



## ***Awaiting Tiresias: A Livestream Performance* by Heather May for the Digital Research in the Humanities and Arts Conference**

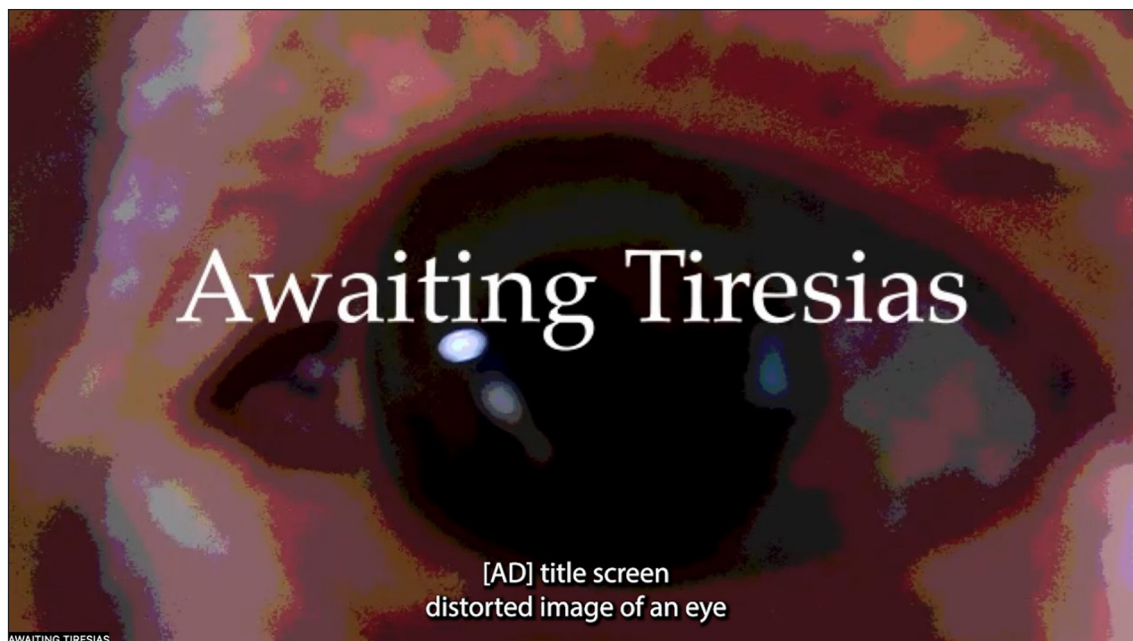
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*Awaiting Tiresias* is a livestream performative autoethnography that uses film and streaming technology to take audience members into the liminal space of a medical exam room in which the performer is left blindfolded and in the dark to contemplate their fate. The piece draws upon Greek mythology, common attitudes towards blindness and disability, and modern conceptions of gender in its multi-layered analysis of identity and diagnosis. *Awaiting Tiresias* examines tensions between liminality and diagnosis, sight and insight, and inter and independence. The performance relies upon film's ability to carefully construct perspective and interiority as a means of generating empathy and awareness. At the same time, *Awaiting Tiresias* embraces the way that the mixture of film with liveness can destabilize theatrical expectations to create a space where new perspectives are possible. The creative team behind *Awaiting Tiresias* utilizes the individualized experiences of audience members who witness the performance from their personal electronic devices to challenge the ocular-centric focus of film and theatre. In order to best experience the performance, audiences are encouraged to use headphones, turn out lights, and minimize distractions.

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This recording is of a livestream performance of *Awaiting Tiresias* that took place on September 7, 2022 as part of the Digital Research in the Humanities and Arts Conference. Unfortunately, our technology did not record the first few minutes of that performance, so I have edited in footage from a dress rehearsal the night before. The change happens when the name 'Kelly Walker' is replaced in Zoom by 'Awaiting Tiresias.' While one day we hope to provide them during the performance itself, in this case we had to add captioning and audio description in post-production. *Awaiting Tiresias* was created during the COVID-19 pandemic and designed to be able to be performed by only two people since it takes place in a very tight space.

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### Competing Interests

The author has no competing interests to declare.

### Author Information

Heather May is Professor of Theatre at Hobart and William Smith Colleges (HWS). They are the Artistic Director of the social justice theatre company Mosaic NY and were a resident artist at Indy Convergence (2019) and a participant in La MaMa Umbria International Directors Symposium (2014, 2017), Dell'Arte International Summer Intensive (2015), Pig Iron Theatre's Something from Nothing workshop (2018), and Directors Labs North and West. May's directing credits include *Memories of Overdevelopment*, *Waiting for Godot*, *The Etymology of Bird*, *Duchess*, and *Lysistrata*. May works increasingly in video, creating projects such as an online puppet voting series (JustCoVote), livestream solo performance *Awaiting Tiresias*, and a short film by the same name. May's book chapter 'When I Can't See You at the Theatre: Creating Inclusive Processes for Vision-Impaired Performers' was published in the Routledge Anthology *Inclusivity and Equality in Performance Training: Teaching and Learning for Neuro and Physical Diversity* (2021).

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### References

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