fundamental power imbalance. Even

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23 This is readily apparent in the Terra Cotta Warrior exhibit at the ROM, where video monitors display vignettes featuring a costumed actor portraying a character, an historical figure of the time period, talking to visitors about the period and the materials in the specific area in the exhibit often accompanied by an historical anecdote that features the figure/character. This situates the visitor as a passive receptor of information. Absent are the transparency of curatorial choices made and the shifting meanings of what these Terra Cotta Warriors mean today.
when labels can talk-back for the object about context and interpretations, there is no guarantee that visitors will engage in that dialogue.

Fusco and Gomez-Peña’s “Couple in a Cage” illustrates the ways in which discourses shape space, which conditions how people act and perceive in spaces, and alternately how performing bodies shape spatial discourses. In appropriating the locale of the museum, Fusco and Gomez-Peña were able to render visible discourses of capitalism, colonialism, and class distinction on such a space. The museum is a site vested with “a multitude of conscious and unconscious acts [that] depend on operative knowledge: from visiting within the opening hours, having the money to do so and knowing how to present yourself as a guest both in dress, manners and comportment” (Kjæboe 79). Such “proper” behaviours are repetitive iterations of codes and norms, and thus appear natural; they are performed and embodied by visitors who engage in the ritual of museum attendance. Fusco and Gomez-Peña illustrate the power of a performative disruption that can expose the seemingly natural discourses of a space in order to question how visitors engage/embody the museum and its implicit spatial ideologies.

2.3 Towards a Dramaturgy of Festival Space: Place and Space

In articulating a dramaturgy of space, there are a number of terms that first require definition. Space and place are often distinguished, as Anthony Giddens theorises, by an absence-presence dynamic, where space is formulated as an abstract idea and place is defined by contact between others (18). But David Harvey suggests in his essay “From Space to Place and Back Again” that the notion of place extends beyond just presence to include a larger range of metaphorical meanings, encompassing human experience, memory, desire and identity, and
emotions. For an example, Roger Silverstone views the concept of “home” as “…a manifestation of an investment of meaning in space. It is a claim we make about a place. It is constructed through social relations which are both internal and external and constantly shifting in their power relations” (28). In The Practice of Everyday Life, philosopher Michel de Certeau distinguishes between the terms space and place. Place, de Certeau elucidates, is “the order (of whatever kind) in accord with which elements are distributed in relationships of coexistence,” and thus a place is “an instantaneous configuration of positions. It implies an indication of stability” (117). For instance when examining the location of the Taste of the Danforth, GreekTown on the Danforth can be viewed as an example of “place” as it is a geographically stable entity, mapped and recognised within the City of Toronto. Place can be understood as subset of space where those social relations are more well-defined and specific.

Space on the other hand, is a polyvalent and can be broadly understood as where general social relations occur. For de Certeau, “space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities” (117). Place was thought of as bounded-space, but places exist in relation to other places and spaces through various forms of interaction. I will refer to specific locations as “place” when they deal with particular understandings of community and identity, and will also refer to the same places as “space” when their meanings open up into a

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24 For further discussion see the works of Edward Relph and Yi-Fu Tuan for phenomenological approaches to space and place.

25 Such concepts of place as a bounded-space are problematic because as Massey et al (1995) have illustrated, boundaries that shape place are often permeable and do not seal places off from other places and understandings. However, boundaries are used as a means of place-making (for example countries have borders), but often times relationships occur between countries as in the European Union that contest the notion that boundaries around places are settled and coherent. Rather boundaries around places are permeable and open to interaction and movement within a wider space. Place can then be considered as the intersection or meeting place of ideas, values and interests, whose boundaries are fluid and not fixed.
broader framework. For instance, the *Taste of the Danforth* occurs on the Danforth which is a place identified by its affiliation with the Greek community. I will also discuss the Danforth more broadly as a space of performance during the festival time. I consider both the City of Toronto, and the public spaces in which the festivals are located, as Space, a more general understanding of social relations in a location, and Place, a more specific understanding of a location that are influenced by social construction and influences the construction of the social, simultaneously.

2.4 Taking up Space/Creating Spaces of Belonging

Ethno-cultural festivals create spaces for celebrating and articulating difference in Toronto. In doing so, these festivals can operate as a form of what Lefebvre calls representational space in his spatial trialectics, in which space is produced in the interactions between representations of space (conceived), spatial practices (perceived), and representational space (lived). Lefebvre sees “official” understandings of space “conceived” by governments, urban planners, developers and map makers that inscribe spaces discursively (*The Production of Space* 42). Individuals “perceive” notions of space by experiencing and navigating the “conceived” infrastructure in going about their daily routines in capitalist society (*Lefebvre The Production of Space* 38). The final vertex of the spatial dialectic involves the “lived” experience of officially “conceived spaces” that can both reflect the values of that produced space as well as potentially create alternative spatial discourses (*The Production of Space* 42). Invoking Lefebvre, geographer Joseph J. Varga sees the significance of representational space to produce an opportunity for individuals to “demand their political recognition, and attempt to use space to achieve this ambition” (36). Following this conception, I see the *Caribbean Carnival, Caravan* and the *Taste of the Danforth* festivals as performance events that can open up representational
spaces that enact diversity and claim a larger role for ethnic others in the city via the official “script” of Canadian Multiculturalism.

In many ways, Caribbean Carnival, Caravan and the Taste of the Danforth festivals developed spaces to increase the visibility and presence of difference allowed for what Charles Taylor calls a politics of recognition. Based on the understanding that life is dialogical, Taylor asserts the failure of Kantian liberalism to adequately incorporate the politics of recognition. Human identity achieves actualisation only through interacting with "significant others" in the “intimate sphere” and with others in the “public sphere” (Taylor 81). As Taylor notes, the public sphere is of great importance to realising a politics of recognition, as public “nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being” (75). The ethno-cultural festivals I have been analysing, open up spaces for interaction with “Others” and are sites of recognition, specifically in that performers present their experiences and identities to others.

The ability a festival has to take over or occupy spaces in the city, although temporarily, gives rise to visibility for ethno-cultural groups and the opportunity for interaction with others. Visibility is essential for recognition, as it is evidence of presence and required for affirmation. Specifically, Caribbean Carnival appropriates space in the downtown core, and specifically financial district, from which Black Canadians have little access to in terms of jobs. This appropriation of space not only asserts a presence, but also a claim to recognition of the accomplishments and contributions of people of Caribbean descent. The claim to space and recognition also applies to the Caravan festival, whose participating groups also struggled to break the social hierarchy. No longer invisible, hidden or contained, the talents, accomplishments and presence of ethnic groups in Toronto were being celebrated. On the other hand, the
appropriation of space or the opening of spaces in the city also gesture to locations of absence. For instance the presence of Caribbean people in the financial district of Toronto only during the festival also gestures to the inequality and lack true breakthroughs in employment opportunities a trend that was also spotted by Merrijoy Kelnor’s assessment that Caravan’s celebration of difference was tolerated because it did not threaten the status quo (Frayne B1). Festivals also allow for a greater connection between people by creating a period of festive license to behave in ways, and to visit places, they would not normally in everyday life. Moreover, such temporal and spatially limited engagement with difference may illustrate impermeability of particular barriers of inclusion and reveal the difficulty of belonging.

As the debate surrounding Canada’s cultural diversity occurred in the federal political arena in the 1960s and 1970s, public displays of difference were beginning to emerge in Toronto as a way of claiming space and recognition for the achievements and contributions of ethnic groups to Canadian society. Created in 1969 by Zena and Leon Kossar, Caravan opened up cultural happenings in church basements and community centres across Toronto to a larger audience. The assertions in the political arena for a new, more inclusive model of citizenship were being mirrored by the active celebration and affirmation of ethno-cultural groups in Toronto’s public spaces. I would argue that Caravan originated out of a political imperative, to create spaces of belonging in a city that was predominantly white. In 1974 Toronto Star reporter Trent Frayne writes, “Toronto was once a mausoleum where nothing moved on Sunday but clergymen’s lips [...]” but with the waves of immigrants, “all of a sudden the town’s drab monotone was overlaid by a merge of color and tone and style and language that produced a whole new ambiance” (B1). The Caravan festival claimed space in the city and recognised the contributions of particular ethnic communities to the rich diversity of Toronto.
Similarly, the *Taste of the Danforth* is marketed as an event that celebrates Greek food and culture. Held over the second weekend in August, the festival draws over 1.65 million visitors annually. In the 1970s and 1980s the Danforth was home to the largest Hellenic population outside of Greece, sparked by mass immigration after the Second World War. In 1960-69, Toronto experienced the largest surge of Greek immigration; almost 60 000 Greeks settled in the city. Many of these new comers settled in established neighbourhoods with ties to the Greek community, such as the Danforth. Whereas, *Festival Caravan* had an underlying imperative that sought spaces of recognition for difference, I see the *Taste of the Danforth* festival as claiming an economic space for the foods and goods of “Others” through the development of an “ethnic economy.” In “Work in the Kebab economy: A study of the ethnic economy of Turkish immigrants in Finland,” Östen Wahlbeck defines an “ethnic economy” as the development and maintenance of a private economic sector by an ethnic group, whose individuals have sole-proprietorship of businesses and often employ members of the same ethnic group, whether or not patronised by co-ethnics (545). When the Business Improvement Area (BIA) for the Danforth area was established in the early 1980s, a survey of local businesses illustrated that sixty-eight per cent of businesses were classed as “mom and pop” shops that employed four or less staff (GreekTown on the Danforth “Our History”). Interestingly, the Danforth is demographically multicultural, but has nonetheless remained as a centre for Greek identity in Toronto.

Despite migration to the suburbs, Greek restaurants and shops proliferated on the Danforth in the 1990s, up more than 14.8 percent from 1970 (Hackworth and Rekers 226). As a

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26 The 1970s is the start of a “Greek exodus” from the Danforth to the suburbs, by 1980s only 12.1 percent of the residents were born in Greece and only 19.1 percent identified as Greek (Hackworth and Rekers 226).
result, the BIA in 1993 made a concerted effort to consolidate the area’s “Greek commercial identity” (Hackworth and Rekers 226) by changing the neighbourhood’s name to GreekTown on the Danforth and hiring a consultant to redesign the area “into a slice of the Mediterranean” (Wong A4). Operated by the BIA, the *Taste of the Danforth* festival began in 1994 during what was a significant economic downturn in Canada. On the one hand, the festival performatively celebrates and inscribes the area’s “Greekness,” and, on the other hand, it functions as a means of local restauranteurs to pool advertising resources to entice consumers to come and eat on the Danforth (“History of the Festival”). The event grew exponentially from its inaugural year with five thousand visitors in the Logan Avenue parkette to fully closing a stretch of Danforth Street to accommodate over half a million visitors in 1996. As Jason Hackworth and Josephine Rekers assert, the move towards “packaging” Greek identity on the Danforth was “good business” (227). As I have mentioned in the previous chapter, the *Taste of the Danforth* can be quite profitable for restauranteurs such as Astoria, which can sell more than 20 000 skewers of *souvli*ki in a weekend. Events like the *Taste of the Danforth* generate significant advertising for the Greek “ethnic economy” on the Danforth and creating a “place” for “cultural tourists,” both local and from away, to spend their money.

Toronto’s *Caribbean Carnival* is a complex event that can open up spaces—or rather take up space—for the recognition and celebration of cultural differences in Toronto, but can also displace others of the Caribbean diaspora. The festival spatially engages the multicultural “script” by filling spaces in official history for the contributions of various under-represented minority groups to Canadian society, and by creating belonging and community within the city,

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27 Canada’s recession began in the second quarter of 1990 and marked a period of shrinking GDP over the following 12 months, and anemic growth until the late 1990s when a recovery occurred.
allowing for recognition. The ability the festival has to take over or occupy spaces in the city, although temporarily, gives rise to visibility and the opportunity for interaction with others in that performers are able to present their experiences and identities. Visibility is essential for recognition, as it is evidence of presence and required for affirmation. Specifically, Toronto’s *Caribbean Carnival* at one point in its history appropriated space in the downtown core, the financial district, in which racialised Canadians have little access to in terms of jobs. An article in the *Globe and Mail* reveals that although recent immigrants from the Caribbean and Africa are well-educated, “they experience more discrimination in Canada’s labour market and their employment outcomes are worse” (Jimenez “Blacks and Hispanics…”). This appropriation of space not only asserts a presence, but also a claim to recognition of the accomplishments and contributions of people of Caribbean descent. At the same time, the appropriation of space or the opening of spaces in the city also gesture to locations of absence and imbalances of power. For instance the presence of Caribbean people in the financial district of Toronto only during the festival time gestures to persisting inequality and systemic racism, which remain as barriers to access to employment and services for racialised minorities. As such, multicultural celebrations of racialised differences may create space for recognition, but do not necessarily translate to changing the status quo.

For many expatriate Trinidadians in the city, Toronto’s *Caribbean Carnival* recreates a sense of “homeland” in Canada and connects them to the “homeland” they left. However, the festival also opens up spaces of difference and dislocation for Trinidadians of Indian descent. As Caribbean scholar Camille Hernandez-Ramdwar argues, Toronto’s *Caribbean Carnival* is often advertised by organisers and media as “a ‘Black’ festival, or ‘African’ or ‘Afro-Caribbean’ or simply as ‘Caribbean’ or ‘West Indian’ (which in the everyday understanding of the majority of Canadians means ‘Black’)” (205). Indo-Trinidadians have a very limited role and/or are not
represented in the festival. One Indo-Caribbean woman details her frustrations with feeling “out of place” at Toronto’s *Caribbean Carnival*, claiming her experience participating at the festival:

>brought home to me forcibly the extent to which Indo-Caribbean people remain on the periphery of Caribana, and how little space is provided for their inclusion. In spite of the fact they form a sizable portion of the Caribbean Community. In spite of the fact that they play mas, go to parties, buy tickets for fetes and pump megabucks into the festival. (Espinet 5)

For some Indo-Trinidadians Toronto’s *Caribbean Carnival* signifies an incomplete relationship or communion with the “new country” as well as the “old country,” in being denied a space of representation at the event. Recognising the festival as a “Black” event causes concern, as it ignores the diversity of the Caribbean community in Toronto and denies a space of inclusion for those who fall outside of that definition.

Ethno-cultural festivals in Toronto can be seen to operate within the rubric of strategic essentialism. The difficulties of essentialism arise in *Caribbean Carnival*, *Caravan* and the *Taste of the Danforth* in terms of reducing ethnic identities to stereotypical performances and foods. Such essentialism can serve to exoticise and exclude otherness within dominant culture, or, in the case of *Caribbean Carnival*, create selective portraits of the Caribbean diaspora that omits the diverse ethnic and cultural identification within the Caribbean itself. Although criticised for homogenising intragroup differences, scholars such as Gayatri Spivak, Gerd Baumann, and Audrey Kobayashi argue that strategic essentialism can be a political device to articulate for rights and recognition, as well as to protest discrimination and inequality. I would suggest that ethno-cultural festivals are strategic in terms of creating a space for self-representation and cultural narrative that challenge dominant discourses of Canadian identity, and for creating spaces in which ethno-cultural groups can realise economic benefits.
2.5 Two Loci of Spatial Dramaturgy: Landscapes and Borders

A spatial dramaturgy can critically examine the ways space and place are constructed and produced at *Caravan, Caribbean Carnival*, and the *Taste of the Danforth* festivals apropos of broader social relations. Through the thematic topoi of landscapes and borders, I see the potential to categorically break down the ways in which spaces of belonging and dislocation are produced and manufactured. While landscapes are often described by their visual properties, it is important to examine the ways landscapes—*where* people speak languages, they celebrate and play, go about their everyday lives—are performed into existence through iterative behaviours. The landscape, for theatre scholar Bill Dunstone, is “present both as a material entity and as subjective images in the individual consciousness, becomes a *theatrum mundi*, a stage on which the self seeks to orient itself towards a fragmented world and to resolve its own internal crisis” (69). Dunstone’s assessment is relevant for my study, as in many ways ethno-cultural festivals in the diaspora create affective landscapes, an ethnoscape, that evoke personal and cultural memory, a landscape of relations and not just of things and structures. In doing so, members of the diaspora, who are located neither here nor there, create a psychic landscape of the “homeland imaginary” to explore their own identities and recreate the lost place of “home” in the host country. I see the “homeland imaginary” as an alternative space constructed as a response to the difficulty in negotiating concrete and literal spaces. Such a space refers to the multiple and intersecting subject positions proliferating the many possible ways in which a subject may take up space in society.

Such ethnoscapes are constructed with both permanent material culture and ephemeral performances, such as festivals, in which the character of a space is performatively inscribed. While such ethnoscapes can be read as resistant by providing spaces of belonging for new Canadians and changing the dominant character of Toronto, they are also capable of being co-
opted by the City of Toronto to enhance its multicultural brand. The festivals in my study are involved in the performative practice of landscape-making that works by enacting the multicultural “script” of Toronto, and by creating spaces for the “homeland imaginary.”

2.5.1 Creating the Multicultural Landscape—Performing the Multicultural “Script”

The Performative Landscapes of Toronto’s Ethnic Enclaves

The Canadian landscape is almost always defined with references to multiculturalism and diversity, which is often staged every day in the streets in both scripted in improvisational ways. As previously outlined in the introduction, the “official” multicultural “script” developed as a uniquely Canadian response to the flood of immigrants after the Second World War, beginning with the Bi and Bi Commission in 1969 and the adoption of many of the commission’s recommendations in the acceptance of multiculturalism as state policy by then Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau in 1971. Multiculturalism was officially enshrined in the Canadian Constitution in 1982 as the Charter of Rights and Freedoms acknowledges the multicultural history of Canada and received royal assent in 1988, as the Canadian Multiculturalism Act. Canadian multiculturalism forged a new nation-building project that went beyond the “two founding peoples” thesis to include racial and ethno-cultural minorities in the expression of “Canadian identity.”

While Canadian multiculturalism is an inclusive policy, a closer investigation illustrates the gaps and fissures through which some forms of “Otherness” disappear. The absence of Indigenous peoples in the official multicultural “script,” however, is significant, as once again First Nations and Aboriginals in Canada are dislocated from belonging to the nation. In Unsettling Space, Joanne Tompkins argues that “official multiculturalism has come to mean non-Aboriginal alterity, rather than a cultural policy of imbrication” (142). Although speaking from
an Australian context, Tompkins’ critiques of the superficial ways in which official multiculturalism plays out in society are relevant in the Canadian context. Tompkins argues that:

In many circles, it has been reduced to ‘food and folkdance’ model of cultural diversity, fostering cultural display that provides suitable photograph opportunities for politicians. It has become, in practice, a convenient location for ‘them’, effectively removed from the ‘us’ of the general Australian imaginary, however each category might be described. It does not have the cultural weight to generate an actual engagement with the real issue of, for instance, racial vilification. (142)

Tompkins gestures to the ways in which ethno-cultural festivals are co-opted by political players and governments undermines or occludes attempts to articulate oppositional positions. The exclusions of Canada’s indigenous from the discussions of Canadian multiculturalism will be discussed in further detail with regards to Caravan’s “Kanata” pavilion in the next chapter.

Rather, I would like to shift the focus towards the ways multiculturalism, as a policy and as a sociological reality, plays out spatially in the construction of ethnic landscapes, or “ethnoscapes,” in the City of Toronto. First introduced as a concept by socio-cultural anthropologist Arjun Appadurai, an ethnoscope is defined as “the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guest workers, and other moving groups and individuals constitute an essential feature of the world and appear to affect the politics of (and between) nations to a hitherto unprecedented degree” (“Disjuncture and Difference” 222). The global dispersion of people is central to Appadurai’s understanding of ethnoscapes, privileging de-territorialisation and migration. In contrast to

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28 Although they are very different nations with separate histories, Australian and Canada share a relationship in being settler-colonies of the British Commonwealth. Similarly, both countries experienced significant post-Second World War immigration and developed policies that are more inclusive of ethno-cultural differences. Australia repealed the White Australia Act in 1966, a policy that sought to retain the British (white) heritage of Australia, and introduced a more inclusive immigration policy. The term multiculturalism was introduced in Australia in 1973, modeled after Canadian ideas.
Appadurai’s understanding, Anthony D. Smith relates ethnoscpes closely to territorial fixity, as Conrad Schetter explains,

> It is not necessary for the members of an ethnic group to settle or dominate their ethnoscape. The collective fiction [emphasis added] that affiliation with an ethnic group is related to certain space is sufficient. Ethnic groups ‘make geography’ and ‘produce space’ to legitimise their existence in space and time. However, like the temporal dimension of ethnic origin, ethnoscapes are social constructions which can be and are modified in keeping with given endeavors and interests. (5)

Schetter’s notion of the “collective fiction” hearkens back to Benedict Anderson’s concept of an “imagined community,” which describes the process by which social groups, and in particular national identities, coalesce along imagined connections rather than contiguity (254). Such national identities and communities are constructed through the assembly of symbols and rituals—symbolic capital—in relation to territorialised categories. In Smith’s version of ethnoscapes, collective memories and imagined geographies closely adhere. Smith calls this process “the territorialisation of collective memory (453-4).

My understanding of ethnoscape borrows from both Appadurai and Smith, in that a space can be territorialised by collective memory, but that the identity of that space is not permanently fixed. Rather, in the same manner that a landscape is cultivated, an ethnoscape only exists in its performative citation of identity—in both performances of everyday life and with festivals—that imbricate group memory and identity with a particular space. As Butler has noted, normative understandings are not fixed, but rather are subject to slippages, excesses, and change over time. Drawing from Walter Benjamin’s depictions of the potential and change of nineteenth-century Paris, Barbara Bender posits that landscapes are “never inert,” but rather are cultivated and shaped by “people [who] engage with it, re-work it, appropriate it and contest it” (3). For example, David Chuenyan Lai argues that Chinatowns across North America can “mean different things to different people at different times and in different cities. Chinatown can be
conceived of as a social community, an inner-city neighborhood, a suburban shopping plaza, a skid row district, a tourism attraction, a place of mysterious evil, or a cultural hearth” (81). Toronto’s ethnic enclaves are not static entities, but rather such ethnoscapes can significantly change in character and perception over time due to a number of social, economic and political reasons, which in turn has the power to dramatically rewrite the experience and memory of the landscape.

Landscapes are continually re-contextualised and re-shaped, reflecting the changing social and economic conditions that ethno-cultural groups find themselves. As Robert Murdie and Carlos Teixeira have illustrated in their article “The Impact of Gentrification on Ethnic Neighbourhoods in Toronto: A Case Study of Little Portugal,” the shift in Toronto’s ethnoscapes is especially evident in former enclaves close to the downtown as property values continue to increase, sparked by gentrification.\(^{29}\) Property taxes are also increasing in correlation to the uptick in property values, which either push out many elderly in ethnic communities or create an incentive to sell and capitalise on increased equity, instigating movement to suburbs with lower housing costs (Murdie and Teixeira 74). In the case of GreekTown on the Danforth, an enclave that has experienced an exodus of people who identify as Greek, the neighbourhood maintains its distinctive “Greekness” through branding. Urban planning and ethnic enclave scholar, Sandeep Agrawal argues that “The Greektown is not Greek; Chinatown is not Chinese. They are just ethnic business enclaves where you can go, eat, play, have fun and go home” (qtd in Keung “Toronto’s immigrant enclaves…”). Agrawal points out the way that certain ethnoscapes has changed from being a space that enacts belonging to commoditised and commercialised spaces.

\(^{29}\) Gentrification is defined as “the production of space for—and consumption by—a more affluent and very different incoming population.” (Slater, Curran, and Lees1145).
in which ethnic otherness is packaged and sold. The landscapes of Toronto’s ethnic enclaves are affected by a number of contributing social and economic factors.

2.5.2 The Mise-en-Scène of the Multicultural City: Festivals and “Making Place” in Toronto

After the Second World War, new immigrants to Toronto settled in areas that became distinctive neighbourhoods with cultural, economic, and religious organisations that reproduced the character and traditions of the “old country” or “homelands” they left behind. The first wave of immigration sparked a chain of migration where extended family immigrated who sought out the support of their kin and community and settled in areas populated by people of similar background. In Toronto distinctive neighbourhoods have sprung up along ethno-cultural lines such as Polish and Ukrainian communities in Roncesvalles, GreekTown on the Danforth, two Little Italys (one on College Street and the other, the Corso Italia, on St. Clair Avenue West), a China Town on Spadina Avenue, and the Gerrard Street East Indian Bazaar. Although ethnic enclaves are criticised as “ghettos” and barriers to assimilation, both Louis Wirth and Herbert J. Gans illustrate that many urban dwellers choose to form communities based on similar lifestyle, culture, ethnicity, and class, which in turn shapes the perception of the area in which that community is located.

Such ethnic communities undergo a performative “place-making” by creating, what I would call the mise-en-scène of the street. In theatrical terms, the mise-en-scène, literally

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30 I wish to draw attention to the problematic use of the term “ghetto” in application to ethno-cultural neighbourhoods that developed in Toronto in the post-Second War periods. Many reasons (family, social, economic, etc…) exist for new immigrants clustering in areas along ethno-cultural lines. Using “ghetto” with reference to these enclaves dehistoricises and decontextualises the anti-Semitic, state-sanctioned segregation and persecution of the Jewish peoples in Europe. Moreover, the work of Mohammad Qadeer and Sandeep Kumar have examined and debunked the criticism of enclaves as ethnic ghettos. Also, the term has recently transformed in the mid-to-late-twentieth century to become a coded racist and classist pejorative.
“placing on stage,” is the constellation of visual and performative signs on the stage that produces meaning. Geographers David Kaplan and Wei Li write that ethnic groups are able to imprint landscapes, which they define as the ordinary surroundings that have been imbued with meaning, in explicit and implicit ways (9). Kaplan and Li assert that “the interconnections of ethnic economies, ethnic neighborhoods, and ethnic institutions mark such places as ethnic communities at their most complete form…. The place-making quality of ethnic economies stamps an ethnic identity onto a district and creates a special landscape” (10). The presence of ethnic businesses and services designate and shape ethnic neighbourhoods, marking their presence with the use of signs, language and selling specialty goods or providing social services targeted at serving their community. These visual and performative elements together contribute to the mise-en-scène of the ethnoscape, developing an affective environment of the homeland for people to situate themselves through visual signs, and what Larry Bourne and David Lay call “the ‘near senses’ of touch and scent and sound” (149). In Placing Words: Symbols, Space and the City William Mitchell also argues that “physical objects and spaces also carry associations and evoke memories. Any thing that you see, hear, smell, or touch may make you think of something else” (8). As such, the mise-en-scène of the street in ethnic neighbourhoods is specifically designed to stimulate memories, emotions and narratives that connects the here with elsewhere, which for diasporic ethno-cultural communities creates a symbolic place (homeland imaginary) out of place (the dominant culture of Toronto).

In creating an ethnic enclave, ethno-cultural groups “produce,” in the Lefebvrian sense, a representational space in which a sense of belonging can be generated in the host country where incorporation into dominant culture is an uneasy process often filled with barriers. Investments made in the desire for belonging produces communities, by politically staking claim for space in the public sphere for housing, schools, cultural centres and places of worship. Such infrastructure
plays “a central part in the ways in which people stake claim to belonging,” Sallie Westwood argues in her book *Power and the Social*, because they “change the landscape forever and help to sustain the ethnoscapes of modern urban areas” (102). Belonging is not only expressed in new builds, but also in the ways that existing architecture is subverted, altered, or expanded as material manifestation of remembering to make a “home” in a new place. Kaplan and Wei call this process “imprinting” where ethno-cultural groups transform “landscapes with their own meaning in ways that are both evident and subtle. These might be architecturally distinct buildings, particular institutions, statuary, or other markers. This in turn has an effect on ethnic identity,” which creates a sense of place (9). For example, traditional Victorian-style homes in the Little Portugal neighbourhood, in central west Toronto, have been “Mediterraneanised” by homeowners with “angel-brick façades or brightly painted brick” (Murdie and Teixeira 67). Similarly, in the Corso Italia along St. Clair Avenue West, transformed the staid British-influenced, Georgian architecture of the streetscape with an Italian *mise-en-scène* that included “arches, balconies, balustrades, columns, gardens, cantinas, and statuary for domestic architecture, as well as wrought iron, stucco, tile and marble that are used in both domestic and commercial buildings” (Buzzelli 580). Along with these material elements of the *mise-en-scène* of the ethnic enclave, the performative elements of everyday life in the neighbourhood, such as speaking a different language with neighbours or while shopping at ethnic businesses, as well as the celebratory festivals, create and express the collective identity of a place.

These developing ethnoscapes of the post-Second War period are evocative of Brecht’s *V-effekt* in making the familiar aspects of Toronto’s British-influenced *mise-en-scène* strange through adaptation and subversion. The layering of “Mediterranean” influences on the façades of British Georgian and Victorian buildings creates a palimpsestic effect that materialises—makes visible—the social conditions that post-Second War immigrants in Toronto experienced. Their
attempts to “make home” in Toronto gestures to their own displacement and defamiliarisation, as the bricolage of architectural vernaculars signal a position that is both not “here,” yet not quite “there.” Such displacement from both home and host countries makes me consider Brecht’s own position as an exiled artist, whose defamiliarising experience in host countries must have thrown his theory of the V-effekt into sharp relief. As an artist out-of-place, Brecht must have experienced his dislocation as a form of “looking-again” at everyday life in each “foreign” country upon finding himself in unfamiliar surroundings. Such frequent movement around Europe and to the United States in a forced exile from Nazi Germany must have fomented, what German Studies scholar Ronald Speirs calls, Brecht’s “ironic exile credo” that “the best school for dialectics is emigration” (47). For Brecht, holding the dialectical positions of “home” and “away” engages a critical position from which new ideas and meanings can emerge.

All three festivals in my study engage in acts of “place-making” by making difference visible through performative iterations of ethnic identity. Through performance and spectacle, Caravan imprints and marks neighbourhoods by creating symbolic worlds, or what I call “homeland imaginaries,” which sit in the dialectical space between the new country, Canada, and the “old countries,” the places of origin. Caravan is community-based, situated in places that are considered to be within the boundaries of so-called “ethnic” neighbourhoods or enclaves. Performance locations, called “pavilions,” were located in church banquet halls or ethno-cultural community centres. Places of worship are one of the centres, or investments in space, for people in an ethnic group to come together and form community, and thus are places that evoke “home.” As I have discussed in the previous chapter, Christ the Saviour Russian Orthodox Cathedral is one example of a spiritual and cultural “home” for Russian immigrants in Toronto, and Caravan is an event in which they can perform that “home” publically for their community and for others. Likewise, the Polish Cultural Centre located on Beverly Street is considered the “cultural home”
of Polish peoples in Toronto. The centre itself “would not exist without the efforts of the nalesniki and pierogy ladies,” who make the delicacies to sell at the Caravan festival in order to pay the mortgage on the building and to fund the “Polish language library there, the Polish concerts and theatre, the lecture series, the young people’s clubs, the help for new immigrants, [and] the Christmas dinner for Polish singles” (Kates C11). Pavilions create “home” in a fashion that recalls the temporality of Bahktin’s carnival, as the festival creates an alternative space of “home” temporarily and incompletely. As the Toronto Star reports on one festival attendee, “Larry Milari lives in North York, but he went home to the Philippines last night—just for a little while” (Acharya A5). The dialectical tension between home and away is made clear, as Milari acknowledges that “Even though it’s not the same, it takes you home for a while” (qtd in Acharya A5). Pavilions assemble traces—the sights, sounds, tastes—of “home” for their mise-en-scène of the “homeland imaginary.” As such, Caravan creates an ephemeral corporeal and somatic belonging through performance in order to claim and make space for “Others” in Toronto.

The last successful Caravan festival occurred in 2002 and many of the places in which it operated have significantly changed in demographics. The church and community halls have given way to condo developments and the so-called ethnic enclaves have transformed due to gentrification, although they may bear some traces of their past identity through signage and local economy. Both the dissipation of Caravan and the changing faces of the neighbourhoods it once celebrated illustrate the very fluid nature of “places” and space. Examining such dissolutions of both physical and performative places suggests that the symbolic multiculturalism promoted by the official policy needs to shift towards substantive issues such as accessibility to services and resources as well as the removal of barriers to equality, something that mere historical/folkloric performances of culture cannot affect. Perhaps declining participation in
Caravan over its last few years reflects the changes inevitable in any culture that occur over time and the realities of the intercultural lived spaces of Toronto.

The Greeks on the Danforth have created an ethnic landscape in two ways: first by physically marking the space with emblems gesturing to the Greek heritage of the neighbourhood residents and business owners; and, secondly, in a more ephemeral way, by imprinting their space through festival in the repetitive citations of “Greekness” in the Taste of the Danforth. GreekTown is set within a bounded area from Chester Avenue to Dewhurst Boulevard that brims with imagery and symbols that signify Greek culture, which is a concerted effort of “imprinting” the landscape led by the BIA. Significant elements of the mise-en-scène include the Greek flags displayed on business signage and the predominant use of the colours of the flag, blue and white, on the streetscape from the Greektown banners to the Greece-shaped lighting that hang on light standards. In 1982 the BIA formalised the identity of the neighbourhood by replacing the street signage with distinctive blue and white, bilingual signs in both Greek and English.
Moreover, by erecting monuments, Greeks on the Danforth make claims on space to the permanence of Greek identity in Canada. The monument is “a complex locus as memory, power, and identity,” Joanne Tompkins argues, that “is a semi-permanent, symbolic site that resonates with history, even if it is not unanimously appreciated or if its function changes over time” (43).

In 1990, a statue of Alexander the Great was placed in the parkette near Logan Avenue and

Figure 6: Bilingual signage, use of blue and white, pillar decals on the light standards.

Photo: Jacqueline Taucar
Danforth donated by the Pan-Macedonian Community$^{31}$ and the Greek Community of Metropolitan Toronto (Kulig H13). The monument commemorates a heroic, official Greek experience in the histories of the Greek diaspora in Canada and around the world. As such the monument acts as a Lefebvrian representation of space that reinforces a certain ideology and produces a specific space. Through symbolic representations of permanent and semi-permanent material culture, Greek-Canadians in Toronto create a distinctive space of “Greekness” of the Danforth.

Figure 7: Monument to Alexander the Great in the Logan Ave. Parkette that serves as a beer garden during the Taste of the Danforth Festival. Photo: Jacqueline Taucar

The Taste of the Danforth festival creates an ephemeral, a more subtle form imprinting by encouraging participants from all over the city is to associate the performance of “being Greek” with GreekTown. The advertising campaign for the Taste of the Danforth festival is to “eat, drink, and be Greek for the day”. At the event’s many stages set up for entertainment, the master of ceremonies encourages the visitors’ performance of “Greekness”: “Here at Taste of the

$^{31}$ From the Greek province of Macedonia and not the country Macedonia from former Yugoslavian state.
Danforth you are Greek! You become Greek through music, food and Greek customs” (Taste field notes). For coming to the Danforth during the festival, the master of ceremonies proclaims to the audiences present that, “You are all honorary Greeks for the day!” (Taste field notes). Along with the visual tropes of “Greekness”, the citation of what the festival organisers call “being Greek” during the festival’s celebration normalises the perception of the Greek identity of the Danforth, despite census results showing that GreekTown is now no longer home to a homogenous Greek population, but is becoming increasingly more diverse.32

Whereas Caravan and a Taste of the Danforth are festivals that operate in areas of the City that are viewed positively as places to visit, shop, and dine, the Caribbean Carnival’s Junior Parade is performed in neighbourhoods such as Jane-Finch and Eglinton-York that are demographically Caribbean and experience higher incidences of crime and low-income rates. Not only does the Junior Parade performatively imprint and perform “Caribbean-ness” in the spaces in which it is performed, but it also functions to subvert and challenge the ways dominant discourses have negatively inscribed such areas, and in doing so, the “black” bodies that occupy this space. Albeit temporarily, the Junior Parade is an opportunity for the poor and marginalised, often “black” bodies of children and their families, take the public space of the streets to critique dominant elite culture and bourgeois morality. As such, the Junior Parade generates space to transgress everyday rules and perceptions of the Caribbean places of the City of Toronto.

Although the Junior Carnival has a long history of being uprooted and re-rooted from/to a number of different communities in Toronto, examining the spatial dramaturgy of three specific

32 The 2006 City of Toronto Neighbourhood profile of the GreekTown Danforth area illustrates rapid change in the ethnic makeup of the area. Results show an increase of people not self-identifying as Greek living in the area and a steady decline of those self-identifying as Greek.
parade routes—particularly Eglington-York and Jane-Finch—reveal significantly different interpretations/presentations of national/diasporic identities.

Media reports on the Jane-Finch neighbourhood discursively shape and inscribe the landscape as an immigrant enclave synonymous with gun violence, crime and poverty. For instance some of the more outrageous and sensationalist headlines and ledes invokes fear and panic as the Toronto Star reports “Neighbours leave town after boy, 4, shot in yard; ‘it’s not worth it to stay,’ says frightened mother…” (Naomi Carinol and Isabel Teotonio). Other journalists perpetuate stereotypes regarding guns and gangs permeating everyday life in the neighbourhood, hyperbolising that Jane-Finch is “where young children who have never been out of the city know the difference between a Glock 17 automatic handgun and an Uzi submachine gun before they see their first live cow” (Rankin “Surviving the Jane and Finch…” SA1-2). Terms such as “notorious,” “tough” (DiManno A1) and “crime-ridden” where people “feel unsafe after walking after dark” (Powell B3) are often used in describing Jane-Finch that it has colonised the public imaginary of the area.

The perceptions shaping the environment are never just tied to the location, but attach themselves to the bodies that inhabit that space, regardless of the diversity of experiences that exist there. As Radhika Mohanram argues, “the everyday-lived-in-ness of black bodies in their environment is effaced along with the everyday-ness experience of dynamic space…. [T]he discursive construction of blackness is metonymically linked to the schematization of space” (22). Although space is mapped and measured according to dominant discourse, there is a disruptive potential for a dynamic, dialectical understanding of space as it is used in everyday life. Ian Buchanan argues that “since space is produced by its occupants, and the nature of space changes with the actions of the occupiers, its present—its everyday-ness—can never be mapped”
There is possibility, according to Buchanan, for reimaging, resisting, and subverting dominant spatial discourses, precisely because space is never fixed or stable, but always in the processes of production.

The Eglinton-York and Jane-Finch neighbourhoods hold particular meaning for the Caribbean community as spaces of Caribbean identity. In the 1960s and 1970s, the first wave of Caribbean immigrants to Toronto settled in areas that became distinctive neighbourhoods with cultural, economic, and religious organisations that reproduced the character and traditions of the “homelands” they left behind. The first wave of immigration sparked a chain of migration where extended family immigrated who sought out the support of their kin and community and settled in areas populated by people of similar background. These areas, Jane-Finch in particular, are demographically considered “priority neighbourhoods” or “priority areas” by Toronto, considered “at risk” for having a higher than average population of new immigrants, visible minorities, and lone-parent families (“Social Risk Factors…”). Priority areas also have an average low-income rate higher than the Toronto average, as well as high youth unemployment and a high percentage of population with less than a high school education (Ghollam 5). The development of Caribbean landscapes in Toronto are the result of marginalising forces in the host nation based on race and class, in which new immigrants come together for mutual support and form an “imagined community” of belonging.

The Junior Carnival is an ephemeral and performative act that contributes to the imprinting and performance of a Caribbean neighbourhood’s identity. In 1994, the form of Junior Carnival changed to became more like the adult event by taking to the streets and becoming more of a community-oriented event. The first street parade for children took place on Eglinton Avenue (starting at Dufferin Street and ending in Oakwood Avenue), which is the
predominantly Caribbean neighbourhood of Eglinton-York\textsuperscript{33} (Rankin “Calypso concert…” A6). The shift to parading the streets is significant, because children are no longer enacting their “Caribbean-ness” in a ticketed event in the closed space of a stadium, but rather are performing in the public and lived spaces that hold meaning for people of Caribbean descent. Such a transition to perform within the community, contributes to imprinting the neighbourhood and solidifying its Caribbean identity. The parade, over the years, reiterates and performs “Caribbean-ness” for the community and becomes an indelible element of the neighbourhood’s identity formation as “Caribbean.” The Junior Carnival’s popularity grew exponentially that in 1998 an estimated crowd of forty thousand spectators lined several blocks of the Eglinton route (James B3). Largely of Caribbean heritage, audiences came to the event and the area to participate in the performance of “Caribbean-ness” and to celebrate an event that symbolically and iconographically re-members the “homeland” in the host nation. Certainly, the movement to Eglinton brought people in the neighbourhood of non-Caribbean backgrounds to the event and benefitted the local economy, made up largely of small businesses run by new immigrants from Europe and the Caribbean, by increasing traffic on the street. The Junior Parade as a marker of “Caribbean-ness” would also draw outsiders who crave exotic experiences and the accessories that go with it.

The Jane-Finch era (2004-2011) of the Junior Parade performed as a significant source of positive representations of Caribbean culture in an area that struggles against negative perceptions of race, crime and poverty. The Jane-Finch neighbourhood has one of the highest percentages of racialised groups and new immigrants, particularly of Caribbean origin.

\textsuperscript{33} This area is also known as the Oakwood-Vaughan neighborhood, which has undergone a transformation due to gentrification and is no longer considered a Priority Area by Toronto.
According to 2006 Census information and the City of Toronto’s Social Policy Analysis and Research Study, 70.6 percent of residents in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood are visible minorities, the largest group identifying as Black (20.2 percent) predominantly of Caribbean decent, and 24 percent of the population lives below the Low Income Cut Off (Jane-Finch Priority Area Profile). Activist and neighbourhood resident Suzanne Narain argues that the Jane-Finch neighbourhood “has become tainted in the public imaginary and is considered one of the most dangerous corridors in Canada (Richardson, 2008). Mass media perpetuates [sic] scenes of violence erupting within the under-resourced neighbourhood” (55). The perception of criminalisation and violence surrounding carnival events is also perpetuated in locations where diasporic carnivals take place, notably in the United States with Brooklyn’s West Indian American Day Carnival and in the United Kingdom with London’s Nottinghill Carnival.34

The Junior Carnival acted as a performative intervention in the normative understandings of the Jane-Finch area. Helen Gilbert and Joanne Tompkins emphasise Carnival’s ability to contest and confront racial binaries and construction in that the “carnival mas’ provides a model of disruptive difference in its display of an ‘alter-body’ (in the Baktinian sense) that beguiles and reworks imperialist systems of representation” (87). As such, the carnival allows for the presence of two thousand children to take over the streets and transform the neighbourhood with their colourful mas costumes, dancing, laughter and youthful exuberance, thereby physically enacting a challenge the normative assumptions and stereotypical representations perpetuated about Caribbean-Canadians and of Jane-Finch, albeit temporarily. Organiser Stephen Weir remarks about the importance of Junior Carnival to the image of the neighbourhood: “People tend to

34 For more regarding negative representations of diasporic carnivals see the work of Guztmore (1993), Buff (1997), and Nurse (1999).
think of this area for its social problems, but we want the kids to see positive sides of Caribbean culture” (qtd in Shrikanthan A16). Certainly, newspapers report positively on the Junior Carnival often describing the event as “dazzling” (Fanfair “Kids dazzle…”), “a showcase of every bright colour known to mankind” (Edwards A3), and “jubilant festivities”(Sidhu A3), but a critical examination of the language reveals a particular tone that trivialises racialised groups. Though positive and celebratory in nature, the language in the newspaper articles is problematic for constructing the event simplistically as a fun, colourful, exotic spectacle, thereby overlooking and marginalising the cultural and historical significance of the Junior Carnival. Such representations in the media are inherently ambivalent: on the one hand, celebrating symbolic multiculturalism in the spectacle of diversity and tolerance and describing Canadians of Caribbean descent as “exotic” and “Othered;” while, on the other, functionally excluding them from belonging to the nation for being different.

*Caribbean Carnival’s* Junior Parade subverts the stereotypical and negative representations of Jane-Finch as an area synonymous with poverty, crime and racial division, with thousands of children taking over the street in an exuberant celebration of Caribbean culture. The enjoyment of the children playing *mas* in the streets as well as the family, friends and strangers who line the streets to watch the colourful spectacle re-write and subvert the “dangerous” narratives and representations with the realities of the heterogeneous experiences that constitute everyday life in the neighbourhood. While it may be a “Priority Area” due to a constellation of social and economic issues, Jane-Finch is also the location where family and a diasporic home can be found in productive and celebratory ways. As such, when the Junior Parade is uprooted and re-rooted from/to a number of different communities in Toronto, the meanings of the parade and the spaces in which they are performed are mutually affected, an
issue that I will examine fully in the following section regarding the Borders, Mosaics, and Peripheries of Canadian Multiculturalism.

The representational spaces of ethnic landscapes are not only just an articulation of alternative positions, but also feed into official representations of space, illustrating Lefebvre’s concept of a fluid spatial trialectics. Such ethnoscapes are not just resistant landscapes of ethnic identities, but can also be co-opted by the city as a means of enacting its multicultural “script.” Ethnic neighbourhoods, and their commercialisation as “little” and “towns” within Toronto, also draw outsiders who crave exotic experiences and some of the accoutrements that go with it. Such special landscapes and festivals are recognised by the City of Toronto and form a major component of the city’s marketing emphasis. For instance on the City’s official website there is a link to “neighbourhoods” where individuals can learn what makes Toronto a multicultural city:

The histories, cultures and even foods brought to Toronto by immigrants have led to the creation of many vibrant neighbourhoods within the city. In fact, the city counts 140 unique areas to live within its borders. Each has its own distinguishing characteristics with a variety of languages spoken and extensive ethnic and cultural communities and services. (“Neighbourhood Profiles”)

Promoting ethnic landscapes as tourist destinations, city governments are able to “capture the local benefits from the global ebb and flow of capital, people and their cultures so that the urban centre becomes a node of lucrative trans-national networks” (Shaw 55). Toronto treats these neighbourhoods as places, distinct locales within the city that have defining characteristic and a sense of identity, worth exploring and consuming. The City often trades on the social and cultural capital of difference that these festivals celebrate, and yet racist and discriminatory policies such as “carding” or “street checks” are still employed by Toronto Police Services.35

35 “Carding,” also euphemistically known as “street checks” or “community interventions,” refers to the practice of arbitrarily stopping and requesting personal identification from individuals in public, which is often and unevenly applied to individuals of racialised backgrounds (stopcarding.com “The Campaign to Stop…”).
Together the physical and performative “places” generated by ethno-cultural groups are used to demark Toronto as a multicultural and tolerant city open to many different cultures.

2.6 The Borders, Mosaics, and Peripheries of Canadian Multiculturalism

While Caravan, Caribbean Carnival, and the Taste of the Danforth festivals perform landscapes of belonging and create spaces for community, the spatial dramaturgies of the festival also reveals the existence of barriers—or borders—to inclusion. Using the theories of Brecht and Lefebvre in a critical spatial dramaturgy defamiliarises the ways in which space appears “naturally” bounded, and/or where and how borders are created around these ethno-cultural festivals that reveal insights regarding the discourses of inclusion and exclusion in the nation. In Unsettling Space, Joanne Tompkins argues, “Borders signal an attempt to demarcate the space allocated for ‘presence’ from the space relegated to ‘absence’” and is “also signified by here/there, us/them, self/other, to name a few” (127). Borders denote anxiety and attempts at containment whether it is to keep things together or apart. The theoretical work on borderlands, which has been significantly influenced by Gloria Anzaldúa’s Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza, can be useful as a counter-hegemonic, decolonising methodology. Borderlands is a concept to describe a space of hybridity (mestiza), in which identity is constructed across multiple categories—race and ethnicity, class, and gender and sexuality—that are always fluid and changing. While the theoretical concept of borderlands valorises the border as a space of “mobility, situational identity, local contingency, and the ambiguities of power” (Hämäläinen and Truett 338), the proliferation of the metaphor of “border-crossing” overlooks the difficult
lived-realities and risks individuals endure when migrating. The permeability of the border is neither a fluid process nor an act without peril.

The “border” is a useful concept for my study in its relation to the notion of hybridity. As the border is a space where two or more cultures meet and mix, it can be a site where new negotiations of power can occur. Building from Homi K. Bhabha’s work, I am interpreting festivals through the concept of the “third space”, a space of hybridity, in which binaristic models of identity based on self and other are disrupted by recognising their continual contact and mixing. Hybridity becomes a third space, a liminal border zone at the crossroads of cultures, in which other positions are negotiated and articulated and new meanings and representations are possible. Bhabha undermines simplistic binaries and polarising constructions of the world as self and other through his writing on hybridity with emphasis on its continual and ongoing process of becoming. Susan Stanford Friedman precisely describes the ongoing process of hybridity as “the body moves through space, crossing borders of all kinds, identity acquires sedimented and palimpsestic layers each of which reflects the locations through which the person has moved, each of which exerts some influence on the other layers and on identity as a whole” (28-9). For Bhabha, the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original movements from which the third emerges because of the recognition that cultures are not discrete phenomena; they are continually in contact with one another leading to a mixed-ness.

Rather, hybridity, Bhabha asserts, “is the ‘third space’ which enables other positions to emerge. This third space displaces the histories that constitute it and sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives, which are inadequately understood through received wisdom”

36 The current Syrian crisis marks an exigent example of obstructions and present dangers, both natural and human, challenging migrants seeking to leave war zones.
Geographer, Edward Soja synthesises Bhabha’s concept of the third space with Henry Lefebvre’s work on perceived, conceived and representational spaces to create the Thirddspace “as an-Other way of understanding and acting to change the spatiality of human life, a distinct mode of critical spatial awareness that is appropriate to the new scope and significance being brought about in the rebalanced trialectics of spatiality—historicality—sociality” (57). Space, history and the social are all entwined and create the experience of being-in-the-world. With ethnoscapes the “trialectics of spatiality/historicality/sociality is merged and conjoined through the power relations that play such a central part in the ways in which people stake claims to belonging” (Westwood 102). The social and historical cannot happen in vacuums, but rather occur in spaces, and spaces are crucial to understanding the social and historical aspects of our being.

Acting as a “third space,” as the borderlands in which conflicting meanings are negotiated, Toronto’s ethno-cultural festivals perform institutionalised notions of multiculturalism as well as recuperate systematic exclusions through the carnival spirit (Bakhtin 1984 and consider Robert Stam 1989, Peter Stallybrass and Alon White 1986) and/or highlight the ways in which people of colour are ironically marginalised as A. Abdi (2005) and Amoaba Gooden (2008) suggest in their examination of the imbalance of economic benefits derived from festivals. The notion of borders is dramaturgically salient in three ways. First, I will examine the relationship between the concept of the border, as a means of separation, and the metaphor of the “cultural mosaic” that is invoked by Canadian multiculturalism. As critics have argued, the Canadian Multicultural Act have is a method of diversity management that perpetuates limited and bounded ethnic representations via its focus on preservation of ethnic heritages. While Caravan opened up space for the participation and recognition of minorities, I will explore how Caravan’s spatial replication of the cultural mosaic is a reflection of the staticity of ethnic
representations and the limitation of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act’s emphasis on the preservation of ethnic heritage. Second, and closely related to the cultural mosaic, I will analyse the boundaries surrounding the *Taste of the Danforth* festival, which starts at Broadview Avenue to the west and ends at Jones Avenue to the east, as the area it excludes becomes a spatial metaphor for be(long)ing in the multicultural city and participation in the multicultural “script.” In particular, the festival ends on the eastern boundary at the point where the Muslim neighbourhood known as the “Danforth-Mosaic” begins. Both *Caravan* and the *Taste of the Danforth* festivals perform into the notion of “social tectonics,” a concept developed by Tim Butler and Garry Robson to describe the ways that social groups move along parallel, rather than intersecting pathways (77).

And third, and in a slight shift of perspective, I will examine the spatial dramaturgy of *Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival* that reveals the relationship of proximity and distance in a symbolic notion of concentric spaces in which power is positioned in relation to the centre. *Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival* is a reflection of the centre and periphery power dynamics in Toronto, revealing the ways that the periphery (as an edge, border, or margin) can be a critical strategy of resistance and cultural negotiation. The centre/periphery relationship works in two distinct ways in *Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival*. First, examining the shifting spatialities of the adult Parade of the Bands from the centre of Toronto’s financial district to the peripheries on Lake Shore Boulevard can be read as metaphor of the (dis)location of racialised bodies of Caribbean descent within the nation. *Caribbean Carnival’s* (dis)placement from Yonge Street, to University Avenue, to Lake Shore Boulevard can be seen as shifting Toronto’s Caribbean community away from the centre and towards the peripheries of Toronto. Secondly, exploring the way that the Junior Parade is displaced from the streets and spaces that act as “home” for Caribbean people within the city of Toronto to a “contained” space in Downsview park.
illustrates the importance of the event’s spatial specificity in making community. Viewing Toronto’s ethno-cultural festivals through a dramaturgy influenced by Brecht and Lefebvre reveals the way festivals can create a space in which many meanings may be negotiated; they become spaces of performative intervention into the normative understandings of multiculturalism and how it functions in Toronto.

2.6.1 Performing the “Cultural Mosaic” at Festival Caravan

The spatial dramaturgy of the Caravan festival becomes an interesting case for examining the literal and figurative construction of the metaphor used for Canadian Multiculturalism, the cultural mosaic. The metaphor of the cultural mosaic performs the anxiety of mixing, in which pieces of heritage are set up in their places, separately from one another. Spatially separated from one another in particular “ethnic” neighbourhood around the city, the festival creates mini-homelands, or in the terminology of the festival “pavilions,” which are named after capital cities of the home countries and can only be accessed by the purchase of “passports.” Although Torontonians visited “Other” neighbourhoods, the spatialisation of pavilions as mini-homelands that required “passports” for entrance reinforces the mosaic metaphor of barriers and separation between cultures. The passport enacts the tropes of geographic borders between nations, or in this case of Caravan between the cultures that live side-by-side within the City of Toronto.
I interpret the "passport," through Brechtian dramaturgy, as gestic prop that reveals the dynamics of inclusion in and exclusion from the nation. The passport encourages a process of exoticisation of “ethnic” Canadians that alienates them from belonging in the nation. While symbolic and used as a souvenir-object, the passport performs into the notion of border control and cultural tourism as individuals must present their “travel document” to be stamped at the entry of each pavilion visited. After “being approved” for entry, visitors are welcomed by the city’s Mayor and “Princess,” a performance of diplomacy that extends the border-crossing metaphor upon which the festival is premised. Each pavilion is situated locally within Toronto, however the use of passports to enter each performance venue suggests that these “places” were exotic and “Othered.”
The common travel trope of exoticisation is often emphasised in articles in the daily newspapers, as Torontonians are implored to “forget your inhibitions about strange-sounding cuisines and prepare to become an explorer” (Rasky D1). The language of exploration and discovery serves to heighten the notions of difference and “Otherness” of ethno-cultural groups in Toronto, which sets them apart from the nation. The spaces of the city between the pavilions become like the grout of the mosaic, because the spectator/visitor never sees the interaction between different cultures in Toronto, but rather self-contained performances located in community halls or church basements.
Upon entrance to the pavilion, visitors would be treated to entertainment by folkloric dance groups and bands that would perform traces of the homeland through a standard structure. Circumscribed in their presentation, each pavilion was uniformly subject to a tripartite configuration of three elements: music and dance, food and drinks, displays and sale of folk arts and crafts. As Greenhill argues with regards to Winnipeg’s *Folklorama* Festival, which mimics *Caravan’s* pavilion and presentation of culture, the “similarities and differences within and between groups are presented in discrete, separate locations, preventing actual encounters between different perspectives” (39). As such, any real differences between groups were effectively erased by the emphasis on common elements that structured pavilion displays.

Moreover, *Caravan* is often minimised and “glocalised” in newspapers, as Esther Fisher writes, “How can you travel around the world and never leave Toronto? It’s possible at Caravan, Metro Toronto’s annual cultural festival” (B11). The presentation structure imposed on the pavilions in addition to the publicity focusing on exoticism and reductionism constrains ethno-cultural
representation and reception, which in turn constructs barriers to developing a deeper understanding of cultural difference in Toronto.

Yet, for those individuals not part of the pavilion’s ethnic community, *Caravan* became a place to encounter the “Other” and learn about the traditions and heritages of people living in Toronto. Although minorities were becoming more visible and actively asserting their differences in the seventies, University of Toronto sociologist Merrijoy Kelner, quoted in Frayne’s article, emphasised that the power structure had not really changed: “[F]ew newcomers have cracked the WASP establishment, the White Anglo Saxon Protestant domination of banking, insurance, the stock exchange and the social ladder” (B1). Frayne further argued that the WASP majority was tolerant of Toronto’s colourful glow of multiculturalism because its position had never been threatened by immigration: “People are tolerant of ethnic diversity as long as this diversity does not pose a threat” (qtd in Frayne B1).

Performances at *Caravan*’s pavilions could only but showcase a very limited or static folkloric picture that circumscribed any complicated or problematic representations of dynamic lived-culture. Furthermore, there is a risk of “McMulticulturalism,” as Greenhill argues with regards to Winnipeg’s Folklorama, to describe ethno-cultural events that tend to “mask difference as multicultural display” (40). Greenhill’s definition of “McMulticulturalism” with regards to *Folklorama*, is relevant to *Caravan* as their praxis is similar: “touristic orientation, pavilion formats, merging of international and local acts, prescribed audience roles—promotes similarity (usually that of a hegemonic order), just as McDonald’s superficially different layout and décor from restaurant to restaurant never really fails to conceal a uniformity of service and product” (40). *Caravan* can similarly fall into such limiting and limited representations of “cultural others,” as Bissoondath has also argued, in its format of entertaining multicultural
spectacle. Bissoondath criticises Toronto’s *Caravan* festival for being a “Canadian-mosaic version of the Jungle Cruise at Walt Disney World” (82). Similar to Greenhill’s notion of “McMulticulturalism,” Bissoondath’s main criticism of multiculturalism is that it devalues “that which it claims to wish to protect and promote. Culture becomes an object for display rather than the heart and soul of the individuals formed by it” (88). In doing so, ethno-cultural identity is both staged to promote Toronto’s multiculturalism and stage-managed to fall within limited and “safe” boundaries of entertainment that eschews cross-cultural conflict or differences.

The cultural mosaic is a powerful metaphor to describe the Canadian style—or brand of—cultural diversity management. Nonetheless, I see potential implications and limitations of using this metaphor. The cultural mosaic is often associated with strategic essentialism, which allow for collective pooling of resources—economic, political and social—for an articulation and defence of interests that individuals cannot accomplish on their own. However, this can lead to divisive battles between groups for scant resources. Regarding *Caravan*, Norman Mohamid, executive director of the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants notes, “There are dangers to emphasizing differences, it can represent a hiving off and a separateness. And yet this notion of differentiation underlies the festival itself, even though the backdrop against which *Caravan* was first staged has changed” (qtd. in Thompson A2).

Bissoondath takes official multiculturalism to task for encouraging ethnic differentiation and a “psychology of separation” from mainstream culture, which results in separation into ethnic enclaves (42). Unity and cohesion are sacrificed in the struggle and competition between groups for resources. Bissoondath’s assertion strikes at the cultural mosaic for the lack of unity and cohesion, arguing that “Multiculturalism has failed us. In eradicating the centre, in evoking uncertainty as to what and who is Canadian, it has diminished all sense of Canadian values, of
what is Canadian” [emphasis mine] (71). In my reading of Bissoondath’s critique, significant questions arise. First, we must ask who defines what is Canadian, and whose history and narrative do we privilege in that definition (British or French) and whose do we exclude, for instance, the Indigenous Peoples of Canada? Second, who gets to define the terms of being Canadian and under what terms and to what end? Concepts such as “national unity” and “national identity” are complex and problematic terms that can maintain hegemonic and suppressive powers over those who fall outside of the accepted identities. As evidenced by ongoing debates regarding reasonable accommodation in Quebec and the recent banning of the niqab in citizenship ceremonies, Canada’s multicultural policy is not as inclusive or as ideal as we may imagine, as debates over which cultural practices fit within official policy frequently occur.

In a similar manner, the bounded-nature of Caravan spaces and the mosaic metaphor of Canadian Multiculturalism equally suffer from a sense of freezing ethnic identities in particular time and space and fail to recognise the lived realities of interactions between cultures in everyday life. Although audience members at Caravan took pride in the city’s diversity and showed tolerance by travelling to diverse neighbourhoods, taking an interest in other cultures, their participation and crossing boundaries into different neighbourhoods did not necessitate any further engagement with the political and social issues that underlie multiculturalism. Caravan’s oversimplified conceptions of cultural minorities and audiences’ reception of them potentially sustained barriers to full participation and equality by not challenging the public’s complicity in their creation or their passivity with regards to issues like racism. While these are significant issues to consider when analysing Toronto’s ethno-cultural festivals such as Caravan, it is also important to note that these festivals also contributed to a community’s sense of belonging. Pavilion were opportunities for ethno-cultural communities to claim visual space in the city and
in the very least allow for the beginnings of cross-cultural understanding, although in a limited and restrictive way. The crude characterisation of festival performances as “Disneyfication” or “McMulticulturalism,” by Bissoondath and Greenhill respectively, overlooks the significant investments in time and talent that volunteers dedicate to representing their culture by producing and selling the food, performances, and folk art, which generates material benefits for the community.

2.6.2 The Boundaries of Be(long)ing at the Taste of the Danforth Festival

There is a similar dramaturgy of space enacted at the Taste of the Danforth as the area of inclusion and exclusion interestingly situates the festival in between the commercialisation of McDonald’s restaurant on the western border and the Madinah Masjid mosque at the eastern border. Ironically, when we examine the physical setting of the performance of “Greek-ness” at the Taste of the Danforth the first restaurant at the corner of Broadview and Danforth Avenues is a McDonald’s fast-food chain restaurant, which sells an affordable, sleekly packaged, mass produced, consumer items. I read the inclusion of McDonald’s in the Taste of the Danforth’s mise-en-scène as a Brechtian gestus that draws attention to the street, and by extension the festival, as part of social and economic relations between producers and consumers. The presence of the “golden arches” is a visual symbol of a global franchise sets a tone for the rest of the festival which sells what I would call “McGreekness,” or, recalling Greenhill’s criticism of Caravan, “McMulticulturalism.”

The Taste of the Danforth sells more than just Greek food, but is also a reflection of the multicultural businesses and restaurants in the neighbourhood. Over one-hundred food vendors participate in the three-day festival offering, what the Toronto Star calls “global flavour” (Slaughter B2). Visitors can sample foods from Greece, Japan, Brazil, Mexico, the Middle East,
Thailand and more, none of which is necessarily sourced, sold, made, or consumed by people of the food’s national or cultural origin. The festival’s website states that *Taste of the Danforth*:

> has grown to become a celebration of its Greek heritage and the multicultural nature of the City of Toronto…. The *Krinos Taste of the Danforth* is one of Toronto’s signature events, showcasing the best of what our multicultural city has to offer – from music to the arts and from sports to food. (‘History of the Festival’)

The *Taste of the Danforth* is often recognised by the organisational body and participants alike as reflecting Toronto’s multicultural heritage and a means of developing cross-cultural understanding between the different communities that make up the city. However, when examining the spatial dramaturgy of the *Taste of the Danforth* reveals critical insights into the multiculturalism that is produced and consumed at the festival.

As I have argued in the previous chapter, the relationship between cultural producers and cultural tourists shapes the production of “Greekness” at the festival. The homogenisation of what constitutes Greek food at the festival to highly portable, fast-food-like comestibles occurs as a result of tourist tastes and dollars having a hand in shaping the food production. In a way, the *Taste of the Danforth* festival becomes a space that draws attention to “McDonaldization,” which George Ritzer defines as the ways in which society has incorporated the processes of fast-food production, such as efficiency, predictability, calculability and control (*The McDonaldization of Society* 12). I see these fast-food conditions at play in the festival space contributing to the homogenising of culture for quick controlled, consumption. The infiltration of “McDonaldization” as a discursive practice in the festival space contributes to homogenising culture in three main ways: first, commercialising ethnic identities in a way that reflects entertainment standards rather than accurately representing the culture of the community; second, de-politicising cultural representations to reflect positive and happy selective portraits in which the difficult aspects of these cultures are usually omitted; and, third, essentialising and
limiting the representation of “Others” (re)produce shallow, cultural stereotypes. Capitalism produces and naturalises a space at the *Taste of the Danforth* festival for the production, sale and consumption of “McCulture,” a neatly packaged, mass-produced, quickly sold and easily consumed product. In doing so, the space, the commodities, and social relations mutually reproduce and reinforce each other.

Interestingly, I would like to add that if you were to walk the three-kilometre length of the festival from Broadview Avenue to Jones Avenue, you would pass three Starbucks Coffee Company locations, which are arguably the legacy and the future of “McDonaldization.” Such “infill”(tration) of Starbucks—that is the absolute reduction of space between outlets that increases the efficiency of coffee purchases and reduces time (calculability) to your next cup (Ritzer “Starbuckization” 2)—gestures to the efficiency and calculability of purchasing your next taste of *souvlaki*, essentially an identical item at the adjacent booth at the festival. As well as the presence of other fast-food franchises, both McDonald’s restaurant and Starbucks Coffee shops are dramaturgical signs of how processes of capitalism can shape spaces and the production of “Greekness” at the *Taste of the Danforth* festival. Moreover, the presence of Starbucks also gestures to GreekTown as a landscape of gentrification, especially when contrasted to the neighbourhood it abuts to the east, the Danforth-Mosaic, which is, coincidentally, where the festival ends.

The image of the multicultural festival is again disturbed when we examine the festival’s boundaries to the east. The festival ends at Jones Avenue, at the foot of the Madinah Masjid Mosque and the beginnings of the predominantly Muslim neighbourhood, the Danforth-Mosaic.
This section of the Danforth is described as “the other Danforth” a “dead space,” the “gritty side,” in binaristic opposition to the thriving, alive, clean GreekTown (Radwanski M1). One journalist from the Toronto Star notes that this area east of GreekTown inadvertently, “serves as a buffer. The businesses that thrive to the west have no market there, and neither do the Muslim community's own establishments have much pretence of catering to a wider clientele” (Radwanski M1). The boundary of inclusion and exclusion reflects a hierarchical understanding of ethnicity establishing GreekTown as a centre of power, a standard with which to be compared, and counters the festival’s surface message of multicultural understanding. The absence of the Danforth-Mosaic from the festivities contrasts the assertions in the newspaper media, “This strip is about being inclusive, not exclusive. And that's what the Taste of the Danforth is about, too” (Zindros qtd in Karastamatis TO1). Up to a point I would argue. As the spatial dramaturgy suggests that so-called multicultural understanding is conditioned by the forces of
“McDonaldization” that reduces and simplifies the representation of ethnic others for convenience, or draws a boundary around that which is yet inassimilable to the practise.

Figure 12: The end of the Taste of the Danforth Festival and the beginning of the Danforth-Mosaic. Photo: Jacqueline Taucar

The two contrasting neighbourhoods of GreekTown and the Danforth-Mosaic also highlight the metaphor of the cultural mosaic in a similar fashion to the way the Caravan festival is organised with separate pavilions. The neighbourhoods of GreekTown and Danforth-Mosaic, like the Caravan pavilions, illustrate cultures positioned beside one another in quite a harmonious fashion, but does not recognise the internal diversity within neighbourhoods or what Tim Butler and Garry Robson call the “social tectonics”(77) between ethnic and class groups. Social tectonics is a useful notion to examine the ethnic mosaic in the ways that different ethnic
groups move and operate along parallel pathways, eschewing integration or interaction on a systematic basis, as if in separate worlds (Butler and Robson 78).

Caravan and the Taste of the Danforth festivals both illustrate the social tectonics of the cultural mosaic of Canadian multiculturalism. The emphasis on enclavism is seemingly “tectonic” as pavilions are set up as pieces side-by-side, and middle-class GreekTown uncomfortably abuts against the predominantly Muslim Danforth-Mosaic, without having much to do with one another. It is important to note that while neighbourhoods in Toronto are named after European countries (Little Italy, Little Portugal, GreekTown), South American countries (Little Chile near Kensington Market, Little Brazil), Caribbean countries (Little Jamaica on Eglinton West), and Asian countries (Chinatown, Indian Bazaar, Little Korea), there has yet to be any official representation of an African country (Stetchyson “Big dreams…”). Recently, an appeal to the city was being made to designate four blocks within the “Mosaic’s” boundary as “Little Ethiopia.” As Globe and Mail journalist Natalie Stechyson writes, the executive director of the Danforth-Mosaic BIA, Patricia Silver, argues “that place is not at Danforth and Greenwood,” because it would be “unfair to rebrand the 500 multicultural businesses in the Danforth-Mosaic under a single country” (“Big dreams…”). Is it patently unfair at Silver argues, or is this discomfort symptomatic of racism by non-African or non-Muslim businesses to be branded and linked to an “African” or “Muslim” neighbourhood? Similarly, GreekTown is demographically multicultural with respect to the diversity of businesses and restaurants on the strip, yet there was no similar protest of non-Greek businesses finding “unfairness” in the movement to brand the neighbourhood as Greek.

Although Caravan and the Taste of the Danforth make claims regarding multicultural understanding, analysing the festivals through a spatial dramaturgy reveals the ways in which
ethno-cultural groups are contained within normative understandings and practices of Canadian multiculturalism. The cultural mosaic has been a powerful metaphor for the Canadian-style of multiculturalism, especially in contrast to the American “melting-pot” of cultural assimilation. Yet, upon critically examining festivals such as Caravan and the Taste of the Danforth that spatially reflect the mosaic metaphor reveal significant boundaries to inclusion in the nation. In particular, the festivals are criticised for commodifying and commercialising ethnic differences. Produced by processes of capitalism, the festival space homogenises culture for consumption, which reinforces existing hegemonic and dominant structures of power. Moreover, evidence that racism persists by invoking multiculturalism as a barrier to the “recognition” of a symbolic African “homeland” on the Danforth. There is an irony that multiculturalism, which is touted as a policy that promotes inclusion, is used in opposition to recognising a specific, racialised spatial expression of African. Such boundaries and limitations, revealed through spatial dramaturgy, illustrate the ways in which multiculturalism is a means of tightly scripting and (dis)locating diversity on the grid of Toronto.

2.6.3 (Power) In Relation to the Centre: The Re-routing of Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival Parades

Spatial dramaturgy can reveal the way that unbalanced power relations manifest in the ways that Toronto Caribbean Carnival’s adult Parade of the Bands and Junior Carnival parade has been re-routed over its fifty year history. I see the re/location happening in two phases for both adult and children’s parade: first, there is a “Centre Phase;” and, second, a “Periphery Phase.” For the adults, the “Centre Phase” is made up of two main routes in which the Parade of the Bands travelled through the downtown’s financial core first on Yonge Street from 1967 and then past the symbol of state-power, the provincial legislature on University Avenue from the mid-1970s to 1991. The routes through the centre of downtown physically possess space and
demonstrate an, albeit temporary, alternative authority. For the children’s Junior Carnival the “Centre Phase” represents their situation in the heart of communities that represent the “homeland imaginary” for the Caribbean diaspora in Toronto. The “Periphery Phase” for the adult Parade of the Bands occurs when the route is dislocated from financial district to the Lake Shore Boulevard, and when the children’s parade is dislocated from Caribbean neighbourhoods and “placed” within Downsview Park.

Dramaturgically, the kinaesthetic appropriation of space by the parade contrasts and contests the physical and normative understandings of the financial district streetscape. The large buildings of the financial district overhang the performance, with large windows to view the events bellow, but not all with the same perspective. The financial towers, forming a dominating wall, physically represent the machinations of the capitalist economy. Their spaces are closed to those without security passes, without jobs. By celebrating their Caribbean heritage, mas players transform the financial district, dancing in bikinis, beads and feathers down street spaces that usually teem with business suits. It is seemingly an ironic performance, staking a physical claim in financial district for one day, when studies by the Association for Canadian Studies indicate that racialised Canadians of African or Caribbean descent experience significant inequalities regarding average income (Jimenez “Blacks and Hispanics…”). Information gathered from Canada’s Census in 2006 indicates that the median earnings for Black men working full time is 29.5 per cent less than for whites (ibid.). The parade acts both as a performative intervention of the spaces and structures of the downtown by the people and the history of Caribbean struggle and celebration and highlights the limitations of publically recognising and including marginalised groups.
The second phase of *Toronto Caribbean Carnival*’s re-location occurred in 1991, when the parade was moved to the Canadian National Exhibition grounds on Lake Shore Boulevard, more than three kilometres west of the downtown core. The Lake Shore Boulevard is one of the main arterial routes into and out of the city, running east and west along the south of Toronto and next to Lake Ontario. While, on the one hand, the move was sparked by an interest to give the festival space to grow and for the million plus spectators that attend the event, on the other hand, it allowed for better policing, surveillance and containment. As Peter Jackson asserts, festival organisers and police were concerned “with peaceful organization, crowding and the threat of ‘trouble’” (138). Displaced from its historical roots in the city and prevented from occupying the financial district, the political activism and critique inherent in the physical presence of racialised bodies in spaces dominated by white financial elites is evacuated and contained. Now, dramaturgically *Toronto Caribbean Carnival* is physically situated at the margins, reflecting the position shared by many of its participants in society.
Figure 13: Parade of the Bands on Lake Shore Blvd. with the downtown in the background. Photo: Jacqueline Taucar

With bands marching westward on Lake Shore Boulevard, the cityscape rises to the east behind them in the distance. This image encapsulates a Brechtian gestus, as it spatially represents the social relationships of power between the diasporic Caribbean community and the dominant centre from which it has historically been, and continues to be, displaced. With the lake to the south and parklands surrounding the parade route, the parade feels less like an infiltration of space, but rather contained and distanced. Such route changes did not go without protest, as activist and dub poet Clifton Joseph writes in the Toronto Star that the numerous route changes constitute, “a slickly transparent attempt to break the continuity of the festival” and an “outrageous disrespect to our community” (“Caribana cut off”).
Moreover, the space on Lake Shore Boulevard allows for the employment of barricades, used to separate audiences and mas players creating a false separation in an event that traditionally sees no differentiation between actor and spectator. The use of security fences installed at the parade to “protect” mas players and inhibit spectators from “jumping up”\(^\text{37}\) needs to be interrogated further. The presence of security fences raises the question of whether is it a matter of protection or policing, as spectators can no longer join in the parade and/or avoid police presence. Drawing upon his experiences of the festival in his youth, Lyndon Phillip nostalgically writes “when spectators really enjoyed a performance, jumping the barricade was a typical response. A jump over the security railing was one way that young and old celebrated the parades” (126). The fences erected essentially divided and separated participants from spectators in an event that traditionally never sought separation. In her experience of the festival in 1993, Annmarie Gallaugher finds that the barricades, maintaining strict divisions between spectators and participants, preventing the crowds from jumping up and having a good time behind the calypso music and band trucks, cordonning off sections of the parade area into overlabelled \([\textit{sic}]\), and overorganized spaces for eating and drinking, standing and dancing, and rigidly controlling access to the street—had effectively put an end to the imaginatively socially conscious, lively and creative participation that we believed Caribana had come to stand for. (398)

For Philip and Gallaugher the barricades are a form of control by police that effectively cut spectators off from the spontaneous (read dangerous) potential of the street. Moreover, the barricades around the festival are not only a physical impediment to the freedom of carnival, but are also discursive in how the festival and the bodies that participate in it are “scripted” within multicultural Toronto.

\(^{37}\) Milla Cozart Riggio defines “Jumping up” in two ways: first, as participating in masquerade; and, second to describe those who “crash a band or play las lap in street clothes” (288).
There are, however, a number of issues that have contributed to the erection of security barricades along the route that go overlooked by critics that privilege the “spectator” experience over the experience of masqueraders that pay to “play mas” or volunteers with the band that produce the art of the street. This distinction is important, as such “spectators” often ignore the hours of labour that go into producing costumes in the months prior to the event and the money players pay to play mas. The costs of costumes in the sections of the band range from $250 for a less elaborate “back line” to over $700 for the elaborately decorated large headpieces and “backpacks” of the “front line.” Moreover, the large King, Queen, Male and Female Individual costumes can cost tens of thousands of dollars based on their size and the materials used in their production. The barriers do receive support from some mas players such as Sophia Rickson of the band Savage Arts International Ltd., who decry the “misbehaviour” of spectators that “jump up” to dance with the female masqueraders. As Rickson points out female masqueraders are
often subjected to unwanted touching and harassment by un-costumed “stormers,”\(^\text{38}\) which causes delays in the parade, or results in damaging costumes and is often the cause of violence in the defense of their person and belongings (“Off the Road Campaign”). Delays in the parade are financially significant as bands may fail to pass before adjudicators, which eliminates them from competing for the title of Band of the Year and cash prizes for various categories that band leaders use to subsidise their annual production. Moreover, crowding on the street by the growing number of spectators “storming” the bands has also sparked concerns for safety with regards to revellers getting too close to the wheels of the flat-bed trucks.\(^\text{39}\) The issues regarding barricades are far more complex than critics may suggest.

\textit{Toronto Caribbean Carnival} kinaesthetically appropriates space and transforms the physical and normative assumptions of the multicultural city. Masqueraders wine and dance through the financial district, performing what Michel DeCerteau calls a pedestrian speech act, subverting the structures and order of the dominant centre and at the same time gesturing to the barriers of belonging in society.

\(^{38}\) This is the term used by The Mas Band Association and masqueraders to describe those who “jump” up in the band.

\(^{39}\) Just recently, 2013, a teenager was killed getting caught under the wheels of a truck at the end of the parade route at the point where it suffers the most congestion due to the mingling of masqueraders and spectators who use the end as an entry point to the rest of the route.
In that carnivalesque pedestrian speech act, *Toronto Caribbean Carnival* transgresses official knowledge and bourgeois morality to create a space for an embodied and popular knowledge. For Lefebvre, the festival is rife with revolutionary potential, because they tightened social links and at the same time gave rein to all the desires which had been pent up by collective discipline and the necessities of everyday work. In celebrating, each member of the community went beyond himself, so to speak, and in one fell swoop drew all that was energetic, pleasurable and possible from nature, food, social life and his own mind and body. (*The Critique of Everyday Life* 202)

Similar to Bakhtin’s notion of carnival, Lefebvre’s notion of festival is a spatial and temporal opportunity in which the hierarchies and restrictions that accumulated in everyday life could be exposed and overturned. Toronto’s *Caribbean Carnival* allows people from the Caribbean diaspora to revel in excesses of bodily pleasure in the financial district that inverts the alleged “natural order” of the space of capitalist production. In infiltrating bourgeois spaces like

**Figure 15: Mas players “wining” on each other. Photo: Jacqueline Taucar**
Toronto’s financial district, *Caribbean Carnival* is able to illustrate that spaces are not fixed entities, but rather, fluid, changeable, and negotiable. The festival’s dislocation from the centre of the city to the periphery mirrors the barriers constructed to the inclusion and full participation of the city’s marginalised and racialised groups. Occupying space and celebrating difference may give marginalised groups public visibility and an opportunity to develop community, but does not necessarily translate into actual change in the political or economic realities of the participants. Indeed, space can do things. It can structure meanings, and changing spaces, such as the relocation of *Toronto Caribbean Carnival* from financial district to Lake Shore Boulevard, engages bodies and its understandings in fundamentally different ways.

The spatial implications of re/location are not only limited just to the adult Parade of the Bands, but also have particular meaning for the diasporic Caribbean community with regards to the Junior Carnival. In 2013, the Junior Carnival was re-located from its “cultural home” at Jane-Finch to the adjacent neighbourhood of Downsview-Roding, and specifically took place at Downsview Park, which is Canada’s only national urban park. The re-location is troubling for two main reasons: first, the removal of Junior Carnival away from the Jane-Finch area displaces the event from the heart of a Caribbean community and their lived realities; and, second, places it within a contained space of a public park. Displacing the Junior Carnival from the Jane-Finch neighbourhood is significant as a loss of a site, which for the diasporic Caribbean community in Toronto, functions as a “home” and constitutes a site of (be)longing within the “host” nation. For the Caribbean community, Jane-Finch, and its concentration of Caribbean-specialty shops, cafes and restaurants, function as “identity markers that provide the group access to the past and constitute their spatial framework for remembering it” (Ekman 5-6). Removing the Junior Parade, an integral element of that spatial framework for remembering and enacting “Caribbean-ness,” creates a sense of losing the “home” (again), an anxiety that plays out in a community that
Stuart Hall describes as being “twice diasporized,” already being twice displaced. The Downsview-Roding neighbourhood, where the Junior Carnival is now situated, is home to a large Italian community and visible minorities only make up 48.4 percent of the population living in the area (Social Policy Analysis *Downsview-Rodin-CFB*), which is 22.2 percent lower than the percentage of visible minorities living in Jane-Finch. As such, there is considerably less local community connection to the Junior Carnival and the Caribbean identity it performs and the Jane-Finch neighbourhood loses an event that significantly confronts negative perceptions of the area.

Anton Gabriel, the president of Mas Camp Centre—an organisation dedicated to the promotion and preservation of Carnival Arts in Toronto—stresses that “Carnival must take place in the public streets, not in a park. You can’t contain a celebration of freedom in a park” (personal interview). Although, the Junior Carnival’s route uses the public roads in Downsview Park, the route is, I would argue, segregated from the public and social spaces of a neighbourhood street that reflects the lived-experience of the people who inhabit it. Carnival is a form of popular theatre. Helen Gilbert and Joanne Tompkins argue that it is a “theatre of the streets and yards where urban populations congregated to do their daily business…. It claims a right to all public space and creates a theatre wherever there is a confluence of people, thus giving the marginalized access to the privilege of self-representation” (84). The arguments that Gabriel and Gilbert and Tompkins make regarding the meanings and associations that the Junior Carnival Parade performs when it is in the street directly relates to the sense of spontaneity and power that Lefebvre sees in the street. When removed from “the streets” and placed in a park, the Junior Parade is removed from the spontaneous potential of the connection to everyday life in the street.
The displacement of the children’s parade from neighbourhood streets to a peripherally contained route in Downsview Park gestures to the uneasy position of racialised minorities in Toronto. Uprooted from lived-spaces of community belonging in the city, the political activism of Junior Carnival is evacuated and contained. Dramaturgically the Junior Carnival is physically situated at the margins, reflecting the position shared by many of its participants in society. With children’s bands marching on a parade route surrounded by parkland and past abandoned military housing on John Drury Drive, the parade feels rather contained and distanced. To adapt Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, carnival relocated is carnival tamed. As Stuart Hall argues, carnival is the expression and embodiment of the nation and of “Caribbean-ness.” The removal of the Junior Carnival from the Jane-Finch community displaces a cultural event deeply rooted to the area’s heritage and identity, which it also performs.

2.7 Conclusion: The Shifting Performativities of Festival Landscapes and Borders

Henri Lefebvre writes that “Space is at once result and cause, product and producer; it is also a stake, the locus of projects and actions displayed as part of specific strategies, and hence also the object of wagers which are articulated, if never completely” (The Production of Space 142-3). Space is never ideologically neutral or inert, but rather is performative, in that it shapes—and is shaped by—social processes. As the shifting nature of the terrain suggests, space can never be controlled absolutely, because it is always changing, and thus it is always being contested. The three festivals, Caravan, Taste of the Danforth, and Caribbean Carnival, that constitute my study illustrate the ways in which the conceptions, perceptions, and lived experiences of space are all held in dialectical tension with one another. Employing Lefebvre’s theories on space and theatre practitioner Bertolt Brecht’s practices of the epic theatre as
analytical tools, opens up the potential for a dramaturgy of festival space that can examine how, and by/for whom, space is “produced” in the City of Toronto.

Thematically, landscapes and borders are potent real and imagined spaces, in which the festivals both perform and to which they are also relegated at times. Landscapes, and the processes of their creation, are important in understanding what—and how—ethno-cultural festivals mean for the communities that develop them, the City of Toronto, and the multicultural “script.” For ethno-cultural groups in Toronto, imprinting a landscape or creating an ethnoscape is an integral part in creating a space of belonging. These landscapes of belonging are “the seat of collective memory, rooted as it is in specific sites and suffused with the quotidian and the communal” (Lowenthal 180). In many ways Toronto’s ethnoscapes produce spaces of inclusion and collective memory in an unfamiliar and potentially alienating host country for the diasporic communities that inhabit them. However, such ethnoscapes are not immutable, but rather their meanings are subject to change and competing claims over time that reveal underlying social relations of power.

A spatial dramaturgy that draws upon Brecht and Lefebvre becomes a critical tool that examines the process of creating landscapes as a performativity of space, and of “ethnic imprinting” that occurs as a result of the repetitive citation of spatial norms in living everyday life that naturalised an image of the space. Ethno-cultural groups mobilise a combination of material and ephemeral practices to imprint landscapes. Immigrants to Canada in the post-Second World War period created spaces of belonging in neighbourhoods, or ethnic enclaves, changing the mise-en-scène of the street to reflect the materialities of the “homeland imaginary.” In addition to establishing ethnic businesses which provide specialty goods and services for their communities, new immigrants, from Italy and Portugal for example, adapted Toronto’s British
Victorian and Georgian homes through a “Mediterranean” aesthetic in order to claim a physical and symbolic space of “home” in the “host” country. The tension between “home” and “away” is evocative of Brecht’s V-effekt, making the familiar strange, suggesting that the dominant British character of Toronto is not an inherent quality of the city, but rather a production that itself is subject to change and adaptation. As such, examining place through spatial dramaturgy reveals its production as an active performance of (re)inscribing and (re)iterating social relationships and practices, instead of as a fixed geographic location.

Similarly, festivals are an ephemeral performance of landscape creation that inscribes identity through public celebration and spectacle. Ethno-cultural festivals also provide opportunities for ethno-cultural communities to exercise agency, by opening up public spaces for self-representation and enacting their subjectivity. In doing so, ethno-cultural groups could claim spaces and challenge hegemonic power structures in Toronto. The Taste of the Danforth, Caravan, and Caribbean Carnival festivals each “make place” through the performative iterations of ethno-cultural identity in relation to particular locations in Toronto. For instance, Caravan festival pavilions were often located in church halls and community centres in the heart of ethnic enclaves they represented. Although, not a street festival, Caravan encouraged visitors to explore neighbourhoods they would not otherwise, and in doing so created a performance that went beyond the pavilion buildings to include the experience the streetscape.

Both the Taste of the Danforth and Caribbean Carnival festivals employ the street as the stage, but do so in different ways. The Taste of the Danforth produces commodified and commercialised representations of “Greekness.” Demographically, GreekTown on the Danforth is home to a very diverse population, as many individuals who identify as Greek have moved to other parts of the city or to the suburbs. Yet, through performance and spectacle the festival
normalises the relationship between Greek identity and the neighbourhood, as a brand-marketing move that reinforces GreekTown on the Danforth as a tourist destination worth visiting and spending one’s tourist dollars. Not only does Caribbean Carnival’s Junior Parade performatively reiterates the Caribbean identity in the Eglinton-York and Jane-Finch neighbourhoods, but it also challenges the negative stereotypes of these areas and the racialised bodies that populate them. The presence of masquerading children—and their families—playfully and colourfully taking over the streets contrasts and subverts the “guns, gangs, and drugs” public imaginary of the area inscribed by mass media discourse. The Junior Carnival combats the oversimplified spatial discourses constructed of Caribbean neighbourhoods, by performing other spatial understandings of the area, its potential usages, and the diversity of its experiences. Through spatial dramaturgy, I see the street functioning not only as a space where subject-positions are formed and performed, questioned, negotiated and reimagined, but also as a metaphor for the dynamism of diasporic identities.

While ethnoscapes serve the needs of new immigrants and create spaces for belonging, they are also co-opted by corporate groups, such as the City of Toronto or Business Improvement Areas, in order to locate ethno-cultural differences on the real and imagined map of multiculturalism. Michael Hertzfeld argues in A Place in History, that:

spaces that people inhabit are actually shifting and unstable… they succumb to the bureaucratic nation-state’s insatiable taxonomic appetite. By recasting past and future in terms of a monolithic present, the state creates ‘traditional neighbourhoods’ and ‘archaeological monuments’ out of what, for residents, are the streets where their friends and enemies live and die. As the state encroaches even further, residents increasingly adopt its rhetorical tactics in self-defense. (6)

Historically, ethnic enclaves have sprung up as a means of aggregating resources, community support, and creating a “homeland imaginary” in order to confront the marginalising forces (racism, classism, and sexism) at work in the host nation. However, the City of Toronto has co-
opted these resistant expressions of spatialities into the official “script” of multiculturalism. Images of multiculturalism and diverse neighbourhoods are carefully cultivated and deliberately produced by political and economic interests in order to increase flows of capital—cultural, social, political, and economic. The GreekTown BIA is a prime example of how the everyday experience of “Greekness” on the Danforth has been distilled and transformed into a sellable commodity transforming an area into a tourist destination in the city. In doing so, the social interactions between people and place are dramatically altered especially as such areas face rapid gentrification for their marketed cachet of diversity. In this instance the cultivation of such “official” multicultural landscapes can undermine a neighbourhood’s diversity through the homogenising forces of gentrification, by ironically displacing those whose presence marks it as such. Employing a spatial dramaturgy of the material and ephemeral practices that constitute festival spaces and the ethno-cultural landscapes of Toronto reveal the ways such spaces are caught up in a contested Lefebvrian spatial trialectics in which many competing claims—conceived, perceived, and lived experiences of space—are articulated and negotiated.

Viewing festivals dramaturgically through the concept of border and its various manifestations—the metaphor of the “Cultural Mosaic,” festival perimeters, and in conceptions of power as the relationship between proximity and distance—can expose the limitations and barriers of belonging to the nation. Toronto’s ethno-cultural festivals occupy a borderland of sorts, an in-between place of hybridity, in which normative and resistant understandings of multiculturalism are simultaneously enacted in festival spaces. Applying Brecht’s notions of gestus in a spatial dramaturgy defamiliarises the seemingly naturalised nature of the ways space is occupied and used by people and illustrates that access to, or exclusion from, space is a performance of power. For instance, the way Toronto’s Caravan festival operates reflects the metaphor of the “Cultural Mosaic” in which cultures are performed side-by-side in discrete
pavilions, foreclosing the potential for mixing and conflict. The anxiety of mixing is made physically manifest in the *gestic*-object of the festival “passport,” which gestures to notions of border control and access. The passport re-frames the representation of cultures within Toronto as “exotic” and different which discursively produces “ethnic” Canadians as “Others” within the nation. Rinaldo Walcott makes a similar argument with regards to *Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival*, performed as a gift for Canada’s centenary, “as brings Caribbean culture to Canada, it simultaneously positions the Caribbean as outside Canada” (128). Moreover, the *Caravan* structure facilitated limited representations of ethnic “Others” via its presentation of food and drinks, song and dance, arts and crafts, often with entertainment in mind. The focus on entertaining representations potentially erected further barriers to full participation and equality as they could not communicate complex issues such as racism and inequality to their audience in a way that could unsettle their complacency and complicity.

Similar issues concerning commodification also abound in the *Taste of the Danforth* as the space it occupies is colonised by discourses of “McDonaldization.” McDonald’s occupies the first commercial restaurant space on the western boundary of the festival at Broadlands Boulevard, which I read as a *gestic* image that reveals the underlying social relationship of commodification and commercialisation at play at work in how the space constructed. Tourists can rely on the processes of fast-food production—efficiency, predictability, calculability, and control—when it comes to their consumption of “McGreekness.” However, examining the dramaturgy of the “eastern” boundary of the festival, which ends at the Madina Masjid Mosque and the beginning of the Danforth-Mosaic neighbourhood, unsettles and disrupts the easy commodification and consumption of ethnic “Otherness.” The Danforth-Mosaic uneasily borders thriving GreekTown without having much in common with regards to social, cultural or economic constitution. Moreover, it represents a space of struggle to articulate an “Ethiopian”
identity, which is ironically denied by invoking multiculturalism as a defense against such a brand. As a space, it gestures to the unbalanced power relations of who gets to be recognised, and under what conditions, by the multicultural “script.”

Thus far I have examined the ways that borders construct spaces of separation, in Caravan and the Taste of the Danforth festivals, reflecting the “Cultural Mosaic and how that then affects the ways ethno-cultural identity is performed and negotiated within the multicultural “script.” My dramaturgical analysis of Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival festival shifts the perspective from the metaphor of the “Cultural Mosaic” to exam how power is exercised in the relationship between periphery and centre. As both adult Parade of the Bands and children’s Junior Parade illustrate displacing and relocating their routes affects how and what the parades mean. Displacing the adult Parade of the Bands from the downtown core to the periphery on Lake Shore Boulevard changes the ways that it is subversive. In the first case, the Parade of the Bands performs an infiltration of the economic and political representations of space in financial district and the provincial legislature, a gestic action that draws attention to the systematic barriers that people of Caribbean decent experience in the economy and politically. Secondly, the removal from the downtown core is not only physical, but also a discursive dislocation of “black” bodies to the periphery of the nation.

As contested terrains of study and practice, the Taste of the Danforth, Caravan, and Caribbean Carnival festivals are complex and multifaceted spaces and not just a hegemonic place that perpetuate official understandings of the multicultural “script.” A dramaturgy of space illustrates the ways in which festivals are contradictory and dialectical spaces with potential for strategic contestation as well as co-option by dominant discourses. Critics tend to oversimplify and reduce ethno-cultural festivals in their analysis, which assumes that all people conceptions,
perceptions, and live experiences of festival spaces are homogenous. However, by using Lefebvre’s theories of space and Brecht’s techniques of the theatre, I have demonstrated that a dramaturgy of space can be a critical analytical tool that enables contesting and contradictory claims on festival space by festival actors and visitors—both in-group and outsiders—as well as corporate and government bodies. Space can do—mean and shape—many things for the people who are involved in its production. Space and bodies mutually produce each other. While this chapter has examined the performativity of space, it is also important to note that it does not do so without the presence of bodies, whose performativity I will be turning to in the following chapter.
Chapter 3
The Dramaturgy of the Body: (Per)Forming Ourselves and ‘Others’ in Toronto’s Ethno-cultural Festivals

3 Introduction

Every day, my home is filled with performances that gesture “back home”, or what my father calls the “old country”, a place that is alluded to in the stories that are told, the smells of the kitchen or when my mom forgets the English word and tells me to grab for her the bunyak. The body, and its physical gestures, is a means of experiencing and understanding the diasporic connection to the displaced “homeland.” As Dad sits by our sunny kitchen window, his body soaks up the warm glow and it unlocks a memory experienced, and re-membered, by his body. Dad sighs and reminisces about being back home in Croatia. “It’s like being home in Krk,” he says, referring to the home that he left almost fifty years ago, only returning for a few visits since then. For Dad, feeling the warmth of the sun on his body evokes feelings and memories of his childhood summers on Krk, the largest island in the Croatian archipelago in the Adriatic Sea. His body gestures to these memories, he closes his eyes, draws a big breath that expands his back, enlarging the surface area for the sun to touch. His actions help to draw me into the performance of “back home,” they are so much more evocative than verbal descriptions, as I am able to witness the ways in which his memories are experienced, embodied. Not only do his gestures animate his body to reveal memories and feelings, but they also serve to illustrate how he experiences them, their affects. Dad replays his memories for a very particular audience: his children and grandchildren. Although I’ve only been to Krk three times, Dad’s performances, albeit nostalgic and ideal, act as a touchstone for my perception of self and family history. By watching his performance, I become a part of a larger community and feel connected to a place and a people outside of Canada.
At the same time, however, Dad’s performances also carry the hardships of immigration. The process of learning English was slow, and his accent remains an auditory reminder of the elements that refuse to assimilate to his new home, marking him as different, symbolically reflective of the ways he clings to the “old country” or rather, how the “old country” clings to him. Yet the idealised home Dad longs for does not actually exist except in his performances. Performing what I call the “homeland imaginary” signifies an incomplete relationship or communion with the “new country” as well as the “old country,” for both actor and audience. Dad’s performances are always marked by his partial assimilation to his new home, and I, in attending to his performance, am only partially connected to another place.

Physicalisations and gestures of the “homeland” are enacted in private spaces and semi-private spaces (in homes, community groups) as well as in public spaces in Toronto in festivals and celebrations. Caravan, Toronto Caribbean Carnival, and the Taste of the Danforth all place emphasis on the body and sensual experiences. Whether it is through food, dance, song and/or the practice of folk arts, these three festivals emphasise the body in performance and the body as a site of experience or knowledge for both performers and audience members. My concern with embodied practices not only focuses on festival performers, but also upon audiences, who are not merely passive observers, but who are also actively participating in the complex and problematic identity formation process of the self and of the “Other.” Moreover, for audiences festivals are multi-sensorial to be experienced through and with the body. As mentioned in my previous chapter, all three festivals have a food component, albeit some to a greater degree than others, encouraging a sensual experience and communion with the ethnic community—to know through the stomach, through taste, smell and touch—and to be initiated into cultural membership through the stomach. Audiences are also encouraged to experience the “Other” in material ways
such as food and folk arts and in oral, embodied non-material\textsuperscript{40} ways such as storytelling, music, song and dance. Through both material and nonmaterial culture, these festivals showcase the body as the repository and producer of cultural knowledge and the ways in which it embodies the “homeland imaginary” in Canada.

Such embodiments play into the symbolic foundations of the multicultural “script” by publicly reaffirming Canada’s racial and cultural diversity through celebrating cultural heritages. Such forms of “symbolic multiculturalism” in festivals are much maligned for the “disneyfication” of cultural identities and promoting safe, shallow stereotypes of “Others.” As Bissoondath contends, the representations of ethnic cultures at festivals are safe commodities, “all the colourful ethnics bowing and smiling in mechanical greeting at the tourists, themselves mostly other ethnics, passing by. They look like the real thing, but their smell is synthetic. They have no bite. They are safe. Culture Disneyfied” (83). While culture is certainly commodified, packaged, sold and consumed at these festivals, Bissoondath overlooks the potential for counter-discursive performances that act back or gesture to oppressive power structures operating in society. I see Bissoondath’s criticisms as being narrow in their scope because bodies in the festivals have the potential to be read as carnivalesque, as capable of spilling outside of their boundaries, enacting a double-ness, a masquerade. By attending to the dramaturgy of the body in these festivals, I see the body not as site of stability, but rather as a medium that can perform subversively. Thus, the expressive and articulate body can potentially question stable definitions and normative understandings of a tolerant multicultural society, by gesturing to power inequalities within the intersecting frames of race/ethnicity, class, and gender.

\textsuperscript{40} Non-material elements are also called intangible cultural heritage by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).
Dramaturgy, as applied in this context, primarily refers to a way of reading, a means of illuminating and describing the dramatic structure, actions, or conventions unique to a play-text, playwright, or—semiotically speaking—a performance text. In this chapter, I will employ a Brechtian dramaturgical analysis to look at the physical body and its gestures as *gestus*, as a way of examining the body as it relates to and critically performs social processes. *Gestus* is a gesture, word, action or tableau that either separately, or in a series, makes visible the social attitudes encoded in the performance. Closely related to *gestus* is the principle of *V-effekt*, the “alienation effect”, or more accurately the distancing effect, is the process in which a subject is recognisable but made unfamiliar. As such, the *V-effekt* technique is used to distance the audience from emotionally connecting with a character and to reveal the constructed-ness of the performance itself. Both *gestus* and the *V-effekt* are instrumental for Brecht, the defamiliarisation encourages the audience not to be lost in the illusory character of entertainment of the performance (as if), but rather to redirect attention to material, style and form as well as the conditions that inform the performance. For scholars such as Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, Stuart Hall and others, the body is always already inscribed by ideological discourses—race, ethnicity, gender—and does not exist outside of its structured discourses. The act of performance becomes “expressive of social relations of oppression” (Auslander 129), or what Brecht would call *gestus*. Brechtian theatre techniques are fruitful tools of analysis, as theatre scholar Philip Auslander points out, for revealing how, “the material life of the body is expressive of oppression because the body itself, its actions and gestures are determined by ideological relations” (129). Applying Brechtian analysis to the festival performances provide one means of moving beyond the reductive and trivial assessment of multicultural festivals and provides insight into how festival performances engage in a multicultural masquerade that presents a richer and more critical interrogation of multicultural discourses in Toronto.
In this chapter the embodied practice of masquerade is read through three acting bodies: the roles played by the Civic body (the City of Toronto), festival audiences, and festival performers. The City of Toronto makes particular use of ethno-cultural festivals in order to brand itself or perform its understanding of Multiculturalism. The city uses a variety of means to co-opt and insert itself into the festivals in order to reap, by association or proximity, the rewards of being perceived as multicultural and tolerant. Yet, the City of Toronto is often financially absent or distant in its support for these events. Masquerading the multicultural brand is a selling point for Toronto. However, the city enacts a double-ness and ambivalence in its performance towards the festivals that are essential for its marketing, and, at the same time, are held at arms-length. Audiences play an important role in the festivals, as they are not passive observers, but rather are active participants in the complex and problematic identity formation process of the self and of the “Other.” Audiences are encouraged to enact a tourist masquerade, in which individuals that even reside in the city are asked to become tourists, to experience and construct “exoticism” and “Otherness” in their own land. Finally, I will examine specific performances in Caravan, Toronto Caribbean Carnival, and the Taste of the Danforth and how the body enacts a masquerade that moves beyond merely reifying simplistic representations of “ethnic” heritages in Canada, but rather gesture to, and critique, significant elements of oppression in society and barriers to inclusion. The three types of masqueraders—City, Audience and Performer— are active participants in performing a multicultural masquerade. The masquerade suggests more complex levels of performance that move beyond re-inscribing symbolic, stereotypical, and commodified representations of multiculturalism, but rather facilitate a way to critically engage with and interrogate the different structures of hegemony that have developed in Toronto’s society.
3.1 Masquerade, Carnival, and Festival: Foundations for the Carnivalesque Body

The history of human pleasures—of festivity, games, jokes, and amusements—has seldom met with the same dignified attention accorded the history of human suffering. Wars, plagues and collective miseries of all kinds have always been conventional historical and philosophical topoi; laughter, as Mikhail Bakhtin observed in his monumental work on carnival has not. (Castle 1)

While masquerade is often subject to anti-theatrical bias and used as a pejorative to suggest deception or the masking of truth, masquerade is historically understood as enacting a personal vision of otherness and participating in a cultural institution by joining a group, “the anonymous collectivity of masks” (Castle 73). Beginning as early as the fifteenth-century in Europe, masquerades were a feature of carnivals during the pre-Lenten period in which attendees to events wore costumes and masks. Throughout the period of early European colonisation, from the fourteenth-century to the early nineteenth-century, the practice of carnival and masquerade were spread to the Caribbean and South America. In the Caribbean, the practice was then adapted and transformed by African slaves into a medium to express an anti-colonialist perspective and resistance to the Eurocentric domination. Carnival refers to the set of traditional festivities established in Roman Catholic countries as a “release” prior to the strict limitations on behaviour and abstinences during the Lenten period prior to the celebration of Easter. A practice initially reserved for the court, masquerades became public festivals in the Renaissance period. The appeal for common people resides in the temporary release of the “constraints and pressures of the social order, [and] generates relationships of amity even among strangers and allows forbidden excesses” (A. Cohen 3). As Bakhtin notes, there are four key elements of the carnival: first, a temporary suspension of hierarchies in which all participants are equals; second, the suspension of “norms and prohibitions of usual life” of the prevailing order and truth, so that

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41 See the work of Jonas Barish on a further discussion of anti-theatrical prejudice and masking.
freedom, familiarity and communication not possible in everyday life can occur; third, the official and hegemonic structures of time and space are overturned allowing for people to organise in their own way, “contrary to all existing coercive socio-economic, and political organization” (255); and, four, the individual body is dissolved into the mass that is the people’s body, or what Victor Turner would deem “communitas” (273). The communitas is an acute experience of community and is particularly important for a festival like Caribbean Carnival, as mas players are encouraged to let go and give into the collective carnival spirit, or to feel the “Carnival Jumbie.”

Although contemporary carnivals and popular festivals are often co-opted and sanctioned by official power in order to render them complicit with dominant ideology and mute their transgressive or utopian power, Bakhtin contends that “the popular-festive carnival spirit is indestructible” (33). As Hall argues, hegemony in any political order is tenuously held, “it is not a ‘given’ and permanent state of affairs, but it has to be actively won and secured; it can also be lost” (qtd in Lull 64). Ideological struggle can occur, according to Hall, “not only when people try to displace, rupture or contest it by supplanting it with some wholly new alternative set of terms, but also when they interrupt the ideological field and try to transform its meanings or re-articulating its associations” (“Signification, Representation, Ideology” 112). As such, even within a state sanctioned/co-opted festival there is potential for counter-discursive performances that challenge the authority of state and corporate sanctioned dominant discourses, as well as open potential oppositional or resistant spectatorship.

Carnival practices are rooted in the body’s double-ness, sensuousness, freedom and expressivity, and is characterised by overindulgence in bodily pleasures of eating, drinking, dancing and masking. In Castle Masquerade and Civilization, Terry Castle describes the function of the eighteenth-century English masquerade as being a process of enacting the other
or another in a way that is hyperbolic, extreme and theatrical, taking on another identity different than that of everyday life. Masquerade can be a process for reinvention within society, Castle notes, as “new bodies were superimposed over old; anarchic, theatrical selves displaced supposedly essential ones; masks, or personae, obscured persons” (4). As such, Castle argues, masquerade projects “an anti-nature, a world upside-down, and intoxicating reversal of ordinary sexual, social, and metaphysical hierarchies” (6). Masquerade tradition has a connection to the carnival and the carnivalesque in which popular expressions and traditions would be privileged over expressions of high culture. Masquerade is one expression of the carnival through which the body can intervene, in performance, with the dominant order of society. The carnivalesque, hyperbolic and theatrical aspects of the body are integral to my understanding that festival performances can be read as a form of masquerade, that is, the process of enacting an identity is performed in addition to and in excess of one’s self in everyday life.

In Toronto’s ethno-cultural festivals, although participants do not hide or physically mask their identities, they perform another identity or elaborate/aggrandise an ethnic identification for show. This aspect of showing also engages audience members in the performative act of identity formation, of reading bodies and demarcating them as “ethnic.” Reading ethno-cultural festival performances as masquerade can be a way out of the trap of creating reductive or essentialised notions of ethnicity. Rather, as masqueraders, festival participants are enacting double-ness, of two bodies together that serves to displace any essentialised notion of a single, fixed whole body. Such double-ness, potentially enacts a Bakhtinian grotesque that celebrates the carnivalesque body as in a perpetual act of becoming (Bakhtin 317). In a festival such as Caravan, a participant can be both a Canadian and a Korean, or Ukrainian, or any other ethnicity, in an “act” of hybridity, in which both sets of identification are held simultaneously. Such a hybrid performance would be dually inscribed. The performance of Korean-ness or Ukrainian-ness
would be shaped by being in Canada, and the performance of Canadian-ness is shaped by the other identity.

Bakhtin’s carnival and Brecht’s *gestus*, estrangement and historicisation share a strong affinity with one another and are complimentary critical forms for how they view the role of the body. As Michael Holquist argues, “Carnival… is a means of displaying otherness: carnival makes familiar relations strange” (89). The process of making “familiar relations strange” is similar to Brecht’s idea of the *V-effekt* as it also attempts to foster social change. As such, carnival and carnivalisation can be read within the scope of Brechtian theory for making visible what is represented and the historical, social and political realities beyond the representation. Carnivalesque bodies are bodies that reveal—and revel in the reversal of—power hierarchies. Medieval carnivals, and indeed *Caribbean Carnivals*, often feature characters who embody, parody and satirise the ruling elite. Performing masquerade as mimicry, satire or parody, can be read as a *gestus* in that it enacts a critique of present forms of oppression and power structures. In *Caribbean Carnival* slaves and former slaves wear the clothing (masks) of their oppressors and in European Carnival the lower class were able to dress like the elite, which allows in both cases for the contemplation of other positions. In ethno-cultural festivals the historical costumes performers and dancers wear draw attention to historical subject positions. To borrow and adapt from Brechtian feminists, such as Elin Diamond who have used Brechtian techniques to challenge, confront and look back at the “male gaze” at play in the theatre, Brecht’s technique of historicisation can be used to examine how the body, a racialised or minoritised body, by virtue of entering the stage space, enters representation – it is not just there, a live, unmediated presence, but rather 1) a signifying element in a dramatic fiction; 2) a part of a theatrical sign system whose conventions of gesturing, voicing, and impersonating are referents for both performer and audience; and 3) a sign in a system governed by a particular apparatus. (89)
For Brecht historicisation is an important technique to draw attention to the ways in which social relations are viewed and constructed as a part of a moving dialectic showing that present social arrangements and institutions are to be seen as historical, transitory, and subject to change. Moreover, if the body can be read as culturally/racially/ethnically mapped and gendered, then historicisation illustrates that the body is not a fixed essence, but a site of struggle and change. Masks and costumes are metatheatrical, and can reveal that race and ethnicity are a historical regime of power relations, separate from biological or natural attribution. In short masquerade can be read as a form of Brechtian *gestus*, as well as an estranging and historicising effect, that can draw attention to the social and historical constructions of identity in Toronto’s festivals.

### 3.1.1 Feminist Masquerade/Multicultural Masquerade

The concept of masquerade as a mode of self-presentation was taken up by feminist psychoanalyst, Joan Riviere, in her 1929 article “Womanliness as a Masquerade”. Often used by feminist and gender theorists to discuss the relationships between gender identity and performativity, Riviere’s work can open up ways of viewing race or ethnicity as a masquerade. Riviere writes,

> Womanliness therefore could be assumed and worn as a mask, both to hide the possession of masculinity and to avert the reprisals expected if she were found to possess it—much as a thief would turn out his pockets and asked to be searched to prove that he has not the stolen goods. The reader may now ask how I define womanliness or where I draw the line between genuine womanliness and the ‘masquerade.’ My suggestion is not, however, that there is any such difference; whether radical or superficial they are the same thing. (38)

Riviere argues that femininity or “womanliness” is a mask worn by women to appease male desire. The feminine masquerade is a performance that women enact of themselves which plays into how men want them to act in order to avoid any censure or punishment. Responding to

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42 See the work of Judith Butler, Luce Irigaray, Mary Ann Doane and others.
Riviere, Judith Butler advocates a “parodic politics of the masquerade” in which mimicry is deployed as a way of staging gender as performance and revealing all identity as socially constructed (67). Masquerade and mimicry are used by women to be successful in the social patriarchal order and so can be said of many people who are marginalised and find themselves outside of a specific social order (patriarchal, racialist, heteronormative or a combination thereof).

Building upon Riviere’s theory, race and ethnicity can also be worn as a mask in order to hide the possession of power, the ability to mimic dominant culture. Mimicry is a threat to colonial discourses in that should an identical representation be possible, the ideology of colonialism requiring a split structure assuming a superior/inferior binary opposition is rendered obsolete. Homi K. Bhabha argues the performance of difference is always a source of ambivalence, a threat and a necessity, required for the maintenance of colonial power. As such, “the subjects of the discourse are constructed within an apparatus of power which contains, in both senses of the word, ‘other’ knowledge—a knowledge that is arrested and fetishistic and circulates through colonial discourse as that limited form of otherness that I have called the stereotype” (The Location of Culture 111). In performing stereotype—the fixed representations of otherness—the normative order of society is preserved, but as Mary Ann Doane illustrates the stereotype can be mobilised and activated through flaunting and hyperbolising its effects to “foreground the masquerade” (66). Like masquerade, mimicry is a form of resemblance that in its ambivalent, almost but not quite structure can be strategically used to reveal and question the mask of normative power structures.

In this chapter I use the term masquerade in a number of different ways that reflect its multi-dimensional use, whether it is used as a means of “masking” or “dissembling” to obscure the sources of power, or wielding it as a critical performance that reveals the unequal exercise of
power in society, or sometimes a combination of both even at the same time. I draw upon theatrical uses of the term as relating to actions of masking, role-playing, disguising, and deception especially when examining corporate or government co-option of multicultural festivals. As well, similar to how feminist scholars like Riviere and Butler have activated its usage with regards to gender performativity, I also employ an understanding of masquerade to examine the ways that bodies at festivals may produce resistant meanings and understandings of the multicultural “script.” My particular interest regarding the body in festival time in this chapter draws upon the interplay between these two understandings of masquerade, highlighting the doubling aspect of (per)forming the self and “Others” simultaneously. While scholars (see Bissoondath; Carol Tator, Frances Henry and Winston Matis 1998; and Grace-Edward Galabuzi 2006) discuss the limitations of Canada’s policy of “symbolic multiculturalism” with its inability to move beyond emphasising “tolerance” or “understanding” of “Others” as a representative mode of the festival, I will examine the modes by which “ethnic” minorities create carnivalesque bodies through masquerade performances that, on the one hand, can reinforce notions of “symbolic multiculturalism,” and, on the other hand, serve as embodied interventions that interrogate and critique the limitations of the liberal multicultural “script.”

3.1.2 The Civic Body Masquerading the Multicultural City Through Caravan, Caribbean Carnival, and the Taste of the Danforth Festivals

The official website of the City of Toronto proclaims, “Toronto's population is one of the most diverse in the world. Nearly all of the world's culture groups are represented in Toronto and more than 100 languages and dialects are spoken” (“About Toronto”). Multiculturalism and diversity are essential elements to Toronto’s brand and are used to entice individuals to leave their current location to visit, shop, invest or relocate to the city. In Toronto, multiculturalism is used as a marketing tool in two main ways: first, to draw tourists; and, second to draw business
investment to the city. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the City of Toronto’s ethno-cultural neighbourhoods are essential to its multicultural “script” and brand, celebrated on the City’s website and on TourismToronto’s website. Marketed as destinations, Toronto’s ethno-cultural neighbourhoods contribute to the positive perception of the tolerant and diverse character of the city while providing pockets of exoticism and discovery for tourists to explore. Secondly, citing “a deep talent pool and a global workforce,” multiculturalism is used to positively frame business opportunities (“Doing Business”). Ranked as one of Toronto’s competitive advantages, the website asserts that “businesses in Toronto benefit from one of the world’s most highly educated and diverse labour forces” as well as recognising that “Toronto’s ethnic and economic diversity drives innovation and economic growth both locally and internationally” (“Doing Business”). Toronto uses its multicultural image to sell itself to others and make the city an attractive place to live, visit and do business.

Toronto’s ethno-cultural festivals create a space of visibility and presence for the contributions and recognition of the diverse communities that make up the city, and are often appropriated by the municipality to promote its image of multiculturalism. The largest spectacles of multiculturalism, Caravan, Caribbean Carnival, and the Taste of the Danforth are large festivals drawing millions of people to the city to partake in events, contributing to performatively enacting the city’s multicultural identity. Canadian theatre history scholar, Alan Filewod, suggests that theatre, and I would argue ethno-cultural festivals, “is not simply a matter of staged representation: it is an event both physical and symbolic; it transforms experience into a community narrative; and it materially constructs in the audience the community it addresses in its texts” (xvii). Canada’s multicultural policies, developed in 1971 and officially institutionalised as the Canadian Multiculturalism Act in 1988, are the foundational myths of Canadian social cohesion, or what Benedict Anderson calls an “imagined political community”
(6), insomuch as “nation-ness, as well as nationalism, are cultural artefacts of a particular kind” (4). While introduced to “preserve, enhance and share” Canada’s multicultural heritage (Bill C-93), the policy encourages the performance of a symbolic multiculturalism in simplistic celebrations and spectacles of ethnic diversity and cultural tolerance. Toronto’s ethno-cultural festivals, appropriated by officials to promote ideas of Canadian multiculturalism, illustrate that multicultural policy and logic “depends on the existence of a multiplicity of historically grown ‘imagined communities’ on the Canadian soil that are reproduced in unequal power relations” (Winter 51). Very little has been achieved to dismantle barriers to full participation and inclusion, or to breakdown the hegemony of dominant (white, anglophone) society. As racialised minorities are continually constructed as “exotic” or for show, or as being from “elsewhere” or “Othered,” the presence, histories, and contributions of minoritised Canadians to the nation are not only often absent from—or at best a footnote or sidebar in—the official “record,” but are also barred from being included in the nation.

Through the repetition of cultural spectacle these festivals performatively inscribe, or as Butler would argue re-iterate, the multicultural identity of the city, which the municipal body profits from by association and proximity. The city, however, maintains an ambivalent relationship with these festivals and their discursive markers of difference. With each festival, the city issues a signed City of Toronto Proclamation celebrating the cultural event as a fundamental element of the city’s multicultural character. The city’s multicultural masquerade is Janus-faced in nature, celebrating “symbolic” or what Stanley Fish calls “boutique” forms of multiculturalism that often overlook and gloss over the difficult realities of racism, prejudice and the lack of substantive gains in creating equal opportunities or removing of barriers to full participation in society. Boutique multiculturalism, Fish contends, characterises a superficial engagement with the ornamental and superficial elements of the “Other” in which boutique
multiculturalists can “admire or appreciate or enjoy or sympathize with or (at the very least) ‘recognize the legitimacy of’ the traditions of cultures other than their own” (378). The tolerance of other cultures does not, Fish argues, come without limitations and prescriptions. A prime example of boutique multiculturalism in action, occurred in 2002, when then Mayor Mel Lastman signed a City of Toronto Proclamation promoting Caravan as “a celebration of Toronto's exceptional quality of life, energy, creativity and unique diversity” and as “a remarkable portrait of our City's and our country's heritage” (“Festival Caravan Week”). Ironically, Lastman’s celebratory proclamation of cultural diversity followed derogatory comments made the year prior, alluding to his concerns about cannibals before a trip to Mombasa, Kenya (“Lastman apologizes”).

A more potent example of the ambivalent attitude towards multiculturalism is the city’s treatment of the Toronto Caribbean Carnival Festival. While both the city and the media are willing to use Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival to brand the city as multicultural and tolerant, both also represent the festival as problematic. Newspapers note that “due to a long history of violence, the festival often has a heavy police presence” (“Police may have been involved…”), while the city is quick to note a history of financial mismanagement and lack of accountability that plagued the festival in the late 1970s, 1980s, and 2000s. On July 9, 2013 the city issued a proclamation acknowledging that Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival “reflects our city’s multiculturalism and the diversity among people of Caribbean origin. Now in its forty-seventh year this vibrant festival was created as the Caribbean community's contribution to Canada's centennial celebration and has grown to become an important cultural symbol of our city” (“Scotiabank Caribbean Carnival Toronto”). Interestingly, the proclamation goes on to recognise the festival’s contributions to “the economic viability of Toronto and promotes harmony by showcasing the captivating spirit of the Caribbean culture and traditions”
(“Scotiabank Caribbean Carnival Toronto”). Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival, according to a 2010 Ipsos Reid Economic Impact Study, generates $438 million for the local economy, and $198 million in federal and provincial tax revenues (Yates “Analysis shows Caribana’s impact…”). As a whole the festival contributes significantly to Toronto’s economy, more than any other cultural institution. Nevertheless federal, provincial and city funding combined amount to less than $1.4 million, with the city contributing $525 000 (“Major Cultural Organizations”). The proportion of funding the festival receives from the city is slightly more than one tenth of a percentage of what the festival contributes to the local economy in Toronto. The contradictory representations of Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival, Annmarie Gallaugher argues, contributes “to the reproduction of social and racial inequalities which the dominant culture is still … trying to deny” (405). As such, the carnival and its participants are marginalised and denied acceptance by dominant white culture, despite being masqueraded for the city’s multicultural branding.

3.1.3 The Tourist Masquerade: Spectators Enacting Tourist Fantasy

Cultural tourism and commodification complicate the agency of multicultural actors and the process of the multicultural agenda. G. Llewellyn Watson and Joseph P. Kopachevsky revisit Marx to define tourism commodification as the “process by which objects and activities come to be evaluated primarily in terms of their exchange value in the context of trade… in addition to any use-value that such commodities might have” (645). As such, ways of life, traditions, and the complex symbolism which support these are imagined and transformed into saleable products for tourists and are produced and performed for touristic consumption. In Caravan’s publicity articles, the consumption model for cultural tourism is at play: “For nine days, wannabe world travelers can fantasize by experiencing the cultures, crafts, music and food of the four corners of the earth. You can return to some of your old favourite international cities as well as enter exotic and exciting new worlds” (“A taste for everyone…” A6). The relationship, between the Caravan
tourist and the performance is complex and shows the potential for tourist dollars to shape cultural representations at *Caravan*.

Interestingly, for tourism studies theorist Erik Cohen, commodification is inherently linked with authenticity. Cohen sees the cultural tourist as one who seeks “Otherness” and exoticism, an authenticity that contrasts with the inauthentic and alienating nature of contemporary life (373). Tourists visiting places already have pre-formed images and expectations which may be frustrated or disappointed by “inauthentic” performances. At *Caravan*, tourists see a “staged authenticity” produced for consumption as pavilions import performers and dance troupes from the countries they are representing and perform to tourist expectations and for tourist dollars. This becomes problematic for three reasons: first, commercialising ethnic identities reflects entertainment standards rather than articulating the lived and experienced culture of the community; second, cultural representations are depoliticised and reflect positive and happy selective portraits in which the contradictory and dynamic aspects of these cultures are usually omitted; and, third, essentialised representations and shallow cultural stereotypes are re-produced. Lillian Petroff, senior co-ordinator of educational programs for the Multicultural History Society of Ontario, says the annual event “presents the danger that it commercializes and trivializes ethnicity” perpetuating “the perception of ethnic groups as merely people who don costumes and dance” (qtd in Freed A7). Cultural beliefs and practices are rarely static entities packed away in luggage and transported in total to be recreated in the new home, but are often changed and adapted to suit the new context. As such, performances at *Caravan* can reveal:

>a disjuncture between the lived experience of the people residing in the countries and cultures being represented on the one hand, and the lived experiences of those given the official job of representing the cultures on the other hand… for some singers and dancers, the festival is the only context in which they participate in “ethnic” dancing or singing. (Bramadat “Towards a New Politics…” 4)
Rather than placing authenticity on a true/false continuum, Ning Wang proposes a model that is critically aware of the social, economic, and political forces underscoring authenticity. Wang asserts that “Things appear authentic not because they are inherently authentic but because they are constructed in terms of point of view, beliefs, perspectives, or powers” and, as such they are negotiable and contextually determined (356). This complex negotiation occurs in performances of the “homeland imaginary” that not only exists in the specific cultural community’s memories, idealisations, and imaginations of the homeland, which can be deemed inauthentic for its selective exclusions or inclusions of the actual homeland, but also to “touristic” imaginations of that community that, as I mentioned earlier, can fixate on highly reductive elements of ethnicity. Commodification risks the potential to have cultural practices alienated from embodied acts of performers in which the transformative, social, or spiritual significances are emptied out for the actors. These acts are no longer performative, but enter into representation, in which culture and ethnicity are manufactured and oversimplified to fit, and be contained, within a socially ordered and systematised tourist gaze (Urry 1).

The tourist gaze fetishises the exotic and different in order to create both images of “Otherness” and of the self. As such, power is hierarchically defined in a single-directional flow from tourist to objects of consumption. For instance, at Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival the photographers for the local and national newspapers are assigned to capture images of the event that are reflective of the character and vibrancy of the community. Their lens can be read as a dramaturgical extension of the tourist gaze as a means of bringing visual information of the event to individuals who may not be able to attend in person. As such, their images, and how they are framed and captioned for newspaper audiences, help to shape and reify public perceptions regarding the event and often serve to reify particular stereotypes regarding the Caribbean and
people of Caribbean heritage. During the 2012 *Caribbean Carnival* Grand Parade on Lake Shore Boulevard, I photographed a photographer “staging” and encouraging a group of masqueraders to get into a “wine” where a male, figured centre, is on the receiving end of two women grinding up on him.

![Photographer encouraging a "wine." Photo: Jacqueline Taucar](image)

This image depicts a particular stereotype regarding Caribbean sexualities as being hyper-sexualised and heteronormative. Moreover, it constructs a depiction of Caribbean male virility, having two women wine upon him, that contributes to the notion of the “erotic exotic” whose body is available for public, colonial consumption. When such images make the front page of the dailies, they are accompanied with an assortment of trivialising captions and titles such as “Revellers ‘feel the love’in Caribana heat wave; Revellers… answer biggest booty call of the year” (Cherry and Kassam), “hot, hot, hot” “colourful” and “spectacle.” When such language is
used, although it is celebratory, it is reductive of the culture on display, the tone is trivial and almost infantile. The role of the caption seemingly relies on stereotypical assumptions regarding Caribbean culture, climate and people as “exotic” and “colourful” while images depict women, mostly, in a culturally specific dance, “the wine,” as sexual and erotic without providing further contextualisation. Toronto Caribbean Carnival’s commodification and marketing constructs itself through the bodies of “black” women as available touristic fantasy evoking a history of the black woman’s body and sexuality on display. Later in this chapter, I will explore this particular aspect of Caribbean Carnival in further detail with regards to performing women’s bodies in the King and Queen Competition and illustrate the ways in which certain performances, reveal and expose these stereotypical depictions and colonial fantasies of the “black” female body.

Rather than suggest that multicultural policy is drafted and then written onto performing bodies, I will argue that it is a more complex and interconnected process. Multiculturalism is a physical style, an act that performs and is performed by individuals. As my example with Caravan illustrates, the performance of multicultural identities and multicultural policy have certainly grown together and affected each other. For Judith Butler the body is not a fixed or stable entity but one that requires iteration, the repetition of cultural norms, which constitutes the very beings that we are. It is a reiteration that is not chosen or performed by a subject that pre-exists the performance; instead, it is the constraint and regularisation that forms us as subjects (Butler 94-5). The affirmation and performance of culturally defined bodies in public spaces requires recognition and protection. Once institutionalised the principles and rules of recognition become prescriptive and defining with their repetition. Caravan participants perform folkloric multicultural identities that emphasise particularly recognisable elements of their ethnicity. For example, at the Ukrainian pavilions an audience could always count on witnessing spectacular dancing, the intricate art of pysanky or traditional Easter Eggs, and buy a bowl of borscht to
enjoy. With the performance and repetition of these recognisable images and practices, the audience, witnessing the performance, engages in a performative act of identity formation, and conflates Ukrainian-Canadian ethnicity with red boots, cossack pants, folk art and perogy. While these elements constitute a part of the community, the audience of Caravan may visit a number of pavilions over the course of an evening, receiving only a tourist snapshot of the most popular elements rather than a larger, more complex understanding of what it means to be Ukrainian, or what it means to be Ukrainian in Canada.

Both Caravan and the Canadian Multicultural Act become problematic with regards to protecting and recreating historical cultural representations. In the Canadian Multicultural Act the Canadian Government is committed to a policy of multiculturalism designed to preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canadians. And while promotion and preservation of multicultural heritage is important, and was perhaps even vital at one point, to assert cultural difference to combat monoculturalism in Toronto, a critic of Caravan notes “some wonder about Caravan’s relevance in an era when multiculturalism has more to do with issues like employment equity, racism and rights than the predominant 1970s notions of cultural retention epitomized by church basement dances and spicy ‘exotic’ food” (Thompson A2). The right to perform historical cultural representations does not necessarily facilitate or guarantee full participation and equality. This problem occurs in part because Caravan is imbued with commercial and consumer appeal. Culture becomes a reproducible commodity for purchase and enjoyment in which participants can experience the “there” here by walking through “sections of the city that we experience as having unique characters which are not ours, where people from diverse places mingle and then go home” (Young 239). Certainly, as audience members, performances of cultural difference at Caravan give us the sense that we are supporting multiculturalism. As audience members at Caravan, we are proud of the city’s diversity and
show tolerance by taking interest in other cultures, and then we go home. Often, these historical representations establish oversimplified conceptions of cultural minorities, especially when produced for commercial entertainment and consumption, which build potential barriers to full participation by not challenging the audience’s complicity in creating such representations and not challenging the audience’s passivity with regards to issues like racism.

3.1.4 Participants’ Masquerade

Following the concepts and practices of the feminist masquerade, the performance of ethnicity and the racial masquerade can be used as a means of upholding official multicultural discourses through the performance of stereotype. As many scholars have asserted, ethnic festivals depict “boutique” versions of ethnicity are safe and contained are performed for safe consumption. Such multicultural masquerades need to be examined further. If, as Riviere contends, performing femininity is a potential strategy through which an individual can avoid reprisals and punishment for performing outside of accepted terms and conditions discursive “womanliness,” then groups adopting an “boutique” versions of multicultural identities can potentially be read as a performance of “strategic essentialism.” In his study of Winnipeg’s Folklorama festival, scholar Paul Bramadat suggests that particular groups may opt to “identify themselves with certain stereotypical characteristics in order to achieve certain social or political ends” (“Shows, selves…” 78). Although Bissoondath and Thoroski critique the facile ethnic representations abundant at the festivals, perhaps they overlook the significance these events facilitate social group cohesion, identity formation, and a sense of belonging that, in many ways, by simply existing within the nation may not be able to fulfill. Regardless of the narrative being told, packaged, and sold to consumers in cultural spectacles, Bramadat argues, such events can foster a “presentation of dramatic performances of identity directed not only by, but also at, themselves in order to tell a certain kind of story about what it might mean for individuals and
groups to combine within themselves various identities (Canadian, Serbian, first generation, second generation, rural, urban, local, global, etc.)” (“Shows, selves…” 78). Moreover, “by encouraging ethnic communities to re-enact and re-experience concentrated versions of a particular ethnic identity in a public (and even ritualistic) manner, spectacles such as Folklorama exemplify the form of Canadian multiculturalism that encourages conversational partners to speak from specific discursive locations” (Bramadat “Shows, selves…” 78).

Through performance and spectacle, Caravan imprints and marks neighbourhoods by creating symbolic worlds, or what I call “homeland imaginaries,” which sit in the in-between space between the new country, Canada, and the “old countries,” the places of origin. For Anderson, the nation is an “imagined community,” “because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (49). Branching off of Anderson’s notion of a nation as an imagined political community, a socially constructed idea of a perceived affiliation between members of a group, the “homeland imaginary” exists for diasporic communities in the ways they maintain and perform social and cultural re-memberings of the places that they left. Such national identities and communities are constructed through the assembly of symbols and rituals—symbolic capital—in relation to territorial categories. Many immigrants left their places of origins to settle and create homes in Toronto, perhaps visiting the homeland and families they left, but whose lived reality is very different from living “back home.” With them they bring practices, languages, beliefs and affiliations that are reflections, traces of the homeland; “traces” that are enacted in ethno-cultural festivals. Such enactments function as “symbolic or iconographic capital,” which Michel Bruneau describes as the processes and monuments that preserve and consolidate the links between the community and their territory despite the temporal and spatial distances that separate them (35).
The *Taste of the Danforth, Festival Caravan, and Toronto Caribbean Carnival Festival* not only function as iconographic capital through which the community transmits its identity, memory and history from one generation to the next, but also create a space signifying an incomplete relationship or communion with the “new country” as well as the “old country.” Such ambivalence manifests in that the folkloric practices and costumes bear little resemblance to contemporary cultural practices and everyday life in the so-called “old country,” but yet are performed as a markers of difference in the “new country.” Moreover, the “traces” performed in one hour *Caravan* performances need to be closely examined for providing an audience with a very selective and simplified depiction of the very complex realities of the homeland. Performing traces opens up an in-between space, not one or other, but both/and. The image of the homeland has been shaped and conditioned by living in the “new country” (with the effects of time, space and nostalgia), and the places in which they now live are shaped by the places from which they have come.

Certainly, at festivals many identities that are being performed are nostalgic, symbolic and reflective of the dominant consumerist milieu pervading the lifestyles of the majority of people in North America and the West. Such pervasive capitalist consumer society evokes the spectre of cultural homogenisation, as Bissoondath makes the case for in *Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada*. Bissoondath argues that the pavilions of *Caravan* and other ethnic festivals depict differences in a synthetic manner that reflects the processes of a Disney theme park, which removes any and all of the troubling or difficult elements (83). The threat of such depictions of multiculturalism contributes to perceptions of multiculturalism as static and non-threatening to the dominant status quo. Thoroski similarly argues that ethno-cultural festivals are “like living museums, Disney’s Epcot Centre (as discussed by Grimes 1995), or the fast-food services of McDonalds’s, this homogenised brand of multiculturalism provides visitors
with the illusion of cross-cultural close encounter along with the security of the imagining the ‘other’ from a safe distance” (106). Before accepting the position that ethno-cultural representations are largely shaped by dominant consumer imperatives, threatening pre-existing more “authentic” identities, I contend that cultural identities and traditions are far more fluid, emerging dialogically, in an endless process of becoming, out of dynamic interactions with Canadian contexts and institutions. Moreover, as I have argued elsewhere what constitutes “authentic” is also a performance that is not immutable or fixed, but rather contingent and contextually determined.

Entrapping identity formation in a consumerist feedback loop overlooks the opportunities for a counter-discourse to emerge. If we read Toronto’s ethno-cultural street festivals through masquerade discourse, we can open up the discourse beyond essentialisation and reductive stereotyping, and see their performances as a way to hyperbolise the nostalgic and folkloric in such a way that we can critically examine their construction. For example, what can also be read from the folkloric and iconic performances at *Caravan* of “cossak pants, red boots, and Ukrainian dancing,” or of “Zorba the Greek” and Greek dancing at *A Taste of the Danforth*, when viewed through a Brechtian lens? As a form of multicultural masquerade, these iconic images appear to be a strategic mode of performance that is invoked to avoid reprisals for performing outside accepted stereotypical norms. In doing so, stereotypical masquerades can be used by those who are marginalised and find themselves outside the centre of dominant power and can find a potential agency in “selling back to the empire.” Moreover, how can the characterisation of Caribbean woman at carnival, as mediated through newspaper and television images, be interrogated further? Moving away from colonialist reductions of the “erotic exotic,” a female masquerader’s performance can be read as “flaunting” and enacting a hyper-sexualisation that asserts her own pleasure in her body, in which a grotesqueness or excessive
sexuality empties attempts to contain the body/identity as it is always exceeding its territory/boundary. In any discursive regime there is always a space of counter-discourse, these festivals enact a number of ways in which the body can, and does, exceed and spill outside the boundaries of the accepted multicultural norms to question and trouble our deep-held assumptions regarding race, ethnicity and belonging in Canada.

3.2 Performances that Unmask the Multicultural Masquerade

While superficial cultural identities may be enacted at festivals, asserting such readings as the performative mode of ethno-cultural festivals in general homogenises the festival experience of participants and audiences. In doing so the subversive and multiple meanings that are performed and contested within the “liminal” festival space by the multiple bodies that act out and move in a myriad of different ways are often overlooked. This section examines three case studies that focus predominantly on the performativity of bodies in very specific, though interconnected ways. My first case study examines The Taste of the Danforth 9/11 Truth Protest that interrogates the ways in which the body and kinesthetics can create political interference and intervene in the dominant multicultural discourse in Toronto. Second, in the section entitled “Subversive Costumes/Subversive Performances at Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival King and Queen Competition” I examine how the body is carnivalised and rendered grotesque as a means to parody and critique the racist and sexual ideologies that inscribe the black female body. The final case study examines the performance of absence/presence by the Kanata Pavilion at the 1997 Caravan Festival to decolonise an imperial “Discourse of Discovery” that discursively erase aboriginal bodies. Each case study examines the way in which the body is used to intervene and disrupt normative assumptions surrounding “official” Multiculturalism in Canada.
3.2.1 Choreographing Dissent at Toronto’s Taste of the Danforth Festival

Although theatre and performance increasingly become situated within specific spaces and architectures, there are numerous theatrical forms and popular entertainments, for instance medieval pageant plays and mystery cycles, commedia dell’arte, as well as carnivals and festivals, where the streets or public squares become stages open to mass participation. Toronto’s ethno-cultural street festivals are often touted by the media as evidence of the city’s multiculturalism and tolerance, yet they are largely ignored and/or trivialised by scholars. To open up ways of critically thinking through the performative potential of street festivals, I will bring a theatre and performance studies perspective to Toronto’s Taste of the Danforth that will approach the body and kinesthetics as a site of cultural production and process. Toronto’s “favourite festival,”43 the Taste of the Danforth celebrates difference with local performances of “Greekness” while reproducing power and order of Toronto’s “multicultural” society. However, the festival as a liminal space opens up the possibility for performances, such as the Toronto 9/11 Truth protest (a group is commonly known as “Truthers”), that rupture and question normative multicultural understandings. The “Truthers” march up and down the street, holding banners declaring the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States “an inside job;” their physical presence is enough to part and carve their way through the wall-to-wall crowds effortlessly. The actions of Toronto 9/11 Truth illustrate the processes of political interference that, according to Susan Foster, “calls forth a perceptive and responsive physicality that, everywhere along the way, deciphers the social and then choreographs an imagined alternative” (412). Building upon the work of Foster, Bertolt Brecht and Baz Kershaw, I will formulate and conduct a dramaturgy of protest in which I will examine the role of the corporeal and of

43 According to a 2007 Decima Research poll (“Taste of the Danforth celebrations…” 1).
kinaesthetics in meaning-making. By examining the choreography and the dramaturgy of the 9/11 Truth Protest, I will interrogate and observe how normative assumptions regarding Toronto as a multicultural city are created and questioned by kinaesthetic intervention at the Taste of the Danforth Festival. Drawing upon Brechtian ideas, I will examine the Taste of the Danforth and the “Truthers’” protest as street theatre and as a performance that draw attention to and comment upon enacting the multicultural “script” in everyday life.

I have witnessed the Toronto 9/11 Truth Commission’s protests at the Taste of the Danforth for three years from 2006-2008, their most active protest year being 2008. The 9/11 Truth movement originated and fomented in the years after the terrorist attacks, in which extremist Al Qaeda operatives hijacked domestic American flights and targeted the World Trade Center buildings, in New York City, and the Pentagon, causing massive civilian casualties, on September 11, 2001. The 9/11 attacks in the United States resulted in two military deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq, and saw an increase of hostilities, distrust and Islamaphobic discourses towards Muslims in the West. The “Truthers’” movement opposes the accepted explanation of the terrorist attacks and claiming, conversely, that it was “inside job” and/or a cover-up. While many dismiss the group’s claims and participants as “fanatical, crazy, or conspiracy theorists,” my intention is not to evaluate the validity of their claims, as a number of academic journals and rigorous scientific studies have been conducted to disprove many of their theories (see Thomas W. Eager and Christopher Musso 2001, David Dunbar and Brad Regan 2006, and Dave Thomas 2011 among others).

Rather, as Jamie Bartlett and Carl Miller argue, the movement is far more complex and cannot be easily reduced to mere “crazy-talk” as there are many different reasons why individuals participate. Bartlett and Miller identify three different kinds of individuals who engage in the 9/11 truth movement. The “Hardcore” members are the first group, who are
veteran conspiracy theorists and who produce the majority of the literature (in pamphlets and articles on websites). The second group consists of the “critically tuned,” mostly well-educated students and activists, for whom the movement is more about “anger at the political order,” the centralisation of power in the hands of the few, and resistance against oppression and social injustice than about the collapse of the two towers (Bartlett and Miller 45). And third group, are the “illiterati” whose participation is “as much a social and recreational pursuit as an exercise in critical inquiry” (Bartlett and Miller 45). My interest in examining the “Truthers” protest at the Taste of the Danforth is entirely in its performative and kinesthetic potential to disrupt and reveal the relationship between the festival and the dominant social and political order.

Dramaturgically, the “Truthers” selection of the Taste of the Danforth is salient for a number of reasons. First, the Taste of the Danforth is, according to a Harris Decima poll, Toronto’s favourite festival and annual attendance hovers at over a million people, which creates a larger potential for visibility, for engagement, and for disruption. Going into its twentieth year, the Taste of the Danforth has grown from its humble beginnings in 1994 where 5000 participants sampled the wide variety of Greek fare from twenty-three local restaurants that set up tasting tables in the Logan Avenue parkette. Now, the festival closes 1.6 kilometres of the Danforth Avenue to traffic, between Broadview Avenue to Jones Avenue, to accommodate approximately one hundred restauranteurs and the massive crowds.

Second, and most importantly, the festival represents not only a celebration of Greekness in Toronto, but also a co-option of the discourses of multiculturalism for the purpose of consumerism. As Kershaw contends,

the spectacle of protest challenges a system of authority in its own terms, because in such societies the display of power – its symbolic representation in multifarious forms of public custom, ceremony, and ritual, and then their reproduction through the media – has become in some senses more important to the maintenance of law and order than authority’s actual powers of coercion and control. (257)
With the branding of the *Taste of the Danforth* as a multicultural festival, the participation of festival goers in the event incorporates them into a particular social order. The boundaries between performer and audience become increasingly blurred, as Mikhail Bakhtin notes festivals and carnivals are not spectacles “seen by the people; they live in it, and everyone participates because its very idea embraces all the people” (7). As such, the relationship between visitors to the festival (whom I call cultural tourists) and those who produce the goods for consumption, together create meaning out of food, and the performances surrounding its preparation, presentation, purchasing and eating, which become exemplary of social relations and identity formation. Moreover, the festival takes such normal or ordinary performances of daily life such as eating and makes them “extraordinary” through spectacle. The act of consumption can be read through the critical lens of Brechtian *gestus* to reveal the social processes at play in the festival and in every day multicultural life in Toronto. In many ways *The Taste of the Danforth* encourages its non-Greek visitors to eat, drink and be incorporated as “Greek for the day.” As you walk down the Danforth, when food is served you can hear the occasional cry of "Opa!" and other festival participants will respond in kind or with some laughter (Gulamhusein A9). Such performances of “Greekness” are superficial, temporary, limited to festival time and I question how completely a non-Greek can be incorporated into and fully understand the food culture. As I have argued earlier, in the chapter regarding the performativity of foods, Greek foodways are vastly diverse and are not always represented in their entirety at the festival or are edited to achieve palatability for Toronto consumers. As a result, certain recognisable elements are popularised and sold, such as the ultimate Greek fetish on a stick—souvlaki—contributing to the need for essentialisation and hegemony of identity through foods.
With the establishment of various ethnic restaurants on the Danforth, the festival has opened up beyond the scope of Greek food and reflects the changing demographic of the Danforth area and the expanding tastes of participants. Over a hundred food vendors participate in the three day festival offering such diverse fare as Brazilian, Thai, Cuban, British pub fare, and Japanese, none of which is necessarily sourced, sold, made, or consumed by people of the food’s national or cultural origin. The Taste of the Danforth is often recognised by the organisational body and participants alike as reflecting Toronto’s multicultural heritage and creating understanding between communities. Attending with her family, Andrea Smart affirms “These festivals are so important because they teach us about other cultures and let us experience those cultures in all of their glory” (Menon A16). Moreover, Sue Zindros owner of Mezes restaurant on the Danforth upholds that the success of the festival is a “testament to the success of the multicultural nature of Canadian society” (Karastamatis TO1). Such claims to multiculturalism need to be interrogated and confronted and I see the “Truthers” protest as a kinesthetic challenge to such discourse.
Figure 17: The 9/11 Truth Commission's protest at Taste of the Danforth, 9 Aug. 2008.

Photo: Jacqueline Taucar

At the Taste of the Danforth, I watch a small group of “Truthers” protestors, holding signs and banners regarding 9/11, continuously march from one end of the festival and back again. In most instances the protestors are able to cut a swath through even the most densely populated areas of the festival as people find room to get out of their way. I read this particular moment as a Brechtian gestus, a moment in which the social relationship between the people’s passive consumption of “Greekness” and “Multiculturalism” is revealed, disrupted and can be interrogated. As an event that celebrates consumption as a means of “knowing the Other,” the festival is also a representative of consumer capitalism in which cultural tourists are able to “visit” an area of the city that is exotic and new to them and purchase experiences of Greekness.
via the many food vendors that are set up on the sidewalks. The cultural tourist can then assume
the feelings of tolerance and openness without actually dealing with the problematic nature of
cross-cultural interaction. When confronted by the “Truthers’” protest, people are suddenly
jolted out of their complacency physically. The cultural tourists have a bodily affective response
towards the “Truthers’” protest in that emotions play out on/through their bodies as they turn or
move away, distancing themselves from the bodies of the protestors. I observe that most cultural
tourists have a very visceral reaction that reverberates throughout their bodies. Most often, their
reaction begins with a moment of recognition and shock that crosses their faces, whose effects
ripple throughout their bodies with a twisting of neck, shoulders and torso, resulting in a recoil
and shuffle away from the “offensive” bodies (Taste field notes). The movement away, is done at
all cost, where there was once no discernable space, individuals make space and distance
between themselves and the bodies of the “Truthers,” avoiding any contamination via bodily
contact. Sara Ahmed defines the movements of recoil and rejection as the corporeality of a
“disgust encounter” (85), which I interpret as a gestic act that reveals the state of power relations
in society. Ahmed argues that the way that emotion plays out on/through the body creates
communities for some bodies while “Othering” other bodies, gesturing to the broader material
and discursive structures of the nation-state.

The cultural tourists become a part of the choreography of the protest and their physical
response of disgust, rejection and avoidance disrupts the “multicultural mythology” embraced
and promoted as the narrative of the nation-state. Rather, the kinaesthetics of disgust illustrates
society’s treatment of complexities of living in an increasingly intercultural society that are
based on unequal power relations. The protest is a physical intervention into the Taste of the
Danforth’s staged version of multiculturalism that reflects symbolic multiculturalism and
folkloric representations, which does not necessarily address substantive concerns surrounding
equal opportunity and access. Cultural tourists come to enjoy the diverse menu, celebrate how “tolerant” they are, and are rarely challenged to confront their complicity in creating limited ethnic representations or their passivity with regards to issues like racism and equality.

Verbal reactions to this intervention range from challenging the “Truthers’” legitimacy to protest and accusations that they are “ruining” this family event. As such the bodies of “Others,” the “Truthers,” can be read as the object of expulsion and exclusion, in that they have injected themselves into an event where they (apparently) do not belong, and have “ruined” or tainted an event by their deliberate, intervening acts and presence, thereby threatening the bodies of the disgusted. The claim of “ruining” the event is rather interesting as it asserts an ideological assumption that the festival ought to be un-problematic, safe, and situated within a comfortable realm of the status quo of boutique multiculturalism. By being confronted with the protest and all of the emotional associations it invokes, cultural tourists and self-exoticising Greek-Canadians are being unsettled out of their complacency and are faced with a performance that gestures to the unpalatable nature of cultural conflict, Islamophobia, and the reductive characterisation of a whole Muslim community by the actions of a few.

First raised as a concept in 1991, the Runnymede Trust Report (1997) defines Islamophobia as “unfounded hostility towards Islam, and therefore fear or dislike of all or most Muslims” (96). Hate crimes and racial profiling directed towards individuals of Muslim heritage, “and those who look Arab or Muslim,” increased dramatically after 9/11 including the development of policies such as the “no fly list”—officially known as “Passenger Protect” in Canada—that restricts the air travel of individuals suspected security threats, who are often denied due process in such situations (Bahdi 299). Anti-Islamic sentiment pervades the debate over multiculturalism in Canada, manifesting in a number of high profile examples: Ontario’s
rejection of Sharia Law to settle family disputes in 2005; the 2007 Hérouville Town Charter for “newcomers,” which bans stoning of women; the 2007 “Reasonable Accommodation” hearings for religious and ethnic minorities in Québec; and, most recently, Quebec’s so-called Charter of Values (2013), which disproportionately targeted and marginalised racialised communities, in particular Muslims. Significantly, the *Taste of the Danforth* ends at the foot of a mosque and the beginning of the Muslim neighbourhood branded as the Danforth Mosaic, a neighbourhood that is not included in this seemingly multicultural festival. The “Truthers’” performative incursion at the festival illustrates how shallow multiculturalism, which emphasises ethnic displays and consumption, is unable to produce a deeper understanding of the “Other”, to eliminate racism, and improve participation in the civic arena.

Choreographic and dramaturgical analysis of the 9/11 Truth protest can reveal particular aspects that often go overlooked by other approaches to ethno-cultural festivals and can also open up critical, performance-based perspectives on the *Taste of the Danforth* festival. Protests, such as the one the “Truthers” enact at the *Taste of the Danforth*, are shaped by performative considerations, although a great deal of spontaneity is involved, there is usually an audience to perform for. The protest reveals that bodies are articulate matter whose actions play out the complex relationship between self, society, community and nationality and whose performance defies closure and keeps open the possibility for reinterpretation and change. Bodies also have the ability to penetrate the real, to render hegemonic oppressions transparent and so subject to interrogation and radical change.

3.2.2 Subversive Costumes/Subversive Bodies in the King and Queen Competition at Toronto’s *Caribbean Carnival*

The King and Queen Competition is held on the last Thursday before the *Toronto Caribbean Carnival* parade of the bands in the three-week festival, transforming the Allan
Lamport Stadium into an open-air theatre in which the stars of a masquerade band, the “big mas,” delight and amaze audiences with their grand architecture and creativity. Big mas—the King, Queen, and Male and Female Individuals—are considered the jewels in the crown of the mas bands, highlighting a particularly important aspect of the band’s theme and acting as a headliner to a section of masqueraders. Towering over thirty-feet tall and spanning over forty-feet wide, the King and Queen mas costumes weigh more than three times the single performer that animates and brings the mas to life. Carnival artists create visual spectacle and evoke a narrative through imagery and movement, and their massive costumes reflect various subject matters from enacting folkloric legends such as Jumbies and Jab Jabs, to mythical creatures (Pegasus, Hydra), and even lost civilisations (Aztec and Atlantis). At the King and Queen competition in Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival, big mas costumes are adjudicated on two sets of criteria that are related: first, the mas is evaluated for visual impact, thematic representation, and costume details; and, secondly, costumes are evaluated on the performer’s ability to dance and interpret the mas.

Mas is more than just the costume alone. Rather, it becomes mas through performance, as Lesley Ferris and A. Ruth Tompsett contend, “when the player plays it, connecting to its meaning from inside him/herself and giving that character or thematic aspect full life on the street” (47). This case study will examine two examples of Queen mas performances from TruDYNASTY Carnival Inc., masquerade band that subversively engage stereotypes regarding the sexuality of the Black Caribbean female body, and “act back” to colonial discourse.

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44 Mas is derived from the term masquerade and refers to the costume that players wear in Carnival.

45 Jumbies are ghosts and spirits in the folklore of Caribbean countries and Jab Jab is derived from the French diable diable. Both of these forms of mas are considered traditional carnival costumes.
TruDYNASTY Carnival’s 2010 Queen, “Josephine Baker goes to the Market” (hereafter “Josephine”) and 2012 Queen costume “The Garden of Eden” (hereafter “Eden”) performances at the Caribbean Carnival’s King and Queen Competition enact a playful subversiveness and parody, both of which place emphasis on the female body. The “Josephine” mas is unique for taking an historical figure and legendary African-American entertainer, Josephine Baker (1906-1975), as its subject. The mas hybridises iconic elements of Baker’s imagery with elements of the Caribbean marketplace, creating a new understanding of Baker’s body for Caribbean Carnival. “Eden” reimagines Biblical Eve within the carnival aesthetic and in doing so opens up new ways of reading and interpreting Eve’s so-called “Fall” in Genesis and posits a post-colonial, counter-discursive view of women in the story, in carnival and in society.

The principle focus of TruDYNASTY’s 2010 mas is Josephine Baker, a twenty-foot bent-wire figure with a metallic bronze mask-like face and sculptural breasts. The bronzed mask can be read as a citation of Baker’s status as the “Bronze Venus,” the seductive and exotic, African-American entertainer, who captured the imaginations of Parisians in the 1920s. On the costume, the most prominent sign of Baker’s image are the six-foot wide pair of breasts sculpted from bent wire, acknowledging an iconography that is dominated by nakedness and primitive imagery that itself is premised on racist stereotypes and objectifications of the black body. Born on June 3, 1906 in St. Louis, Missouri, Baker never saw Africa and had no knowledge of tribal cultures and/or dance forms, yet in her audience’s gaze she was transformed into the primitive through her danse sauvage where she performed nude, except for feathers around her thighs.

The carnivalesque breasts of the “Josephine” mas extend upwards and outwards, beyond the natural boundaries of the body. Such extensions in the mas are a reflection of Brechtian gestus and Baktinian grotesqueness, in that it “is looking for that which protrudes from the body, all that seeks to go out beyond the body’s confines. Special attention is given to the shoots and
branches, to all that prolongs the body and links it to other bodies or to the world outside” (Bakhtin 316-17). Grotesquely exaggerated in a Bakhtinian sense, the breasts are not only a parody of Baker’s image, but also a celebration of the spectacle of nudity, its bodily excesses and its pleasures. In doing so, the mas costume acknowledges the historical discourse of the primitive body surrounding Baker, while opening up other ways of understanding the body within Caribbean Carnival.

Using elements from a Caribbean market, “Josephine” translates Baker’s image from exotic female entertainer to a local West Indian woman shopping, or selling, in marketplace. On the “Josephine” costume mesh-like netting is used predominantly lower to the ground to cover the three-wheel base, resembling a skirt for the large figure of Baker. The skirt is decorated with piles of colourful straw hats, tropical fruit like pineapples, watermelon, citrus and flowers. Oranges and limes also hang from the wires and rods that extend up and out from the base of the costume. Although Baker’s success has been directly associated with her “nakedness,” Anne Cheng notes, Baker’s skin “is a remarkably layered construct” often associated with sartorial elements like bananas, feathers and drapery (7).
Bananas figure prominently on the costume in two different places: first, bananas are placed on the mesh-like fabric constructed in a fan-shape above the base of the mas costume; and secondly around the mas performer’s waist-piece, a citation of Baker’s banana skirt from her “Banana dance.” Aside from the racial and erotic undertones, the bananas also gesture to local colonial politics and economics in the Caribbean as “banana plantations were being promoted as a supplement to and replacement for the sugar plantations” in the 1920s (Cheng 45). With all its market elements, the costume evokes the image of a higgler, a woman who sells food at the market or in the street walking house to house with her wares. Higglers represent “a powerful image in Afro-Caribbean history, a woman who symbolizes local economic ingenuity and female independence” (Freeman 1019), qualities that Baker also possessed. The costume actively re-
writes history and shifts Baker’s position from exotic to familiar, illustrating the possibility of destabilising fixed interpretations of Baker’s identity as a primitive savage to be tamed and opening up ways of viewing Baker from a Canadian-Caribbean perspective.

The performance of “Josephine” cites Baker’s infamous “Banana Dance” performed in 1927 at the Folies Bergère, Paris. In the dance, with what one critic called “remarkable humour” (André Rouverge qtd in Dalton and Gates 918), Baker animates the bananas encircling her waist by twirling her hips, undulating her torso, and shaking her buttocks, simultaneously enthralling and disgusting her Parisian audiences. Whereas Saartje Baartman’s passive body, a century prior, became a surface upon which Europeans constructed black female sexuality, Baker activated the body to return the audience’s gaze. Indeed Baker played into the audience’s racialised—and sexualised—conceptions of the black female body, but did so with parody and satire, often crossing her eyes, pulling faces, and protruding her bottom in a playful “moon” to her audience.

“Josephine” enacts Baker’s playfulness and character in two ways. First, Thea Jackson, the performer dancing the mas, is costumed in a manner consistent with the theme: she wears a banana belt that bounces with her circular hip movements popularly known as “wining” by Caribbean peoples. Secondly, the way in which the performer dances the mas brings to life Baker’s character. The wires and thirty foot long rods that extend vertically supporting the wire-sculpted Baker are a combination of metal and light-weight fiberglass that responds to the performer’s movement. As the performer dances sharply from side-to-side, the Baker sculpture appears to sway and gyrate wildly as if she too, is dancing. The enormous wire-frame breasts bounce and shimmy with the music, uncannily resembling eyes that confront the audience’s gaze. The breasts grotesquely “outgrows its own self, transgressing its own body, in which it conceives a new, second body” (Bakhtin 317) becoming new eyes, and fostering a new way of
looking outwardly at the world, and inwardly at its own construction. The back of the costume, shaped like a half “moon” covered in a golden mesh or netting, gyrates and shakes at the audience and judges. The carnivalesque breasts and rear end can be read as a critical intervention into the racialised stereotypes of a hyper-sexualised black femininity, whose exaggeration exposes such discourse as absurdity.

While costume and the performance “bare” the traces of historical readings of Baker’s body as the “exotic primitive,” the costume’s market elements shift the perspective towards a more local and familiar understanding for Caribbean people in Toronto. Unlike Baker who danced for white Europeans with a colonising gaze, “Josephine” dances for a Toronto audience predominantly from the Caribbean diaspora. The change in audience shifts the intent of the gaze. Rather than find exoticism and primitivism, Toronto’s diasporic audiences see the familiar: the market of the Caribbean, the song and dance of Caribbean culture, and the carnival license to enjoy and celebrate the body—especially the female body. As both the performer and the mas wine and dance, I see the discourse shifting towards how women re-position their bodies within carnival to assert their pleasure in their bodies and sexuality.

Pleasure similarly underlines the theme of TruDYNASTY’s 2012 Queen, “Eden,” which enacts an iconoclastic version of Eve from Genesis, in which Eve’s newly acquired knowledge brings enjoyment through her sexual freedom and agency. The Christian imperialist legacy of the “Eve-seductress and subordinate” permeates Caribbean culture and understandings of women in Caribbean society. Caribbean women are objectified via a male-oriented, colonising gaze, which has constructed racist and sexist stereotypes and fantasies of the black female body and sexuality. Male ownership of a slave’s body included access to the sexual services, consensual or by force. The legacy of sexual objectification continues through modern sex tourism, where neo-
imperialist ideologies construct/consume the body of the racial “Other” through the tourist gaze. The “Eden” mas and its performance can be read as an example of what Helen Tiffin calls a “canonical counter-discourse” in which, “a post-colonial writer [or performer] takes up a character or characters, or the basic assumptions of a … canonical text, and unveils those assumptions, subverting the text for post-colonial purposes” (100). Helen Gilbert and Joanne Tompkins contend that the Bible, in aiding and abetting the imperial project, is ripe for post-colonial intervention (100).

Women have been constructed in reference to Biblical Eve in Western, colonial, Christian culture as the root of temptation and sinfulness for having first succumbed to evil. In Genesis 3 Adam and Eve live in paradise and are forbidden by God to eat the tree of knowledge’s fruit. Tempted by a serpent, Eve eats the fruit and shares some with Adam and they both become aware of their nakedness. Consequently, God punishes Adam and Eve for their disobedience and banishes them from the Garden of Eden cursing Eve, and all women, with labour pains and subordination. Artistic and social representations of Women as Eve—as temptresses and sinful—are pervasive in Western culture. For example St. Augustine, considered the father of Western Christianity, writes, “What is the difference if it is in a wife or a mother; it is still Eve the temptress that we must beware of in every woman” (Letters 243: 10). Roots of the phrase that “a woman’s place is in the home” can be found in the lectures of Martin Luther, one of the leaders of the Protestant Reformation, who argues: “The rule remains with the husband, and the wife is compelled to obey him by God’s command… the wife should stay at home…. In this way Eve is punished” (qtd in Hanson 87). Luther legitimises women’s restriction to the private sphere based on Eve’s disobedience in Genesis. Also interpretations regarding Women as temptresses abound in art, in particular Michaelangelo’s depiction of “The Fall” in the Sistine Chapel where the serpent is portrayed as half-woman, half-snake. Despite advancements in
women’s rights and equality, the archetype of Eve as Fallen Woman and her guilt still holds traction in contemporary culture, most recently and notably dragged into public consciousness via Krista Ford, niece of the late former Toronto mayor Rob Ford, with her ill-conceived tweets on the recent string of sexual assaults in Toronto’s Annex neighbourhood. Ford tweeted, “Stay alert, walk tall, carry mace, take self-defence classes & don’t dress like a whore. #DontBeAVictim #StreetSmart,” (qtd in Dempsey “Krista Ford apologizes…”). The perception of Eve as temptress and responsible for her own downfall is culturally ingrained that even women accept that they are de facto at fault or denounce other women as “sluts” and “whores.”

Unlike the “Josephine” mas, the character of ‘Eve’ is represented by the performer animating the costume, Michelle Reyes, while the rest of the costume built around Reyes is representative of the Garden of Eden and the Tree of Knowledge. The performance of “Eden” reimagines Biblical Eve within a carnival/esque aesthetic that challenges and reconfigures conventional understandings of women. Entering the stage to sounds of birds chirping, Reyes presents the costume in a sweeping circle to face the judges and the audience. Playing into the trope of innocence before the fall, the use of this entrance music evokes the image of a natural paradise, the mas is lush with many hues of green shimmering under the floodlights, and Reyes performs Eve’s discovery of the Tree of Knowledge and its fruit with playfulness, reaching up for an apple and then retreating gazing back at the audience, teasing them and tempting them by delaying the first bite. The music changes to a power soca song, Fay-Ann Lyons “Miss Behave.”
As Reyes plucks an apple from the tree she also triggers the winch that lifts the back half of the costume into a vertical position revealing the twenty-foot, bent-wire snake who watches Eve eat the apple. Helene Cixous writes that “knowledge begins with the mouth, the discovery of the taste of something. Knowledge and taste go together” (133). As Eve bites into the apple she explores the inside, both of the apple and her own inside, and takes great pleasure in knowing the inside. Knowledge is through the body and Eve embraces knowing, embraces her body, for which, Cixous argues, “Eve is punished for it…, punished since she has access to pleasure (specifically, her own), of course a positive relation to the inside is something which threatens society and which must be controlled” (134). As Reyes bites the apple, her persona transforms
from innocent to knowing being, eschewing shame and instead embracing the carnival license to enjoy and celebrate the body – especially the female body.

Such joy and pleasure of the female body is also reflected in the “Josephine” mas’s over-emphasised, over-sized erotic body parts, the breasts and bottom gleefully bounce, shimmy and shake to the beat. Through the tourist gaze such images mark the black female body, according to Caribbean studies scholar, Camille Hernandez-Ramdawar as being sexually available:

Caribbean women, and specifically Trinidadian women, are viewed as “loose” and promiscuous. The image has haunted Caribbean women for centuries, coming out of a long history of exploitation and brutalization in which stereotypes of “oversexed” women allowed slave masters and other colonial men to rape with impunity. There are also myths attached to the “hot-blooded” mulatta and mixed-race woman, evolving out of colonial discourses of racial impurity and sexual deviance. (Hernandez-Ramdawar 171)

Such constructions of Caribbean women are premised on a legacy of racist stereotypes and objectifications of the black body that shares resonances with the “Hottentot Venus,” Baartman, who was exhibited in the nineteenth century for her racialised exoticism and erotic features, her buttocks and genitalia.

Both Queen costumes challenge the historical discourses that substantiated Baartman’s exploitation. “Josephine” and “Eden” interrogate the legacy of displays of the exotic—an imagined construct of a male-oriented, colonising gaze—representing the relationship between “Otherness” and Eurocentric civilisation, which support the notions of Empire and official culture of colonialism. Baartman, unlike Baker, lacked the agency and freedom over her display and was exploited until her death in 1815. Baker used and parodied the racial stereotyping of the “primitive” to achieve unparalleled success and agency on the Parisian stage and society at a time when black females had very little of either. Baartman lacked the agency and freedom over her display and was exploited until her death in 1815. In carnival, Caribbean women challenge “dominant representations of female sexuality, respectability and access to public spaces” (Nurse
674). Significantly, women are now the dominant masqueraders in the streets, outnumbering men four or five to one, shifting the style of costuming to that which emphasises sexuality and facilitates wining.

In TruDYNASTY’s re-imagining of “The Fall,” Eve is not banished from Eden. Rather Eve’s new-found awareness of her body and sexuality brings new life to the garden. As Eve consumes the forbidden fruit, the performer begins to wine and dance the mas making it appear that the Tree of Knowledge dances along in celebration. Eve’s breaking of the rules leads to regeneration and growth. After the first bite, Reyes triggers the winch system that elevates a portion of the mas featuring a sparkling serpent to a vertical forty feet. Eve’s bodily abandon and freedom animate the entire mas. The snake bobs, sways and gyrates – catching the carnival spirit and sexual energy that emanates from Eve’s body. The lyrics of the Fay-Ann Lyon’s song that Reyes’s performs to are ironic, “It’s carnival time and I will behave, I will limit myself to jump and wave” (Miss Behave), which is code for an overt display of nationalism that is jumping to the music and waving your island’s flag. “Jump and wave” is seen as appropriate behaviour because it emphasises nationalism over sexual display. Between the lines though, Lyons is encouraging women to be subversive and express their sexuality, to “wine and jam” as wildly as possible close to the ground when she sings, “drop on the ground and roll” (Miss Behave). As Reyes’s Eve wines hard to the music, I see the discourse shifting towards how women re-position their bodies within carnival to assert their pleasure in their bodies, sexuality and their knowledge.
The performances of the 2010 and 2012 mas costumes reimagine both Josephine Baker and Biblical Eve characters as Carnival Queens – the first Wine or “Wuk up” Queen – or perhaps the first Jamette. Jamette is the title given to poor black women in the Caribbean who challenged conventional accepted definitions of female behaviour in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Samantha Noel argues that:

Although the jamette is no longer a symbol of disorder and licentiousness in Trinidad, her impact on the corporeal expression of the contemporary woman in carnival is unmistakable. When jamettes violated the conservative rules of etiquette in everyday life and during Carnival, they prompted a reevaluation in Trinidadian society of the ways in which women appeared and behaved in public, thereby challenging society’s control of their bodies. The figure of the jamette is a defining force in the repertoire of performativity that exemplifies the contemporary woman masquerader. (61)

The wining women perform at Carnival may occur with a man, another woman, but most often takes place with no one but the self, a form of “autosexuality” in which the dance is understood within what Daniel Miller calls the “idiom of sexuality” (335)—and not necessarily through sexuality itself—to express the feelings of release and self-fulfilment. While cultural conditions can proscribe women’s sexuality and its expression, because patriarchy defines the terms of being sexual, Judith Bettelheim contends that the female masquerader can use her sexuality to become an active agent (69). For example, M. NourbeSe Philip writes about the empowerment women can experience as they play mas during carnival: “oh, for a race of women!—shaking their booty, winin up and down the streets, parading their sexuality for two (w)hole days—taking back the streets making them their own” (107).

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46 “Wuk up” is a slang term for the sensuous gyrating of the waistline.
Women now make up over eighty percent of the participants at Carnival and, while seemingly emancipatory and celebratory, Philip Scher cautions scholars to consider the very ambivalent nature of female performance, if:

Carnival provides an outlet for middle class women to express frustration with a patriarchal and limiting society, it also reifies women as objects of the male public gaze. If women’s “wining” on each other has been vilified for its lesbian overtones, those same overtones have excited typical male fantasies of lesbian sex as an occasion for voyeurism. (Sher 478)

Similarly, Kevin Frank argues that women’s performance shares a troubled/troubling relationship with emancipation as “But that a woman takes pleasure in being observed does not mean that she is necessarily the agent of the action or that she escapes being a fetish or an object” (187). Carnival’s commodification and marketing constructs itself through the bodies of “black” women as available touristic fantasy evoking a history of the black woman’s body and sexuality on display (reminiscent of figures such as Saartjie Baartman and Josephine Baker). Such legacy continues even explicitly today in British Airlines marketing of flights to the Caribbean linking Edenism and Hedonism, “you’ll be in the nearest thing we have on earth to the Garden of Eden, and to make it even better, it’s after Eve tempted Adam with the apple” (qtd in Kennaway 114).

Both “Josephine” and “Eden” performances cannot exist outside of the historical discourses that inscribe and shape our understandings of women, but can dialogically engage in alternative possibilities that can rupture, destabilise and question accepted knowledge in the same manner as the Jamette. In performance, “Josephine” actively claims space and female sexuality represented by breasts and buttocks, thereby denying their objectification. As such, “Josephine” avoids reifying and fixing understandings of Baker’s body, but rather opens the

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47 Consistent finding in both Trinidad and in Toronto Carnivals.
discourse to multiple and other interpretations. Reyes’s performance of Eve can be read as a self-reflexive intervention into the representation of Caribbean women as exotic, Eve-temptresses that also exposes the links between Christian imperialism and the patriarchy. Moreover, Reyes’s performance of an Eve gone bacchanal contests patriarchal authority by embracing her so-called “Fall” and re-directing the debate about women’s roles and sexuality within post-colonial cultures. The carnivalisation of Eve subverts the Biblical understanding of woman, and her subordinate position in imperial ideology as a consumable object, by revelling in her own bodily pleasure, enacting an auto/sexuality that does not rely on the presence of others.

3.2.3 (Un)Discover Me: Critiquing the Discourses of “Discovery” Through Bodily Presence and Absence at Festival Caravan’s First Nations’ Pavilion “Kanata”

Reacting to the 500th anniversary celebrations of Christopher’s Columbus’s “discovery” of the “New World” across the United States in 1992, Chicano performance artist Guillermo Gómez-Peña and collaborator Coco Fusco exhibited themselves in a cage as “undiscovered” aboriginals from an imaginary island in the Gulf of Mexico. In their year-long performance project “The Year of the White Bear,” they enacted a “hybrid pseudo primitivism” for their audiences (Johnson “Coco Fusco and Guillermo Gómez-Peña”). With the words “Please, don’t discover me!” emblazoned across his bare chest, Gómez-Peña stages and renders the indigenous body visible in a way that the “Discourse of Discovery” has rendered it absent and makes visible the violence and legacy of colonialism. Discovery of the so-called “New World” paradoxically creates absent presences of indigenous bodies and sparked centuries of genocide, assimilation and subjugation of colonial subjects to Imperial power. The “Doctrine of Discovery,” established by papal bull and employed by European Imperial powers, essentially defines all non-Catholic, non-European people as nonpersons, as “heathens or infidels,” and therefore all lands and regions occupied by such non-Europeans—or whose patterns of use, such as migratory patterns,
that do not fit into European constructs of settlement—as “terra nullis” or “vacant lands ripe for “discovery” (Reid 340).

While Canada does not celebrate or valorise Columbus’s discovery, the nation recognises explorers from the “two founding nations,” Britain and France, specifically John Cabot, Jacques Cartier and Samuel de Champlain. The legacy of imperialism and the discourse of discovery underline the complicated relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous people in the settler-colonial nation to this day. In 1997, the Canadian Government in collaboration with Great Britain staged quint-centennial celebrations of John Cabot’s so-called discovery of North America, culminating in a re-enactment of Cabot’s journey from Bristol England to Bonavista Newfoundland, replete with a modern day replica of Cabot’s ship *Matthew*. Celebrations occurred throughout Canada and were met with aboriginal protests, including at Toronto’s annual multicultural festival, *Caravan*, whose theme that year recognised Cabot’s accomplishment. While many argue that the *Caravan* festival produces uncomplicated, uncritical and entertaining representations of ethnic identities that support the normative mythology of tolerant Canadian multiculturalism, the First Nations pavilion “Kanata” illustrated the potential for an embodied counter-discursive performance to the 500th anniversary celebration of Cabot’s “discovery” within the format of a “boutique” multicultural festival. Employing what I consider Brechtian theatrical elements of historicisation, estrangement, and the “not… but” technique in its presentation, “Kanata” engages its audience critically and resists passive consumption of folkloric bodies. “Kanata” mobilises an embodied protest to challenge the way in which “discovery” discursively erases aboriginal presences, histories and lives within the Canadian nation and its policy of multiculturalism.

To briefly contextualise “Kanata’s” performative interruption into the discourse, the 1997 re-enactment of Cabot’s 500th anniversary on both sides of the Atlantic re-inscribes Canada’s
colonial history and constitutional narrative of “two-founding peoples” to the exclusion of Canada’s aboriginal population. Prior to contact the area now called Newfoundland was inhabited by the Beothuk indigenous peoples who were exterminated, three centuries later by the 1800s, in what many First Nations people call genocide that largely is omitted or obscured from the official record. John Cabot, originally Giovanni Caboto from Venice, became a captain for the English fleet and received a letter of mark from King Henry VII, in which he was given the authority to “discover” new territory for England and to subdue any people and claim them as vassals. Cabot’s initial voyage in 1497 was followed by a well-equipped exploration party and subjects to establish colonial settlements the following year. Cabot’s efforts were lauded in the celebrations of the 400th anniversary in 1897 in national newspapers, which also sought to remediate the disproportionate credit accorded to Christopher Columbus in the “discovery” of the continent:

When Columbus was vaguely feeling his way to the mainland of South America these bold navigators were mapping the northern coast from Labrador to Cape Hatteras, and opening the way for an English civilization to enter the continent…. We must be pardoned if, when we look abroad over this great continent consecrated to English tongue and to English freedom, we see in it little to remind us of Columbus and the Spaniard, but much, nay everything, to remind us of John Cabot. (“Fourth Centenary of Cabot’s Discovery” 10)

The tone of the article is decidedly flavoured with British nationalism and the superiority of Cabot’s, and therefore Britain’s, rightful claim to the “discovery” of the North American continent. The article also marks an attempt to inscribe the newly created nation of Canada in the British North American Act of 1867, with British character, gesturing to the uneasy relationship with the other settler-nation, the Québécois within the nation. Moreover, the newspaper article erases the presence and sovereignty of First Nation peoples in its British-Cabot narrative, suggesting and fostering the notion that the English had a divine right to the land, a legacy that can be directly linked to the “Doctrinе of Discovery” established by papal bull centuries prior. A
century later in the 500th anniversary of Cabot’s landing in Bonavista, the British-Colonial legacy continues with Queen Elizabeth II speech at the celebrations in Canada in which she calls Cabot’s landing “the geographic and intellectual beginning of modern North America” (Rose 105). Such discursive erasure of Aboriginals in North America, serves to legitimate colonial powers and Imperial presences. Eliminating aboriginal subjectivities allows a space for Imperial presence to take root, and establish dominance.

The “Doctrine of Discovery” supported by imperial powers 500 years ago, underpins the relationship between indigenous and non-indigenous people and is entrenched in various laws and policies that outline and govern aboriginal rights within the Canadian state. Canada has developed a number of policies to manage its Aboriginal populations that have, as scholar Julie Burelle describes, “pushed it to the brink of disappearance” through the assimilation objectives of the Indian Act and the violent alienation of aboriginal youth from their culture and peoples through Residential Schools (“Self-Consuming Body Politics”). Moreover, in expanding the colonial settler-state, indigenous people had no sovereign rights in relation to their own land, a pattern which continues today in Canadian Law, as “sovereignty is presumed to reside in the Crown, and thus the Crown has the right to own Native land” (Reid 351). Despite the guarantees of Aboriginal rights set out in the Royal Proclamation of 1763, and the entrenchment of Aboriginal rights in Section 35 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Native peoples are regarded as having an Aboriginal claim on the land, but this claim is not equivalent to ownership. Aboriginal title relates to rights of occupation and use, not underlying title. Thus, all Aboriginal land rights are limited in Canada. Any land right can be contravened if the government deems such a move is necessary for economic or other gains. (Reid 351)

Neo-imperialism, inherent in neo-liberal economic ideology pursued by the Canadian state, continues the five-hundred year-old legacy from the “Doctrine of Discovery” that erases and disappears Aboriginal presences and interests within the nation for “gain.” Significantly, this
process may have reached a tipping point with the introduction of Bill C-45 that has sparked the
nation-wide Aboriginal movement, Idle No More, which I will discuss further later on.

In response to Canada’s celebration of “Cabot 500,” Aboriginals in Canada came out to
protest this event, demand justice and to commemorate the genocide of the indigenous people.
Reacting to the theme of celebrating “Cabot 500” at Toronto’s multicultural Festival Caravan,
the aboriginal pavilion “Kanata” staged a performative incursion, reconfiguring the concepts of
absence and presence that decolonises the discourse of discovery. “Kanata” intentionally turned
its back on the Cabot theme, strategically deploying absence, a reverse-discovery or “un-
discovery” of Cabot, in that “There are no references to his name” or accomplishments at the
pavilion (Te Rangi Huata qtd in Doole G14). Spokesperson for the pavilion’s organiser, the Six
Nations and Mississaugas of New Credit, Te Rangi Huata asserts “We’re not supporting the
notion that John Cabot discovered Canada” (qtd in Doole G14). This act of absence as resistance
within a festival whose theme celebrates “Cabot 500” can potentially be read as a manifestation
of Brecht’s the “not… but” technique. Brecht contends that the “not… but” is a dialectical
approach to acting in which the actor, “appears on the stage, besides what he actually is doing he
will at all essential points discover, specify, imply what he is not doing; that is to say he will act
in such a way that the alternative emerges as clearly as possible, that his acting allows the other
possibilities to be inferred and only represents one out of the possible variants” (“Short
Description…” 137).

While such a technique is often employed in the rehearsal process and not often
obviously visible in performance, “Kanata’s” performance is an instance where this process is
rendered visible. The pavilion, operating under the auspices of Caravan, which has taken the
theme of “Cabot 500,” has chosen to perform the absence of such a narrative, a “Not Cabot 500”
so to speak, and offers the audience an alternative possibility for understanding the concept of discovery. The effects are subtle as the pavilion makes no mention of Cabot, but does not obviously stage or state a counter argument, but subversively, rather, presents the history and perspective of First Nation peoples and an alternative vision of discovery that recuperates indigenous subjectivities. As Te Rangi Huata claims, “Our pavilion represents the perspective of the people of the land. We see ‘discovery’ more as people looking at native people through new eyes” (qtd in Doole G14). If the aboriginal disappearing body arises from the imperial discourses of discovery, “Kanata’s” performances stages a counter-discovery that materialises and makes present the histories, bodies and ties to the land from which they have been largely absented.

Inaugurated as part of the festival in 1996, the Kanata pavilion was a Caravan hit, attracting 7,000 visitors. Due to its popularity, the pavilion returned in 1997 and featured performances by the 60-strong Kanata Native Dance Theatre (KNDT). The pavilion operated in the standard way for festival pavilions, offering visitors a performance, featuring material objects of the First Nations in arts and craft displays, producing native delicacies and foods for visitors to sample, and some soft-sell on ongoing Indian cultural programs in the Toronto region. Founded by New Zealand Maori artist Te Rangi Huata, the KNDT from the Six Nations Reserve in Brantford, Ontario, was one of the busiest aboriginal performing arts companies in the country, performing over 250 shows a year. The company’s focus is on young people and the transmission of knowledge, traditions, and skills from one generation to the next and across cultural lines. The group has members who come from Iroquois, Ojibwe, Blackfoot, Cree and Lakota heritage. The pavilion’s performance features members of the KNDT, in their hand-made regalia, perform dances for Caravan audiences, while an on stage narrator explains the significance of the dances, how they were used in Powwows, and how the outfits were constructed.
Rooted in the traditions of oral culture, the use of a narrator, as an intermediary between the performer and the audience, at the “Kanata” pavilion can also be read as a very Brechtian technique. Rather than allowing the audience to passively consume the spectacle of cultural heritage, the narrator acts as a distancing agent, breaking the fourth wall of the theatre to talk and directly engage the spectators. In doing so, the performance becomes a means to actively educate the audience and encourage a critical engagement to consider the “living-ness” of the culture being performed by elaborating on the historical meanings and current relevance of the dances to the specific performers and their respective communities. The emphasis on education is important to KNDT as choreographer and ensemble member, Naomi Powless, asserts, “Too often people don’t realize that we still dance our traditional dances. It’s really surprising how many people have no knowledge of what happens outside of their towns. If they don’t see it, then it doesn’t exist” (qtd in MacDonald “Showcase of Dancers”). The play on visibility is vital, if “discovery” made aboriginals invisible to achieve imperial objectives, “Kanata” encourages audiences to reconsider what Cabot’s “discovery” entails. Rather, the pavilion offers opportunities to recuperate the invisible colonised subject’s body—that has be disfigured, rendered incomplete, or even erased—and to transform its signification and subjectivity. Whereas the doctrine of discovery has erased the presence of indigenous bodies (and their sovereignty), “Kanata” decolonises the discourse and allows for a re-constitution of bodies, lives, and histories through an “un-discovery” and a meeting between cultures.

“Kanata’s” inclusion in the multicultural festival is interesting in light of First Nations peoples being excluded in the discussion and development of multicultural policy in Canada. Beginning with Bi and Bi Commission in 1969, which, pointedly omits Indigenous cultures from the discussion, stating:

Our terms of reference contain no allusion to Canada’s native populations. They speak of "two founding races," namely Canadians of British and French origin, and "other ethnic
groups,” but mention neither the Indians nor the Eskimos. Since it is obvious that these two groups do not form part of the "founding races," as the phrase is used in the terms of reference, it would logically be necessary to include them under the heading "other ethnic groups." Yet it is clear that the term "other ethnic groups" means those peoples of diverse origins who came to Canada during or after the founding of the Canadian state and that it does not include the first inhabitants of this country. (B&B Report xxvi)

Excluding Native peoples from the discussion marks a distinction between their “founding” role in the nation and that of the British and French peoples, perpetuating a colonial hierarchy of power relations. Moreover, as Richard Day argues, while “other ethnic groups” (at this point, predominantly European ethnic others)\(^{48}\) are recognised as “potentially making ‘contributions’ to the ‘cultural enrichment’ of Canada,” Indigenous peoples “were to enjoy their ‘preserved’ cultures in solitude” (181). Aboriginal people are absent in the subsequent policy developments of official multiculturalism, up to and including the passage of Bill C-31, the Canadian Multiculturalism Act 1988.

Indigenous people are simultaneously placed within and outside of the nation, as present and absent. Canada’s Aboriginal art and culture are co-opted by the nation on a symbolic level to demark “Canadian Culture and Heritage,” often as “gifts” to visiting foreign dignitaries, while their bodies marked by “Otherness” always already places them as outside/excluded from the nation. As well, the absent/present dichotomy plays out in that First Nations “demand acceptance within the nation as ethnically identified ‘others’ as well as or even in opposition to—Canadianess” (Légaré 353). As Day argues in Multiculturalism and the History of Canadian Diversity, “Aboriginal are still fleeing the Canadian state—not physically now, but semiotically—by refusing the position of integrated Aboriginal Canadian in favour of membership in a historically located and identified nation” (227). Aboriginal peoples have

\(^{48}\) It is important to note that, at this time, predominantly Eastern and Southern European immigrants were arriving in Canada following the tumult of the Second World War and the rise of the Communist Eastern Block.
particular claims on the state not shared by other Canadian “multicultural” groups, specifically asserting their right to self-government, claims to the land, and on being a distinct society as the “First Nations” and Inuit, all of which enacts a self-distancing from the colonial-settler nation. Despite laws eliminating barriers to full participation, anti-discrimination, and anti-racism, Aboriginal people are often victims of racism and systemic discrimination, and continue to face widespread poverty and ill-health, inadequate housing and food security, and often experience disproportionate violence than non-indigenous communities that often goes overlooked by the criminal justice system. Continuing the colonising tendencies of the nation, multiculturalism rather than include Aboriginal peoples in its discussion, omits and erases their presence again.

Through body techniques and performance, Aboriginal people are asserting presence and claiming space in the nationalist discourse from which they have largely been absent. Most recently, the Idle No More protests have sprung up as a grassroots, and embodied, movement in response to Canada’s long-standing colonial practice of unilaterally revisiting its agreements with First Nations, to benefit Canada’s national interests, from which First Nations are being continually excluded and absented. Sparked by the Conservative government’s omnibus Bill C-45, now entitled “Jobs and Growth Act 2012,” enacting numerous changes to the Indian Act, Navigation Protection Act, and the Environmental Assessment Act that have widespread implications and consequences for First Nations communities in Canada. The roots of “Doctrine of Discovery” are at play in the neo-imperial and neo-liberal core of Bill C-45, which removes many of the protections, checks and balances placed on developing on First Nations lands, to achieve national growth. In “Self-Consuming Body Politic(s): On Colonial Violence and Chief Theresa Spence’s Hunger Strike,” Burelle astutely observes that Canada’s emphasis on the term “growth” historically has “depended in large part on the consumption of First Nations’ territory,
and on the symbolic and material starving of First Nations as a body politic” (“Self-Consuming…”).

Two important physical “acts” of the Idle No More movement emphasise the ways in which colonial violence marks bodies and the counter-discursive ways the body acts back to imperial power, specifically public walking performances and Chief Theresa Spence’s hunger strike. A 1600 kilometre public walking performance was undertaken by six youths from a remote northern Québéc reserve to Ottawa. Their walking constitutes a performative re-establishing of presence and visibility through embodied occupation of public spaces, and non-indigenous people were encouraged to walk alongside First Nations people as an act of witness, testimony, and reconciliation – to walk a mile in someone else’s shoes, in other words. Walking reasserts the presence, and physical and spiritual connection to the land, from which Aboriginals in Canada have previously been displaced, and, more importantly is physical act of resistance to the stasis and “idleness” encouraged by the isolated/ing reserve system in Canada.

Chief Theresa Spence’s hunger strike, conversely, performs her disappearance, thus reflecting the “starving body-politic” of the First Nations within Canada. Building on Allen Feldman’s work on hunger strikes, Patrick Anderson argues in his book So Much Wasted, “The body of the hunger striker, in other words, asserts itself as a body, as a visceral representative for state-produced delinquency, by performing its own gradual decline, through self-consumption, to death” (123). The play on presence and absence is writ large on Chief Spence’s body, in which the Canadian public is called to bear witness to the disappearing of First Nations bodies and subjectivities, as well as the physical manifestation of colonial violence on the body. According to Feldman, “no other action more eloquently demonstrated the conditions and image of the human body infested with the state apparatus” than the hunger strike (236).
Embodiment as protest connects the ways in which colonial violence marks bodies and the counter-discursive ways the body acts back to imperial power. “Discovery,” for the purpose of the nation, does not find some thing or someone, but rather incongruently erases the “Other” for gain. Since contact, Aboriginals in Canada have struggled against a disappearance imposed by the colonial state through violence and assimilatory policies. Often the struggles of Indigenous people in Canada are invisible, obscured, and overlooked, specifically the 1000 missing indigenous women, which, only recently, is generating public attention. The play between presence, absence and the body emerges in First Nations discursive position within the nation, and is significantly staged in counter-discursive protests. The “Kanata” Pavilion at Caravan examines the duality of presence and absence in their performances which attempts to decolonise a discourse of “discovery” entrenched in the imperial operation of the Canadian nation. Through what I consider Brechtian techniques, “Kanata” is able to strategically manoeuvre through “boutique” multiculturalism, and resists the passive consumption of aboriginal bodies that could be used to re-affirm notions of Canadian tolerance. Rather, directly engaging the audience via a narrator intercepts complacency, by encouraging a critical distance between the audience and the “spectacle,” opening up a space for a discussion of the “living-ness” of the culture being presented. The narrator, while historicising the performance and costumes, makes clear the relevance and importance of the practice to the present performer. In doing so, the performance and the culture becomes less of an artifact or object, but constitutive of present indigenous subjectivities. In this case, discovery for Caravan audience becomes reframed in terms of presence and visibility.

Yet, in the seventeen years since “Kanata’s” performance of “re-discovery” seemingly little has changed for Aboriginals in Canada, and it can be argued that their position has experienced further erosion under the nation’s neo-liberal approach towards resource
development on First Nations lands. The imperialism inherent in Bill C-45 has provoked a widespread movement insisting that Indigenous Canadian be “Idle No More” in the face of their systemic disappearance. Through long-distance, walking performances, land occupations, and staging hunger strikes, Indigenous people in Canada are now asserting their presences, bodies and subjectivities into public discourse and consciousness, which have been in a long process of erasure since contact for over 500 years. The performances of “Kanata” and Idle No More are what Zygmunt Bauman would deem “emergent,” in that they make certain aspects of the dominant social structure visible and thus open for potential change. Both “Kanata” and Idle No More spring from the legacy of the “discourse of discovery,” which resulted in the discursive erasure of the Indigenous body from the nation. What remains to be seen is whether or not Idle No More can solidify and resist further state incursion into Aboriginal rights and territory, and succeed in moving Aboriginal bodies from absence to presence in National consciousness.

3.3 Conclusion: Performativities of the Multicultural Masquerade and Exiting through the Gift Shop of Boutique Multiculturalism

To revisit the ideas of Stuart Hall from earlier in this chapter, an ideological struggle can occur not only through directly contesting an existing order with an alternative, but also through transforming and re-articulating its meanings or associations. These three case studies from the Taste of the Danforth, Caribbean Carnival, and Caravan festivals illustrate the ways in which the body can, and does, perform back to—and from within—an established order. Examining the body through a Brechtian perspective can open the ways of interpreting and seeing an embodied counter-discourse and can reveal potential oppositional signifying practices. A Brechtian perspective allows for a way for bodies—their movements, embodiments and performances—to enact a degree of agency, by revealing and making visible the dominant social and political order
in society. The 9/11 Truth Movement’s protest at the *Taste of the Danforth* illustrates the ways in which the choreographies of the “affecting bodies” of the “Truthers” constitutes a part of a body’s power of action, in that it has a capacity to have a physical effect on other bodies that it encounters. As a social *gest* the disgust and revulsion that the “Truthers” are able to affect the (multi)cultural tourists it encounters at the food festival reveals the very limits of the official “script” of multicultural tolerance. As Rosalyn Diprose argues in *The Bodies of Women: Ethics, Embodiment and Sexual Difference*, “Faced with a stranger, with a different cultural history and hence a different corporeal schema, one’s own lived body may exhibit intolerance or resistance to the encounter” (122). Such affective demarcation between the “self” and “other” are reflective of broader social relations of power and the unpalatability of divisive cultural beliefs. The “Truthers” performativity at the festival creates a visual representation of the ways in which fear and vulnerability of one’s own position and power de/forms the bodies of “Others,” specifically that of Muslim Canadians who are targeted in post 9/11 Islamophobia through hate crimes and through governmental policies for so-called “homeland security.”

While the “Truthers” illustrate the power of affecting bodies of disgust to reveal normative social structures within multiculturalism, *Caribbean Carnival* makes strategic use of a grotesque body as a *gestus* to reveal and critique colonial and racist constructions of the female figure. Through grotesque imagery, the queen *mas* costumes “Josephine Dancing in the Market” and “The Garden of Eden” manifest historicised imperial discourses of the black female body and attempts at subversion through parody and carnival license. Taking on racist, colonial assumptions of the hyper-sexualised and exoticised black female body—Josephine Baker’s specifically—for display and consumption, “Josephine” grotesquely and humourously revels in the display of female erotica of the six-foot wide pair of bent wire breasts and immense fan-shaped buttocks. When animated by the performer, the breasts and buttocks gleefully take on a
character of their own as they bounce, jiggle and shimmy at the audience in carnival celebration of absurd bodily excess and pleasure. Moreover, the enormous breasts, which resemble eyes, uncannily return the audience’s gaze, a *gestic* looking at those that look upon the representation of the female body. The carnivalisation of body parts intervenes in the sexualised racial stereotypes of black femininity through exaggerating such discourses to the point of absurdity.

“Eden” similarly intervenes in the racist and sexist imperial tropes of the female black figure through a counter-colonial inversion of the story of Eve’s “Fall” and subsequent expulsion from the Garden of Eden. The *mas* performance rejects the image of Eve as a “fallen” woman, rather celebrating the gift of knowledge and the power of female sexuality as Michelle Reyes, performing as Eve, animates and gives life to the Garden through her bodily movements and vigorous wining. Such a re-interpretation of Eve allows for a discursive re-examination of women’s bodies in post-colonial cultures, subverting Biblical and patriarchal understanding of women as consumable objects, by asserting the potential for her own pleasure in her body, sexualities and knowledge(s). While both “Josephine” and “Eden” performances exist within discourses that constitute our understanding of women’s bodies, the carnivalesque and the grotesque serve as performative techniques that can destabilise and reveal the constructed-ness of such discourses.

Thus far, I have examined a dramaturgy of affecting bodies and grotesque bodies as potential performative strategies that are useful in unmasking “boutique” versions of multiculturalism. My final case study, examining the “Kanata” pavilion at the 1997 *Toronto International Festival Caravan*, presents a dialectics of absent/present bodies to interrogate the five-hundredth anniversary celebrations surrounding John Cabot’s “discovery” of North America and its implication for the lived experiences of Indigenous people in Canada. In response to
Caravan’s adoption of a theme celebrating Cabot’s five-hundredth anniversary of “discovering” Canada, “Kanata” staged an embodied counter-discourse of “discovery” that challenges the ways in which aboriginal presences, histories and lives have been discursively erased by the nation’s continuation of imperial legacies. Strategically, the pavilion deploys absence in omitting any and all references to Cabot and rather offers the audience an alternative possibility for the concept of discovery. The “Doctrine of Discovery,” which Imperial powers have used to legitimise conquest, disappears aboriginal bodies for not being European or for not occupying their lands in established European patterns.

“Kanata’s” performance enacts a counter-colonial discovery by presenting the history and perspectives of First Nations peoples that recuperates indigenous subjectivities and bodies as self-actualising texts. Presenting traditional dances with narration to explain the history and relevance of the practice to the audiences creates a Brechtian distancing effect that disrupts passive consumption of the “Other” as commercial entertainment. Rather, indigenous performers are able to assert their presence and body on the stage in roles that are, to a degree, “self-determined,” in that they are able to perform beyond imperial defined tropes and representations. Performing at a multicultural festival also reveals a tension between aboriginal presence and a discourse from which it is largely absent. Again, drawing upon the legacies of the “discourse of discovery,” indigenous people neither constitute the “two-founding races” nor “other ethnic groups” and are largely erased or rendered invisible from contributing to the nation, thus legitimising the erosion of First Nations lands for the settler nation’s interest and gain.

“Kanata’s” inclusion in the multicultural festival is a performative way to interject an indigenous presence into a discourse from which, at a policy level, excluded indigenous participation. In a similar manner to “Kanata”, the contemporary Idle No More protests continue the performance dialectics of absence/presence across Canada through public occupations, long-distance walking
performances and hunger strikes, which make visible the way colonial violence marks indigenous bodies and the ways bodies act back to imperial power.

By attending to the dramaturgy of the body in Toronto’s ethno-cultural festivals, I see that the body expresses and articulates a multitude of different positions with regards to enacting the multicultural “script,” some of which can be normative and nostalgic, and others playfully subversive and critical. All these contrasting and competing enactments can, and do, occupy the festival space simultaneously, making festival spaces dynamic and polyvalent, and not just a purveyor of homogenous, safe ethnic identities for public consumption as Bissoondath, Thoroski, and Greenhill tend to argue. Employing a Brechtian dramaturgy to look at festival bodies opens up ways to observe the body and its performative techniques in relation to the ideological discourses that inscribes the body, and which can be critically performed by it. As Elizabeth Grosz argues, bodies are not passive objects through which power regimes play freely and uncontestedly:

> If the body is the strategic target of systems of codification, supervision and constraint, it is also because the body and its energies and capacities exert an uncontrollable, unpredictable threat to a regular, systematic mode of social organisation. As well as being the site of knowledge-power, the body is thus a site of resistance, for it exerts a recalcitrance, and always entails the possibility of a counter-strategic reinscription, for it is capable of being self-marked, self-represented in alternative ways. (64).

Festival bodies are also carnival bodies that have the potential to grotesquely expand past its own limitations and boundaries, and have the potential to enact a masquerade that ruptures discursively fixed identities.

Masquerade is enacted by three different agents participating in ethno-cultural festivals. First, the Civic body—the City of Toronto—masquerades multiculturalism to sell the image of Toronto as a way to expand the economy. In their book *Selling Diversity*, Yasmeen Abu-Laban and Christina Gabriel argue that recent shifts in multiculturalism leverages diversity as a
competitive advantage, as policy initiatives since the 1990s have focused on “the economic exploitation of Canada’s racial and ethnic diversity to capture markets at home and abroad, at the probable expense of gender equality and other initiatives” (168). The City often finds ways to align itself with various festivals to exploit the cultural capital and leverage superficial support for diversity into economic capital. All the while, the City benefits from the appearance of being multicultural, without substantively contributing financial support to either the festivals or the communities they represent.

Second, audiences enacting a tourist masquerade are actively participating by engaging in identity formation of the self and of the “Other.” Because festivals operate within a model of commercialisation, Thoroski argues the resulting product is the “simplifying the complex intersections of cultural identity into about an hour’s worth of dinner, drinks, and dancing… for the purposes of identification with and consumption by a large mainstream audience” (106). Examining the audience’s tourist masquerade also opens up issues surrounding staging authenticity and the role of the tourist gaze in inscribing identities onto bodies. And finally, performers and specific performances at the Taste of the Danforth, Caribbean Carnival, and Caravan reveal the potential performative double-ness of masquerade to move beyond uncritical, commercially palatable representations of ethnicities, to reveal and critique the very processes that inscribe multicultural bodies in society.

In applying a Brechtian dramaturgy to the body, I see the ways in which affecting bodies, grotesque and carnivalesque bodies, and absent present bodies are used as performative strategies that questions normative understandings of a tolerant multicultural “script,” by baring the power inequalities within the intersecting frames of race/ethnicity, class and gender. As such, bodily techniques, according to Helen Gilbert and Joanne Tompkins, illustrate an “oppositional
process of *embodiment* whereby the colonised creates his/her own subjectivity ascribes more flexible culturally laden, and multivalent delineations to the body, rather than circumscribing it within an imposed, imperialist calculation of otherness” (205).

Ethno-cultural festivals are exceptionally rich sites to examine the ways the performing body in relationship to the social discourses that inscribes it. In reading various festival performances at the *Taste of the Danforth*, *Caribbean Carnival*, and at *Caravan* as masquerade, I see potential moments of Brechtian *gestus*, distancing, and historicisation that make the social attitudes, processes and ideological relations observable, and therefore open to change. The multicultural masquerade builds from work on gender and performativity, in which femininity or “womanliness” is a physical iteration of the social inscriptions that mark a person as a woman and is often enacted to avoid censure of punishment for not adhering to accepted norms. Similarly ethnic and racial identities can also be viewed through the process of masquerade, as both categories do not exist outside of cultural and social inscription that inform them. Through masquerade, the performing bodies can, and do, with their material presence illustrate and make visible the very discourses and processes that socially inscribe them. In doing so we can critically evaluate the process in order to de-naturalise and unfix multicultural identities.
Conclusion

The street, a series of displays, an exhibition of objects for sale, illustrates just how the logic of merchandise is accompanied by a form of (passive) contemplation that assumes the appearance and significance of an aesthetics and an ethics. The accumulation of objects accompanies the growth of population and capital; it is transformed into an ideology, which, dissimulated beneath the traits of legible and visible, come to seem self-evident. In this sense we can speak of a colonization of the urban space, which takes place in the street through the image, through publicity, through the spectacle of objects—a “system of objects” that has become symbol and spectacle.

--- Henri Lefebvre, from The Urban Revolution (21)

Performing My Personal Roots/ Routes of Ethno-cultural Festivals

As a first generation Canadian the work I have conducted on ethno-cultural festivals has been a profoundly personal performance, and it has prompted me to interrogate the multiple roles—both complicitous and rebellious—that I play at these events. I can remember attending Festival Caravan, in particular with my brother Christopher, attending pavilion after pavilion and especially discovering a “feeling” of familiarity and “home” in “Kyiv” or “Odessa,” where a sensual phantasmagoria—of aromas, sights, and sounds—evoked memories of my Baba, who was again, and at once, made present but absent.

In the very same evening I have also been a “cultural tourist” getting my “passport” stamped at the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre’s “Tokyo” pavilion, where I watched in awe the incredible physicality of taiko drummers and purchased “souvenir” sumi-e prints after a demonstration. Likewise, I have purchased and consumed “Greekness” at the Taste of the Danforth festival, and have been invited to “be Greek” if only for a day. Yet, as I have argued, the role of “cultural tourist,” is never performed in a predictably straightforward manner, but is rather couched within a shifting set of complex social relations in which the potential for

49 Traditional Japanese art form that uses ink wash as a painting technique.
disruption and resistance exists. The performative interference of the 9/11 Truth Commission’s protest march is an exceptional example of intervening in the passive consumption of “boutique” or “bourgeois” multiculturalism with the disgust their “affecting bodies” invoke in consumers, testing the limits of “tolerance” in the multicultural “script.”

In addition to the in-group or cultural tourist roles I have played in attending ethno-cultural festivals, I work “back stage” at *Toronto Caribbean Carnival* in a *mas* camp producing the Queen costume for Saldenah Carnival. As a volunteer, I have been accepted into a vibrant community of artists, some of whom, like the Reyes clan, have become like family to me. Above all, through this experience I have come to deeply appreciate the production and performance of Carnival, whose labour and creative process is often overlooked in the official record. It is my role as an assistant to the costume designer and the Queen *mas* performer, in particular, that surrogates for my desire to “make theatre,” which is presented on the largest stage (the approximately 3.5 kilometre parade route on Lake Shore Boulevard) that I have ever worked upon. Experiencing *Caravan, Caribbean Carnival*, and the *Taste of the Danforth* festivals from these different roles shapes how I perform dramaturgy of ethno-cultural festivals and the result is a richer, more nuanced study.

Moreover, it is my experience as a theatre practitioner and performance studies scholar that adds a productive lens through which I can critically view ethno-cultural festivals in their relationship to the official multicultural “script.” Throughout my study on ethno-cultural festivals in this dissertation, I have attempted to develop a critical practice of festival dramaturgy, drawing upon Bertolt Brecht’s work in the theatre, which does not fix or reduce the understandings in the relationship between ethno-cultural festivals and the multicultural “script.” My Brechtian dramaturgical analysis of *Caravan, Caribbean Carnival*, and the *Taste of the Danforth* festivals
acknowledges the surfeit of contradictory and ambiguous multicultural discourses that exist, co-mingle and clash with one another, and in doing so, engages rather than forecloses the transformative and/or subversive potential of these events. As a third space of hybridity, I argue that festivals retain the counter-revolutionary traces of their medieval carnival forbearers, as well as the discursive marks of hegemonic culture. Whereas other scholars criticisms reductively focus on either one or other, my work acknowledges the possibilities of both/and.

Disrupting the “Mesmeric” Multicultural Traffic Flows of Everyday Life: Performative and Critical Interchanges

Beyond contributing to the perspectives and debates on the relationship between ethno-cultural festivals in Toronto and the performance of the official multicultural “script,” I have found that employing a Brechtian dramaturgy of festivals can be a useful strategy that can disrupt and draw critical attention to the “illusion” of everyday life. A Brechtian dramaturgy has allowed me to delve deeper into the process through which multicultural identities are interpellated in ethno-cultural festivals. Understanding that multiculturalism is an act in which beings are constituted through performative iterations of a normative “script,” I have found that a Brechtian perspective draws attention to these social processes of the “act(s)” and disrupts the notion of a fixed multicultural identity. A Brechtian dramaturgy can reveal the disruptive excesses or slippages in the performative tropes that can reveal the social, political and economic “scripts” of power. My dissertation has examined ethno-cultural festivals through the concept of performativity, which broadens the scope of how festivals “do things” through material objects like food, space, and with the physical body. These three performative themes draw out the ways that discourses of power are inscribed and naturalised in everyday life, as well as gesturing to the openings and gaps through which performances can and do slip, exceed, and overflow their boundaries. In these moments of excess, I argue, the performativities of food, space, and bodies
illustrate and make visible the many junctures where the official multicultural “script” can be challenged and questioned.

As I discussed in Chapter One, in addition to the existing critiques of commoditisation at ethno-cultural festivals, my work on the performativity of food opens up a dialogue about the other ways that the multicultural “script” contributes to the management of diversity in the nation. I have gestured to the ways that “traditional” cuisine is a practice of individual subjectivity, as well as a mediating object of memory, community and the “homeland imaginary,” a shifting and ever elusory idea. Through dramaturgical analysis I have illustrated the ambivalence of “traditional” cookery in the diaspora; desire for the lost or imagined “home” displaces the migrant from the “host” nation, and the “host” country feeds nostalgic desire for “home” by failing to remove barriers to full inclusion. Moreover, my Brechtian dramaturgy of food at ethno-cultural festivals draws attention to the politics of palatability in relationship to “official” multiculturalism in which “Otherness” is adapted, tempered, and contained in order to be rendered inoffensive to the dominant (white) majority. Finally, with a closer examination of how discourses of “authenticity” are enacted with regards to “national cuisine” at ethno-cultural festivals, my chapter on the dramaturgy of food draws attention to the ways that “traditional” foods reflect privilege and processes of power and knowledge, rather than pre-existing conditions.

In Chapter Two, my dramaturgy of festival space has opened up a broader discussion about the fluctuating performative barriers to belonging to the nation. While I acknowledge that visibility and recognition are important aspects to establishing claims on space in the nation, they must be reinforced and maintained with substantive changes that ensure full and equal access for everyone to participate in society. My Brechtian dramaturgical approach attempted to peel back the veneer of tolerance in the multicultural “script,” by illustrating how corporate groups such as
the City of Toronto or Business Improvement Areas appropriate ethnoscapes—the representational and lived spaces—that enact the city’s diversity, thereby mining the benefits of “appearing” multicultural without incurring the costs of supporting it. As I have shown, attending to the real and discursive barriers of ethno-cultural festival reflect the social relations of power that contain and marginalise ethnic and racialised differences from within a multicultural framework.

The potential for counter-discursive practices at ethno-cultural festivals are often disregarded by the present scholarship. The work conducted in Chapter Three of this dissertation, dramaturgically analyses the capacity of the body’s performative excesses to move beyond, and through, attempts to narrowly “script” multicultural identities. My work in this chapter applied the notion of masquerade as a productive form of performance in ethno-cultural festivals that, as I have argued, can unmask the naturalised power structures of multiculturalism. This chapter has described and illustrated a number of bodily strategies and techniques, such as the use of parody and the grotesque in Caribbean Carnival, or the “Truthers’” arousal of a disgust response in others at the Taste of the Danforth festival, or the First Nations’ “Kanata” Caravan pavilion’s use of absence/presence to contest the erasure of indigenous bodies. Such oppositional forms of embodiment, I argue, can be used as a form of critical distancing—a gestus or Verfremdungseffekt—that can draw attention to the limitations of multicultural discourses and open them up to further debate.

Conducting a Brechtian dramaturgy of ethno-cultural festivals helps to locate the point at which critics of the form, such as Bissoondath, Greenhill and Thoroski are short-sighted. To adapt a Lefebvrian automotive metaphor (The Production of Space 100), the ethno-cultural festival becomes a vehicle as an object of study, which overlooks the infrastructure (the networks
of roads and highways) by which the vehicle must navigate as well as the rules established for its operation on those networks. The automobile, as Roger Silverstone elucidates “and its extension in the road network that has been designed to accommodate it, is not just a material artifact, a technological object. It lies at the centre of a socio-economic and symbolic system,” which reinforces and is reinforced by it (64). A Brechtian dramaturgy helps to extend the perspective by examining the festivals as part of a larger field of social relations that serve to constrain and regulate performances within discourses that seem natural and self-evident. The happy smiling mechanicals of Bissoondath’s vision of a “Disneyfied” Small World that are performed in festivals are not a product of the form itself, but rather are intrinsically shaped by the normative discourses of Canadian multiculturalism, which valorises the celebratory aspects of “different” “ethnic” identities at the same time as excluding the excesses of that difference. Such systemic discursive regiments operate invisibly, and a Brechtian dramaturgy offers techniques that can disrupt, denaturalise, and render visible, thus available, for critique and change.

The limited scope of existing criticisms of ethno-cultural festivals also ignores the generative potential for participants and audiences. Such scholars are too narrowly focused on the vehicle alone (its colour, materials of production, and performance), thus overlooking the many ways in which the vehicle can be used: a) as a means to travel to and from work; or, b) subversively, as in a slow moving traffic protest; or, c) to stay connected with family and community; and/or, c) to get to the activities that bring personal pleasure. Beyond the effects of capitalist production, my dissertation has contributed to the debate by discussing the generative possibilities produced by ethno-cultural festivals for its participants and audiences that are often omitted by other scholarly critiques.
Ethno-cultural festivals, as I have illustrated, offer individuals opportunities to represent themselves to others, albeit not in conditions free of discursive restrictions. This sense of agency is important, as evidenced by *Caravan* and *Caribbean Carnival*, to assert their “Otherness” and presence, to take up space, and be rendered visible, even if just for a limited time. The festival manifests a trace of Bakhtinian carnival in that it produces a time out of normal time in which the regular social order is suspended and set free, where individuals who normally would not comingle have an occasion to come together in the same space. Although co-presence is not politically efficacious in and of itself, I have argued ethno-cultural festivals in the very least offered a space and an invitation to develop a relationship that would not otherwise have taken place. In doing so, these festivals create spaces for difference in society and provide community supports. In the case of *Caravan*, as I have discussed, community groups used proceeds from the festival to build centres and fund cultural programming. These community centres and programs act as social supports for individuals, who were displaced from their own homelands after the Second World War, and who came, as my own parents did, with very little belongings of their own.

Another productive function of ethno-cultural festivals is generating affective alliances and community. In Chapter One, I have examined how food can draw people in the diaspora, especially from marginalised communities, together into a shared experience that can facilitate feelings of belonging. In addition to facilitating a sense of belonging amongst diasporic communities, I have argued that ethno-cultural festivals draw “outsider” audiences into a shared and communal experience of a “multicultural commensality,” that is, opening a spot at the collective table for everyone to encounter one other. As such, ethno-cultural festivals potentially generate an “imagined community” through the performance of multiculturalism. The largely positive image of multicultural events like *Caravan, Caribbean Carnival*, and the *Taste of the
Danforth festivals are fuelled by media representations of festivals. Using celebratory language, media coverage of ethno-cultural festivals reflects the convergence between displays of cultural difference and the enacted official political “script,” illustrating that “festivals become prime sites for recognition of the ‘effects’ of the state” (Henry 126). By the media’s representations of these tourist events as show pieces of multiculturalism and tolerance, I have argued that ethno-cultural festival performances and their representations play a large role in legitimising and fostering the national multicultural narrative for the broader society.

While the terms of sharing the multicultural “meal” may not be politically neutral, as I have maintained, at least ethno-cultural diversity is presented positively, especially in a Canadian context where Islamophobia, racism, and anti-immigrant sentiments continue. Unfortunately, the positive reception of the “Other’s” foodways does not always include the bodies that produce it. Thus the limitations of ethno-cultural festivals are exposed in that, the consumption and appreciation of diversity does not necessarily lead to greater inclusion in society. Although festivals may function within boutique multicultural “scripts,” constructive offshoots such as developing affective alliances disrupt attempts to reduce these festivals within terms of capitalist production.

All three festivals build affective alliances that operate within the community to create spaces of belonging through the performance of the “homeland imaginary,” which can also create political and economic benefits. Caravan and Caribbean Carnival festivals demonstrate how taking up space for cultural differences can be politically potent in creating spaces of belonging or to gesture to spaces of their exclusion. All three festivals, as I argued in Chapter Two, engage in an ephemeral act of “place-making,” in which the repetitive iterations of identity in a space territorialise a location, creating places of belonging and community. Moreover, I have
claimed that festival performances like *Caribbean Carnival’s* Junior Parade are politically potent, because they can counteract the negative images that discursively shaped an area like Jane-Finch in Toronto, and the bodies that inhabit it. Economically, *The Taste of the Danforth* festival illustrates the way that “Greekness” has been used to brand a neighbourhood as a tourist destination within the city for both locals and visitors to spend their dollars. For restauranteurs on the Danforth in the recessionary 1990s, strategically branding the neighbourhood as “Greek” has allowed their business to thrive in economically uncertain times and the *Taste of the Danforth* festival was a strategic plan, in which they were able to aggregate resources for collective advertising gains.

Of course, such shows and displays are imperfect as they cannot fully depict the diversity and complexity of a particular ethnic identity. The curation of ethnic identity is not self-reflexive or transparent as to who selects which diverse characteristics of identity are selected to represent the whole, or why some elements are eliminated, and who benefits from such representations. What is also not rendered visible is the way (dominant) white culture and privilege influences curation through the official multicultural “script,” which tracks towards palatability and boutique forms for bourgeois consumption. Any representation of ethno-cultural communities is filtered through the perception of a small group of stakeholders who make decisions on what aspects of their culture are presented, on behalf of the majority whose experiences are far more diverse than what can be communicated in a one-hour song and dance show. As such, there is an underlying power imbalance as only a privileged group of individuals have an opportunity to articulate and present their vision of the community to the public, and as a result they may benefit the most from the attention and accolades gained by the dominant (white) mainstream for participating in multiculturalism.
Future Travel and Potential Destinations in Ethno-cultural Festival Scholarship

My work in this dissertation has revealed itself to be a rich and rewarding endeavour, in which I could only present a small perspective. There is significant opportunity to develop the scholarship in all three festivals; however, I see particular necessity to conduct further research with regards to Toronto Caribbean Carnival Festival. In conducting my research, I have realised that there are a number of significant barriers for future researchers of ethno-cultural festivals, which have especially been an issue with regards to Caribbean Carnival in particular. First, the established scholarship tends to trivialise and reduce ethno-cultural festivals as “Disneyfied” portrayals of cultural differences, which I would argue hinders and perhaps discourages further study. Trivialisation of ethno-cultural festivals may also contribute to a second type of research barrier that their lack of representation in the official record is compounded by the fact that such events are largely community-driven and sponsored. As such, the histories of these kinds of events are largely oral and embodied in nature, although archival evidence can be found in newspapers. The third difficulty in conducting such research, as I have experienced with Caribbean Carnival, is that it takes time to work with and for the community in order to gain the necessary trust and support. Also, I am most concerned that I am employing decolonising approaches to studying Caribbean Carnival in Toronto, in which I emphasise giving back to the Caribbean community with my own labour in mas camp rather than only “observing” their labour and appropriating their knowledge for my own production.

Throughout this dissertation, I have been critically aware of the unequal power balances at play, not only in society, but also in the ways in which specific knowledge is produced and/or excluded. Interconnected discursive factors of race, class and age (especially when studying the Junior Carnival), in addition to the unequal power relations that guide what constitutes the
“official record” contribute to the dearth of scholarship on diasporic Canadian carnival. Canadians of Caribbean descent are marginalised economically, politically, socially and historically from the Canadian nation-state. As such, the contributions of Caribbean-Canadians are often overlooked and go undocumented by the “official record” that serves to maintain the power structures of the dominant (predominantly white) centre. Moreover, like theatre, carnival is an ephemeral event whose documentation is rooted in oral tradition, passed down from one generation to the next and enacted kinaesthetically, and is thus overlooked by the mechanisms of the official record that privileges written forms of knowledge. I am committed to continue my work with the Caribbean community, and especially the producers of carnival arts in Toronto to develop an archive of their contributions to the art form. This archive, I hope, will be the beginning of a record of mas bands, designers, performers, and costumes that will encourage further scholarship of Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival as well as claiming space in the “official” record for this event.
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