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**Suspended Animation: How to Drive a Monster Yellow Construction Crane and Play God as a Mecha (machinic exoskeleton with human/body/spirit) (Paper)**

What is the performance dramaturgy of a machine and what might that examination reveal about subjectivity, perception, and affect in daily or theatrical or media events? Rosi Braidotti and Donna Haraway argue, albeit in different ways, for a kind of post- anthropomorphic philosophy that not only de-centers the hierarchies of the human but creates a level playing field of humans, animals, plants, objects, and media. This open field is at the center of this minimalist exploration of building Crane-choreo-dramaturgy and Mecha, the Japanese mechanical robot "armour." This is a transnational critique of the hegemonic building crane, followed by its transformation into the Japanese animation Mecha, an animated combination of machine and human. From the context of Japanese performance, pop culture, robots, animation, and early mechanical toys (karakuri), I will bring Western and Japanese theorists into a conversation concerning objects, robots, and what is "living." Or, better: what has "ki" (spirit)? Underlying this performance-based examination is how ethics functions when machines, human-like things, and robot-like humans perform in these mixed worlds. In the current world of drones and transformers on earth and in fantasy, the questions of responsibility arise, "what performs? what are the ends of performance? How does the nonhuman perform inhuman? What is at stake?" Haraway comes to that famous cyborg (robot) difference: "...far from signaling a walling off of people from other living beings, cyborgs [robots] signal disturbingly and pleurably tight coupling." This tower crane project is really about this human and machine/robot relationship and the past/future. How does this disturbing and pleasurable "coupling" of human and machine un-make norms of perception and hierarchies of human/animal/things? Is this a possible process of attunement to an "other" materiality? To organize this experience, I will weave the information on the tower crane in and out of theories dealing with the posthuman, machines, "vibrant materiality," and a dramaturgy and choreography of robot/machines between animated media and construction "sites." I suggest several theories on Japanese robotics and anime machines to open up the positioning of human and machinic differences to more radical relationships. The project is experimental and experiential and focuses on the non-human turn or what Rosi Braidotti calls, "... a transversal entity, fully immersed in and immanent to a network of non-human (animal, vegetable, viral) relations." It is these "relations" that form the heart of the "matter."

**Katherine Mezur** is a freelance performance scholar/dramaturge. She researches transnational Asia Pacific performance, particularly the transmission of practices from East Asia. She holds a PhD in Theatre and Dance, (Emphasis on Asian Performance) from the University of Hawai'i Manoa, (MA Dance Studies, Mills College, BA Film Studies, Hampshire). Her publications focus on "corporeal" practices in Japanese traditional/contemporary performance, girl cultures, kawaii or cute aesthetics, media/robotic performance, and gender performance (kabuki to J-pop). She is co-curator for 2015 P*S*i 21 Fluid States, Aomori, Japan: Beyond Contamination" and a core member, butoh-research-unit [<http://www.portfoliobutoh.jp/>]. Recently a Research Fellow at the International Research Center, Freie University Berlin, she has taught at University of Washington, Seattle, Mills College, McGill, and Georgetown University.