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Keeping the Fun in Staying with the Trouble: *Green Suits* and Environmental Activist Pleasure

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It started with an early morning outing in London, in January 2016, wearing a full-body, Spandex green suit with a leafy sash. Beth Osnes, professor of Theatre and Environmental Studies at the University of Colorado (CU), was in England touring a climate change show, *Shine*, in conjunction with the Rockefeller Foundation 100 Resilient Cities Initiative, and the green suit and sash were part of the costumes for the performance (Osnes 2017). Sneaking out into the early morning before her travel companions had awoken, an all-green Osnes asked an elderly passerby to take a photo of her seated on a wall ledge in front of the Thames, one green arm gesturing upward toward the barren tree above. He did so with piqued interest and asked Osnes about her motivations. She explained that she was in town doing a performance project to support youth in greening their city, and that she came outside dressed in green and with her camera to picture what “greening” might look like literally, yet playfully (fig. 1).

Encouraged by their delightful conversation, Osnes tucked a green suit into her backpack and donned it for other photographs in Paris near the Eiffel Tower and in Barcelona. In order to quickly get in and out of the suit in public places, she wore leggings and a tank top beneath an easily removeable outfit. Tourists asked to have their photos taken with her, and children gawked. Not only were these impromptu performance activities fun and exhilarating, but they prompted unlikely conversations about environmental issues, such as “You know, I remember how much milder summers used to be,” reflected one passerby in Paris. Osnes posted these photos to social media to convey and invigorate what greening could look and feel like.

These initial forays eventually became a photographic performance project titled *Green Suits* that has taken four different forms. Since 2016, hundreds of similarly green-suited participants have contributed their photos representing every continent on Earth. This essay illustrates how performance can “stay with the trouble” by navigating between the tricky dualisms of eco-activism: using fossil fuel-based materials to critique fossil-fuel culture, addressing serious matters with frivolity, interceding at individual levels in service of what must eventually be a structural-systemic shift.

Green Suits has been used in a variety of settings to support participants in having fun and experiencing pleasure while playfully embodying *green*'s homophony as a verb and adjective. Through common usage, the adjective *green* has morphed into a transitive verb, *to green*, indicating the act of protecting the environment (*Macmillan Dictionary* 2022).

The *Oxford Learner's Dictionary* defines the verb *green* in the political sense as “to make somebody more aware of issues connected with the environment; to make something appear friendly towards the environment” (2022). To enact this awareness-raising, friendly idea of green in various ways between 2016 to 2022, *Green Suits* has taken four different forms between 2016 to 2022: 1) *Green Cities*, an online collection of hundreds of photos submitted by photographers representing every continent on Earth hosted on the Inside the Greenhouse website and displayed at the University of Colorado Art Museum; 2) *Green Suits Boulder Valley School District (BVSD)*, a district-wide school competition in Boulder exhibited at the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR); 3)



FIG. 1 Photo titled “London Beth Osnes.” Osnes seated near the river Thames in London for the first of many green-suit photos. (Photo: Anonymous [a passerby].)

Green Suits Your University, university residencies at University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, Barnard College, and University of Colorado (CU); and 4) *Green Suits Your Fashion*, a student assignment communicating sustainable fashion.

All participants in *Green Suits* costume themselves in a full-body, Spandex green suit with a leafy sash, physically embodying their own idea of green within their chosen context, submit a photograph of themselves doing this, and have that photo publicly displayed to an audience through some format. Both the process of taking the photos and the photographs themselves have sparked unlikely and delightful conversations. Most who share their experience of participation are surprised by how much fun they have and mention other pleasurable emotions that resulted from the process, such as happiness, joy, and connection. Having ourselves participated in *Green Suits* as contributors (wearing the suit, posing for pictures), both of us (Osnes and Fahmy) attest to the enduring capacity of this simple artistic medium for participants to experience pleasure in association with this project by witnessing well over 1,000 participants over the years giggle as they step into a suit, and—once costumed—often expand their expressive range of movement as they pose for a photograph while performing through embodiment some self-defined idea of green.

This project is designed to set a positive tone for entry into and associations with climate change as an issue, broadly conceived, for both participants and audiences of these photographic acts. As we discuss later, doom-and-gloom narratives tend to characterize most climate change discussions; climate change activism is frequently (and justly) defiant, angry, and serious. Without denigrating these activist gestures, we offer *Green Suits* as a necessary complement, a bit of verdant hope and joy within an often all-too-bleak context of global warming.

Within the broad spectrum of climate change activisms, *Green Suits* focuses on the individual-level, first-handshake, conversation-starter bandwidth. It seeks to set an initial tone. Significantly, it mainly relies upon nonverbal bodily techniques, yet is designed as a form of climate communication. Although we green-suited performers are happy to give brief explanations (“raising environmental awareness”) when passersby ask what we are doing, we generally do not state definitively what the green suit represents. The accompanying leafy sash clearly represents leaves from some form of plant. That and the suit color’s obvious environmental associations likely *greens* spectators’ readings of the live events and photos. Beyond that meaning, the suits may take on some of the “normal” function for green Spandex one-pieces: a special-effects tool in filmmaking to render a person invisible, edited out and replaced post-production by whatever projection the filmmakers imagine or animate. Perhaps the use of green suits—the green-suited human figure within context—serves as a sort of place or aide for green projection and imagining by whomever witnesses them, either in person or through photographs. Whatever the exact semiotic process involved, the phenomenon of green suits tends to elicit smiles.

Green Suits developed as a project through “Inside the Greenhouse,” a CU initiative for creative climate communication cofounded and co-directed by Osnes, Max Boykoff, Phaedra Pezzullo, and Rebecca Safran (Inside the Greenhouse 2020). Fahmy is a doctoral candidate in theatre and performance studies at CU and has since 2017 been an active collaborator with Osnes. The chosen title—*Inside the Greenhouse*—acknowledges that, to varying degrees, we are all implicated in, part of, and responsible for greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere. We also treat this “greenhouse” as a living laboratory, an intentional place for growing seedlings of new ideas and evaluating possibilities for creatively communicating climate change awareness and action strategies (fig. 2).

When contributing to this project, Fahmy notes that through her embodiment of greening our world she wanted to highlight the climate-change challenges facing her home country’s coastal cities like Alexandria and Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt. The historic city of Alexandria is surrounded on three sides by the Mediterranean Sea and backs up into a lake, putting it in great risk of flooding due to rising sea levels. The coast is surrounded by concrete barriers to limit erosion and to help break the tide; however, residents in low-lying areas of the city and some archeological sites, including the medieval Qaitbay Citadel where she took a photo, are already experiencing significant infrastructure loss. She wanted her presence in the green suit to serve as a climate metaphor to highlight some of Alexandria’s unique characteristics that are jeopardized by climate change (fig. 3).

In her visit to Alexandria during the summer of 2017, Fahmy was advised to not mask her face with the green suit, as there had been a couple of security scares earlier caused by people donning bodysuits and masks. Exercising caution, she decided that the best way to avoid unwanted trouble with the authorities and get the best photos at some of Alexandria’s famous sites was to drive around the city at six o’clock in the morning on a weekday with a friend. They spent less than five minutes in each location. Her friend would pull up, she would jump out, zip up her hood, strike a pose, he would snap a photo and she would quickly jump back into the car, laughing harder with every photo. She got a couple of amazed looks, and some people stopped to ask the purpose behind the photos. They had wonderful, albeit brief conversations about climate change and environmental awareness. Most people left the encounter smiling.



FIG. 2 Photo titled "Alexandria Egypt El Zayat." Sarah Fahmy dressed in a green suit before the boats at El Shatby, Alexandria. (Photo: Mohmed El Zayat.)



FIG. 3 Photo titled "Green Suits BVSD Miller." Uli Miller (right) and her brother Satchell Spencer (left) highlighting the joy of recycling. (Photo: Michelle Ellsworth.)

What if anything the passersby Fahmy catted with did after their encounter we cannot know. But it is worth noting the effect that the visceral act of being inside the green suit had on Fahmy. Her identity was hidden, and yet her existence was clearly present and could not be ignored. She felt a connection with the numerous bodies who had worn the green suit before and those who will wear it after. She wondered where they had been, how they felt, and what choices they had to make both in and out of the green suit. They may never meet; however, all are connected through the environment and will be impacted by climate change. Her green, anonymous presence at times felt like the embodiment of climate change, a pressing issue that we collectively contribute to. It is everywhere—a loud, disruptive presence that cannot be ignored. Simultaneously, it felt like the glimmer of environmental consciousness that emerges amid the tumultuous climate-change narrative. The green suit thus became for Fahmy an intriguing symbol of energy and reminder of the power of unity and collective action to combat climate change.

Similar to the way in which *Inside the Greenhouse* alludes to being both complicit in contributing to climate change and part of the solution, participation in *Green Suits* subjects the human form to a dualistic and paradoxical nature as well. By being “inside a green suit,” human bodies cover themselves in a fossil fuel–based fabric to envision a predominantly fossil fuel–free future. Participants consciously perform as part of both the problem and the solution. The green suits’ matter (polyurethane) matters. We have chosen, however, to “stay with the trouble” of the green suits’ matter. We draw that phrase from Donna Haraway’s book of the same name. “Staying with the trouble,” she explains, “requires making oddkin; that is, we require each other in unexpected collaborations and combinations, in hot compost piles” (4). The presence of fossil fuel–based plastics in everything (German beer, bottled water, table salt, even breastmilk) confirms that we are physically entangled in a relationship with fossil fuels that renders differentiating between it and us inherently messy (Glenza; Liebezeit and Liebezeit). In her book *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self*, Stacy Alaimo imagines “human corporeality as trans-corporeality, in which the human is always intermeshed with the more-than-human world” and “the substance of the human is ultimately inseparable from ‘the environment’” (2). *Green Suits* performs a kind of synthetic nature, embodying human uses of the natural world and its technologization, from the Spandex suits, to the use of photography, to the technological infrastructures that enable the circulation of images through Instagram, email, and websites. There is a reliance upon all of this for the project to exist and be shared with others.

The decision to go with Spandex suits rather than what might be perceived of as some more environmentally friendly material, such as cotton, is also fraught with trouble. Cotton may be thought of as more “natural” since it is plant-based, but it certainly is not environmentally friendly with its heavy use of pesticides, fossil fuel–based fertilizers, polluting dyes, and huge amounts of water, along with its industrial spewing of carbon dioxide. An article in the *Independent* lists cotton first in its list of the worst fabrics for the environment, *after* which is listed synthetic fabric (Young). The decision to use Spandex suits was also artistic and practical. The vibrant color and attention-grabbing sheen of Spandex are ideal for making the images of the green human form “pop” in a photo. Also, the four-way stretch of Spandex is perfect for clinging to the human form to allow for clean lines. Because green suits are so readily available for purchase inexpensively thanks to their use in video production, they were a practical choice, since sewing green suits would have been extremely labor intensive. Given this reality of the green suits being made of fossil fuels, it should be noted that throughout this project, all zippers on these purchased suits were reinforced to prolong their lives, sewing repairs were made on suits after use where seams split, and they were line dried after being washed in cold water—all in a dedicated effort to exercise the response-ability to prolong their life and minimize the environmental impact of their use. In addition, the tension between the makeup of the suits and the intention of their use is shared with participants in this project for them to consider whether or not they feel the use of this product is justified by what positive change it may be able to inspire.

Since climate change is strongly associated with negative emotions for many, such as fear, guilt, and shame, providing a positive association with climate can encourage increased engagement with the issue that could result in sustained climate action (Osnes et al.). Doom-and-gloom narratives that emphasize problems, costs, and adverse impacts dominate conversations about climate change (Hinkel et al.). Many researchers believe that doom-and-gloom narratives are counterproductive for climate action, as fear may demotivate climate action (ibid.; Chapman et al.). Receiving horrific and hopeless stories about the impacts of climate change on our world can lead to the emotional numbing that often invites disengagement with issues surrounding climate and apathy rather than action. Without downplaying the seriousness of climate change, activists need narratives that mobilize joy/pleasure rather than (or at least in addition to) doom/gloom. It matters what kind of thinking, intention, and approaches we bring to our narratives. “It matters what stories make worlds, what worlds make stories” Haraway writes (12). What stories we tell about climate and how we tell them matters in terms of resulting feelings of elation or deflation regarding climate engagement and action. Positive narratives that focus on specific solutions can motivate action by demonstrating how change can be affected within various contexts. Even though *Green Suits* does not recommend specific solutions nor a specific narrative, it supports creative and generative impulses from which many narratives and solutions can originate.

Play is often related to pleasurable emotions like joy, delight, curiosity, and fun. Even the name of the project, *Green Suits*, is a play on the double meaning of each word within the title. *Green* signifies green and greening broadly construed, while *suits* indicates both the costume and a verb, suggesting that the act of greening can go well with, enhance, or be pleasing to anyone. The joy and pleasure that can be experienced playing in the green suits while taking photographs correlates with what adrienne maree brown describes as “pleasure activism,” which asserts that we all need and deserve pleasure and that our social structures must reflect this” (13). brown identifies “pleasure as a measure of freedom,” which relates to the reported and observed experiences of those donning a green suit in terms of expressive range and ability (3). She also encourages noticing what makes you feel good, and to increase opportunities for that to happen in your life (ibid.). In climate activism and awareness-raising, a joyful approach makes good sense as a complement to the serious demands for action and accountability. The impetus behind this project is to turn heads and hearts toward joy and other positive emotions while engaging in various iterations of the *Green Suits* project.

As stated, Osnes created the *Green Suits* project in conjunction with the Rockefeller Foundation 100 Resilient Cities Initiative. During off hours on tour, she took photos in a green suit within the cityscape of several participating cities to embody and make visible the action of “greening.” The photos appeared as social media posts chronicling her travels. In the following months and years, others happily took up the challenge to add to the photo collection, tucking away a green suit in luggage headed to Brazil, Vancouver, Antarctica, Japan, and beyond. Each sent back visual proof of their foray into the world embodying their notion of a spirit of green. Osnes curated the initial photos gathered from her and others’ efforts between 2016 to 2018 into a *Green Cities* collection hosted on the Inside the Greenhouse website. This collection (approximately 300 photos) was exhibited at the University of Colorado Art Museum in fall 2018, along with a supply of green suits that museum visitors could check out so that they might contribute even more photos to the collection.

That same fall, Marda Kirn of EcoArts Connections commissioned a partnership between Osnes (representing Inside the Greenhouse), Lisa Gardner of the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research’s Center for Science Education, and Ghita Carrol, the sustainability coordinator for the Boulder Valley School District (BVSD). The resulting project, *Green Suits BVSD*, featured Boulder Valley students photographing scenes of sustainability in action. Each photo also featured one or more students dressed in a green suit with a leafy sash. Students were also required to write a 150-word caption describing or commenting on their submission. Each school selected up to twenty of its students’ best photos. A jury of local arts, science, and sustainability professionals chose the top photos to be exhibited. The winning photo was chosen by celebrated photographer James Balog, the

subject of the environmentalist films *The Human Element* and *Chasing Ice*. Eighteen huge, framed collages of the winning photos were on display at NCAR in Boulder from April to October 2019. Given that NCAR receives over 90,000 visitors a year, these students' work reached thousands of them from around the world.

The winning photo utilized a drone to get an overhead shot of a single green human figure lying within a field of solar panels. At our opening for the NCAR exhibit, we read aloud the feedback on the winning photo provided by Balog:

I am attracted to its clean composition, attractive balance of colors, and, of course, for communicating the message of sustainable energy. The point of view and the scale of the figure symbolically communicate a wonderful message: the enormous energy of that great star in our sky is forever pouring down on us and it is readily available for us to harvest if we simply keep our hearts, minds, and technology open to it.

The impact of this project on the students can be gleaned in part by reading some of the written descriptions by students of their photos. In the caption by her displayed photo, Elizabeth Roberts at Boulder High School wrote: "My photo shows the green-suited figure posing in front of a colorful fence found in the gardens, painted with vegetables and other grown goods, promoting not only the practical aspects of growing your own food but also the colorful happiness it feeds into." Photography proved to be an effective medium for this student to convey the inspiration she garners from the splendor of color associated with locally grown food.

Uli Miller at Casey Middle School wrote:

I think getting people in a bunch of green suits is much more impactful than some person standing on a stage and telling you to throw away your waste. This photo is meant to bring attention to the importance of recycling in a fun way. I chose the flip over the recycling can because it catches the eye and hopefully makes you look and think a little longer about this important topic.

The capturing of an exceptional physical feat through photography helped this student draw attention to a sustainability issue important to her. Other photos capture green-suited figures actively engaging in the greening of their community through such actions as the use of public transportation or vegetable farming. Like other community-based youth participatory photography projects (see Trott for an example), *Green Suits BVSD* seemed to strengthen participants' sense of agency through enjoyment, agentic action, and collaborative action.

Currently, *Green Suits* is offering residencies at universities to "green" light their sustainability efforts, and to disseminate this methodology for student-generated creative climate communication. In September 2019, Kate Nelson, chief sustainability officer at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, hosted Osnes with the *Green Suits UWM* iteration of the project. The green-suited people visited various sustainability efforts, such as the Sandburg Gardens, where the Learn-Earn-Grow program is operating, the Spiral Garden near Sabin Hall, and the hoop house where compost piles made from Sandburg food scraps are managed by student volunteers. Although compost on its own lacks visual appeal, the photo published in the *UWM Report* of three green figures with shovels hard at work turning the compost pile brought this project to life and warranted front-page coverage.

In October 2019, Osnes and Fahmy co-facilitated the *Green Suits Barnard* residency at Barnard College in partnership with Leslie Raucher, Barnard's associate director of sustainability. CU graduate student Lianna Nixon partnered with us as our photographer. A group of about fifteen students from Barnard's sustainability committee came to meet us with no idea of what kind of an activity they were venturing into. We began by asking each student to say in about five words or less what brings them to this work with climate. Responses included, "I'm here because I'm scared,"

“because I read *The Lorax* as a child,” and “because I love the Earth.” After doing some stretching and relaxation exercises, we introduced the green suits and invited all to put one on.

Each of the suited students stood on the raised ledge running along the base of the windows and improvised being growing organisms exploring various levels. After several photos of that configuration, some of the students came down to the floor level in a tight group. Since the light was low, Nixon asked them to grow and then freeze, so that she could sharpen her focus. Then she called out again, grow and freeze, and again, and again, each time snapping photos as they froze. The rhythm created in their movement was beautiful to behold. The stop and start of movement allowed for appreciation of the figures, shapes, and relationships and seemed to add to their own physical awareness as bodies in motion. As they rearranged themselves, one of them noticed the pattern emerging and designated herself as a stem, asking the others to form a leaf around her (fig. 4).

One student noted that being in the full body costume liberated her movements, that she felt freer to move and be expressive. Another student noted that she initially felt apprehensive to put on a skintight green suit, which she said brought up negative body issues. However, after a few minutes of being in the suit, she said she forgot about her self-consciousness and had a lot of fun doing it. Raucher, the host of this project, shared that as an environmental scientist she is not used to engaging in an activity in which the method or outcomes were open-ended. Yet, she affirmed, being a part of this activity was fun and demonstrated how arts-based explorations like this benefit from that open and looser approach.

During the spring 2020 semester, students in Osnes’s creative Climate Communication course partnered with the CU Environmental Center to generate photos for *Green Suits CU*. The class mainly consisted of senior environmental studies majors who were largely unaccustomed to this type of communication. Pairs of students were assigned twenty distinct CU sustainability efforts. One example depicted the green-suited figures wearing white lab coats and putting specimens into a shared laboratory freezer, highlighting the work of the CU Green Labs project to implement sustainable practices in every laboratory on campus (CU Green Labs). Another photo featured a sustainability initiative by the CU theatre and dance department—specifically, the new LED theatre lights in the University Theatre—the largest in the building—that are more sustainable than traditional theatre lighting. The photo demonstrating these lights featured a green-suited figure, center stage and brilliantly lit, in an exuberant leap. Yet another photo featured a green-suited figure standing at a conveyor belt in the CU Recycling Center sorting various types of recyclable items. These photos have since been used for various visual campaigns on each initiative’s webpage, in promotional materials, and beyond.

In Maxwell Boykoff’s book *Creative (Climate) Communication: Productive Pathways for Science, Policy and Society*, which we used for the class, he notes that so much climate change communication relies upon appeals to expert knowledge and advice. “However,” he argues, “developments of user-generated, peer-to-peer, democratized and interactive communications have led to substantive changes in how people access and interact with information as well as in who they consider authorized definers of the various dimensions of climate issues” (9). Here, we acknowledge that these communication efforts are micro-interventions in relation to (and not in competition with) the macro-level interventions of activists pressuring corporations and governments to cut greenhouse gas emissions. Our hope is that in doing this work with students about to graduate as the next front line of environmental policymakers and advocates, we can uplift their spirits for the work ahead and remind them to infuse joy into it for sustained engagement for themselves and others.

In this class, the *Green Suits* project actively involved students in experiencing various approaches toward effective climate communication. Research by Anthony Leiserowitz describes a “hope gap” that often sits between increased awareness of the challenges and real opportunities to take action in the face of understanding, from the individual to the collective levels. Osnes extends an invitation to any universities or schools to borrow our collection and/or invite us to facilitate a



FIG. 4 Photo titled “Green Suits Barnard Nixon.” Students at Barnard College creating the shape of a leaf with their green-suited bodies. (Photo: Lianna Nixon.)

green-suits photography session to greenlight their sustainability efforts and engage their students in embodying a spirit of green. The most recent iteration of *Green Suits* took place in the spring of 2021 with an upper-division undergraduate Creative Climate Communication class at CU taught by Osnes, Boykoff, and Patrick Chandler. *Green Suits Your Fashion* focused on creatively communicating sustainable fashion. For this assignment, students were asked to visually communicate within their circle of influence how sustainable fashion can positively influence the environment and be aspirational. Each student created a sustainably sourced outfit (that is, thrifted, handed-down, recycled, dumpster dived, clothing swapped, or made from repurposed materials) as an expression of their personal style. One student even crocheted a tube top out of strips of plastic bags for the

project. All students created a photo or video of themselves modeling their outfit while wearing a full-body Spandex green suit underneath. They were challenged with adding a pro-environmental personal message to the post, such as “the more we thrift, the more we contribute to a thrivable, survivable, and fashion-forward future.” We challenged students to reach at least ten people within their circle of influence and document any feedback received. This assignment activated students, who are trusted messengers of climate within their circles of influence (Robinson), using the “power of ten” as a framework for suitably scaling sustainability and climate action in response to the rapid need for transformation of systems, policies, and behaviors (Bhowmik et al.). This assignment does this in a manner that offers attainable local action (sourcing fashion sustainably), which helps avoid disengagement by those who can become overwhelmed by climate issues when posed as a global threat (Markowitz et al., 32).

Green Suits Your Fashion integrates the study of climate communication with the fun of personal expression through fashion. It was completed by forty students, whose *Green Suit* photos and pro-environmental messages successfully reached 5,338 people, which supersedes a factor of 100 instead of the intended ten. Once we collectively tallied the impact of the combined work, many expressed hoots, hollers, and satisfied feelings akin to pleasure activism as “the work we do to reclaim our whole, happy, and satisfiable selves” (brown 13).

Students participating in *Green Suits BVSD* put their physical selves in service of visual communication to draw attention both to successful efforts within their community of which they are users, such as public transportation, and areas where they deemed action was needed, such as in reducing food waste. Their partnership with powerful institutions within their community, such as NCAR, BVSD, and CU, ensured that their message was validated and widely received. With the *Green Suits Barnard*, *UWM*, and *CU* projects, the aesthetic process of having a student group or class for sustainability come together through an aesthetic photography experience united them into one expressive and pulsing organism of matter that mattered. Together, they became something quite extraordinary and reported feeling freed from much of the self-consciousness that otherwise inhibited their expression. In *Green Suits Your Fashion*, students linked their embodied expression of sustainable fashion style to evidence-based communication strategies to encourage changes in how their circles of community source their clothing.

Green Suits welcomes viewers into a conversation about climate that is open, inviting, and, as one student put it, capable of “colorful happiness.” The power of the *Green Suits* photos lies in the quantity and range of expressions enacted. The public presentations of these green-suit photos in collages, on a Google map, or in a thumbnail-sized website gallery make the photos more visually impressive. It also conveys a unity in the shared experience of thousands of people wearing green suits throughout the various iterations of this project to publicly bear witness to their unified entanglement with the environment, belying the seeming futility of the single action.

Green Suits admits its humility. It knows it is a sort of court jester to the much more powerful king of ideologies—our capitalistic governments that continue policies and laws that allow for the power, consumption, and commodification of our planet’s resources—yet it speaks happiness to power. Participants in this project realize their creative agency when they don a green suit and makes their form public in their city streets. The photos bear testimony to these acts, these statements of unity and joy, these assertions toward a green future, all while humbling knowing that “[t]he state is . . . the only institution large enough and powerful enough to allow for a progressive response to the escalating challenges of climate change” (Moore 10).

Our agency for enacting pro-environmental behavior—greening—is embodied. Repeated green acts can become habitual gestures. Innumerable variations on these habitual green gestures “can accumulate and cascade into forms of innovation and, yes, resistance that produce profound effects on behavior” (Noland). These gestures can spread out to inspire others and may provide the urge

or inner nudge toward civic action. *Green Suits* was and continues to be a gesture responding in an embodied and immediate way to joyfully communicate a better, greener future, one that absolutely needs to be and feel aspirational, a bit risky, and pleasurable. Fun, happiness, and pleasure may be the most powerful attractants for continued climate engagement and action. We return to and seek out that which makes us feel good, providing a design for an experience in which these pleasurable feelings are associated with the communication of climate matters. Alaimo theorizes on the idea of ethical action arising from pleasurable practices that “open up the human self to forms of kinship and interconnection with nonhuman nature” (2016, 30). By becoming more aware of the physical self, gaining awareness of interconnectedness, and finally recognizing the self as part of humanity *and* the more-than-human-kinship network, ethical action can arise from pleasurable practices. Just as brown sets as a moral principle that pleasure ought to be a part of activism, so do we assert that the association of happiness and fun with climate communication matters.

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Sarah Fahmy is a PhD candidate in theatre and performance studies at the University of Colorado who cultivates community-based embodied explorations. Her dissertation, “This Is What a Young Egyptian Woman’s Decolonial Feminist Voice Sounds Like,” presents a foundational theoretical praxis for conducting socially engaged applied performance programs exploring decoloniality in Egypt. She is a cofounder of the Middle Eastern Theatre focus group at ATHE and the creator of the CU Boulder Middle Eastern North African Women Playwrights LibGuide. She facilitates performance-based programs internationally with SPEAK: Young Women’s Vocal Empowerment, the CU Playback Ensemble, Performers without Borders, Inside the Greenhouse, and is the cofounder of CU EnActs. Her publications appear in *Theatre Topics*, *RiDE*, and *PLoS One*.

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