

**ART &  
QUEER  
CULTURE**

Catherine Lord &  
Richard Meyer

ART &  
QUEER  
CULTURE





## Preface

Preface ..... 7

## Survey

**Inverted Histories: 1885–1979**

by Richard Meyer ..... 15

**Inside the Body Politic: 1980–present**

by Catherine Lord ..... 27

## Works

**A – Thresholds (1885–1909) ..... 49**

**B – Stepping Out (1910–29) ..... 61**

**C – Case Studies (1930–49) ..... 79**

**D – Closet Organizers (1950–64) ..... 95**

**E – Into the Streets (1965–79) ..... 117**

**F – Sex Wars (1980–94) ..... 147**

**G – Queer Worlds (1995–2009) ..... 187**

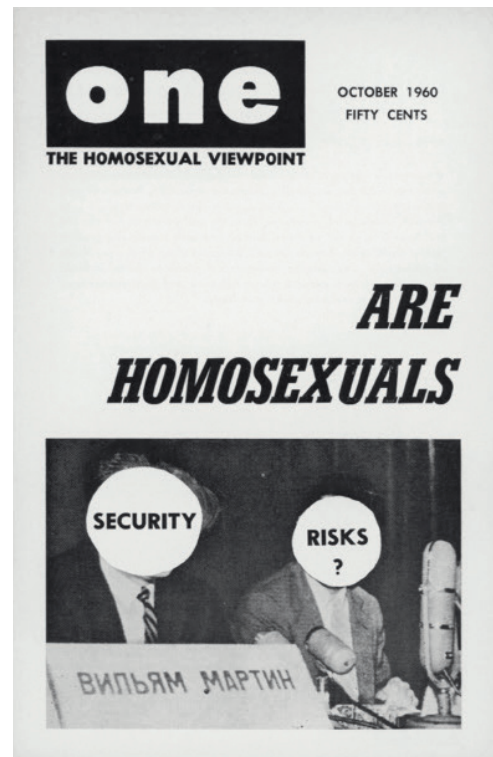
**H – Here and Now (2010–present) .... 249**

**Artists' Biographies ..... 281**

**Index ..... 299**

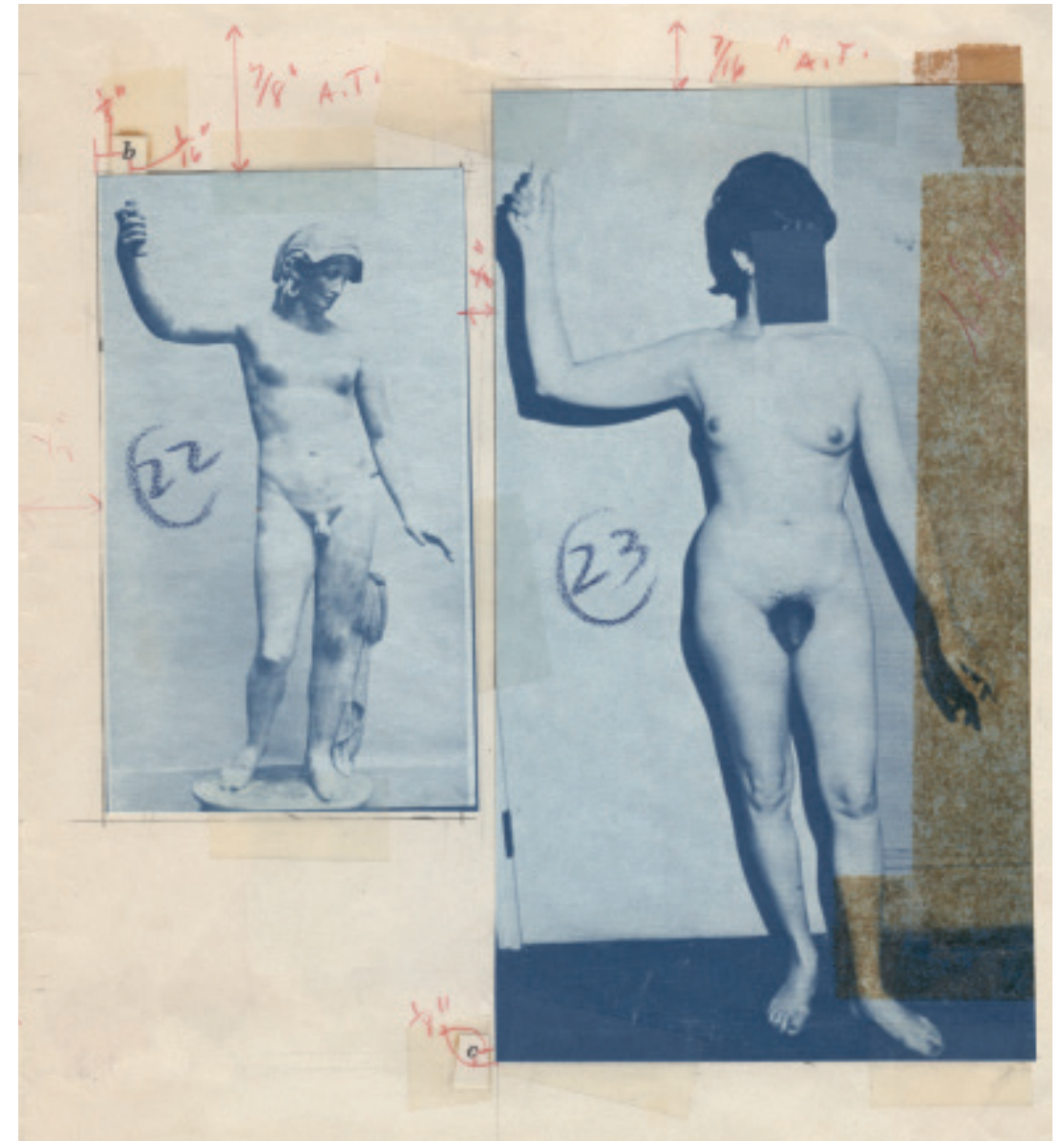
Cover of the October 1960 issue of *One* magazine

During the height of anti-communism in 1950s America, homosexuals were framed as political subversives and sexual degenerates susceptible to socialism. In 1953, as part of this so-called 'lavender scare', US President Dwight Eisenhower signed an executive order banning homosexuals from jobs in the federal government. Thousands of men and women were fired as a result, and their careers largely ruined. *One* magazine, the first widely distributed journal for homosexuals in the US, began publication in the same year, demonstrating how queer culture can find creative ways to respond to repression. The cover image of the October 1960 issue, for instance, mocks the surveillance of homosexuality in the name of protecting national security. The faces of two men seated behind a placard bearing Russian text are obliterated by white circles bearing the words 'Security' and 'Risks?' The reference to Russian censorship draws attention to the absurdity of the government's purge of homosexual employees. As the magazine's accompanying editorial put it, 'Of what value is national security if our government adopts and pursues those very evils from which it supposedly would like to protect our nation?' *One's* cover invokes the sensationalism of the 'lavender scare' in order to deflate and refute it. [RM]



Pre-press book layout of *The Transsexual Phenomenon*, written by Harry Benjamin, 1966

Dr Harry Benjamin was a German-born physician who trained with renowned sexologist Dr Magnus Hirschfeld. His 1966 book *The Transsexual Phenomenon* was one of the first to describe the lives and experiences of people diagnosed as 'transsexual'. The book presents patient case studies and outlines a fixed typology of 'sexual variation' that has since come under critical scrutiny for its pathologizing framework. Despite the controversy, this text laid the foundation for many contemporary approaches to transgender medicine. In this image of the pre-press layout for *The Transsexual Phenomenon*, the photograph on the left shows a sculpture of the mythical Greek figure Hermaphrodite in the collection of the Altes Museum in Benjamin's home city of Berlin. The figure's contrapposto stance languidly offers the breasts and genitals of the hermaphroditic body to view. In the photograph on the right, a patient who underwent feminizing hormone treatment supervised by Benjamin mimics the pose of this classic figure. Though the image on the right was produced from within a medicalized discourse that conflated gender and sex and thus fixated on the visibility of genitals, the image on the left aestheticizes figures with anatomical characteristics associated with both male and female sexes in a way that reaches back to the Classical Age. The juxtaposition of the photographs suggests that bodies that defy normative distinctions between male and female categories have existed since time immemorial. [CM]



JOSH FAUGHT

*It Takes a Lifetime to Get Exactly Where You Are*, 2012  
Handwoven sequin trim, handwoven hemp, cedar blocks, cotton, polyester, wool, cochineal dye (made from ground up bugs), straw hat with lace, toilet paper, paper towels, scrapbooking letters, Jacquard woven reproduction of a panel from the AIDS Memorial Quilt, silk handkerchief, indigo, political pins, disaster blanket, gourd, gold leaf, plaster cats, cedar blocks and nail polish  
244 x 609.5 cm  
Collection, Saatchi Gallery, London

Based in the Bay Area and drawing inspiration from its bohemian legacies, Josh Faught works in textiles to weave together 'the sheets' and 'the streets'. He draws as much from personal history as from social history, incorporating his family's domestic *tchotchkes* alongside the slogans and guidebooks of feminist and queer activist movements. With its vertical strata in shifting hues, *It Takes a Lifetime to Get Exactly Where You Are* can be read left to right as a loosely stitched-together biography that culminates in a woven reproduction of a panel from the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt (1987–ongoing). In the late 1980s, the Quilt was decried as overly tear-jerking by AIDS activists seeking more militant forms of mourning. By contrast, Faught's work indulges both these unproductive 'bad' feelings of sentimentality as well as the Quilt's 'bad', low-brow craft aesthetic. This work was the centrepiece of his 2012 solo exhibition 'Longtime Companion', which also included cedar 'closets' bearing woven PFLAG newsletters from 1995, the year Faught himself came out. [JD]



CHRIS E. VARGAS

*'Transgender Heroes' MOTH promotional broadside*, 2013  
Offset print on newsprint  
83.8 x 68.8 cm

The Museum of Transgender History and Art (MOTH) is an archival project designed to bring together a visual history of transgender culture with a critique of the institutional forces that keep transgender people invisible. Though Vargas describes MOTH as an imaginary museum that is forever under construction, it is also a platform for the exhibition series 'Transgender History in 99 Objects', modelled after the books *A History of the World in 100 Objects* and *American History in 101 Objects* (Penguin, 2012 and 2013). Each iteration of the exhibition is composed of a new set of objects. Many refer to major events in transgender history: a shot glass stands for the one that was reputedly thrown by transgender warrior Marsha P. Johnson at Stonewall in 1969; a T-shirt representing the group Transgender Menace transforms the name of the 1970s radical, feminist, lesbian group Lavender Menace to resist transgender exclusion from gay and lesbian organizations in the 1990s. The collage pictured is available to visitors to the 99 Objects exhibitions as a take-away publication. It features, and identifies on its reverse side, a number of prominent figures in transgender history, like activist and philanthropist Reed Erickson, who funded much of the research on transgender identity in the 1950s and 1960s, and contemporary artist Genesis P. Orridge, who identifies as 'third-gender'. [CM]



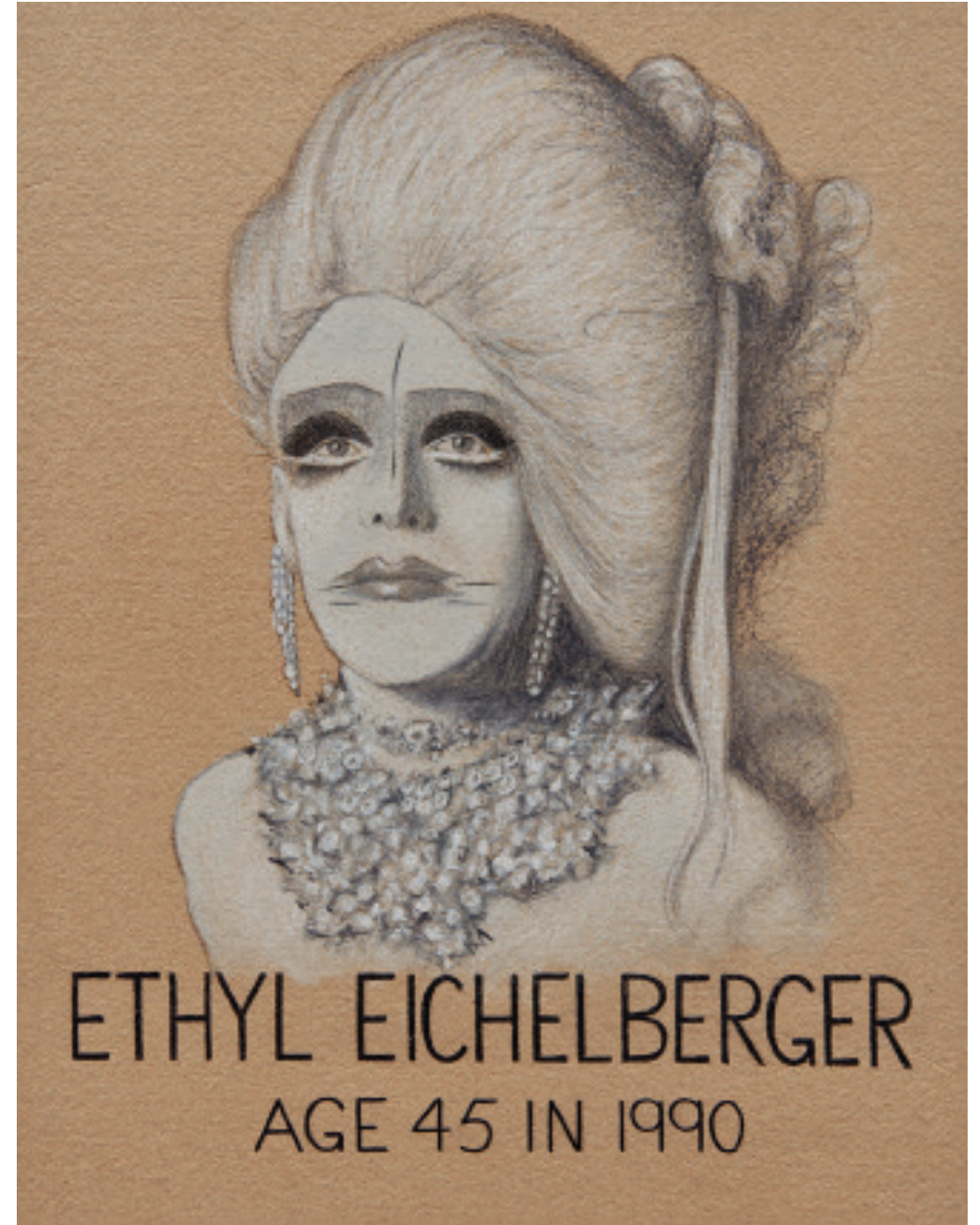
REINA GOSSETT AND SASHA WORTZEL

*Lost in the Music*, 2017  
 HD video installation, colour, sound  
 4 min. 20 sec.

Marsha 'Pay it no mind' Johnson was a self-declared 'street queen' who some say helped start the Stonewall riots with Sylvia Rivera in the early hours of 28 June 1969. One narrative of that now famous night describes Johnson as shattering a mirror with a shot glass in the Stonewall Inn in response to a sudden yet routine police raid. *Lost in the Music*, projected onto a broken mirror, is a video excerpted from Gossett and Wortzel's short film *Happy Birthday, Marsha!*, which imagines Johnson in the hours just before the rebellion. The actress who plays Johnson, Mya Taylor, stands in front of a curtain of gold tinsel wearing an elaborate pink floral hat and a large white wig that threaten to engulf her smiling face. Holding a tattered diary, Taylor recites a cathartic poem of resistance against the tides of exclusion, poverty and violence that Johnson and her fellow street queens regularly endured. Interwoven archival footage of Johnson presents a painful reminder that she was found floating in the Hudson River in 1992 – and that the cause of her death has never been determined. [CM]

JOHN KELLY  
*Ethyl Eichelberger, Age 45 in 1990*, 2018  
 Graphite, pastel and pigment pencil on paper on aluminum panel  
 28 x 35.5 cm

How does one honour an artistic generation decimated by AIDS? John Kelly has been addressing this challenge since the earliest years of the epidemic. In 'Sideways into the Shadows', his 2018 exhibition of excerpts from more than forty years of sketchbooks and journals, he included over fifty drawings of lovers and friends who have died of AIDS. Beginning with William Schwedler, a painter and former lover, who died in 1982, and continuing to the present day, these mixed-media portraits are drawn from photographs. Each is introduced by their name, age at the time of death, and the year they died. They include a who's who of the 1980s East Village scene – Charles Ludlum, Ron Vawter, David Wojnarowicz, for example – and many others who comprised Kelly's artistic world. He draws his subjects from the shoulders up, as in classical portraiture. Sometimes they are shown in full costume, as in the portrait of the legendary performance artist Ethyl Eichelberger, which is based on a John Dugdale photograph. Others are rendered in more sketch-like fashion. Kelly, who has been living with HIV since the 1980s, sees himself as both a witness and a survivor. With these portraits, he carries the dead with him and celebrates their lives for all to see. [DR]





LOLA FLASH  
*miss kimberley*, 2011  
 Digital c-print  
 61 x 51 cm

*miss kimberley* stares directly at the viewer, confident and confrontational. Her body is turned sideways and she crosses her arms in front of her chest. She wears all black, except for a silver watch, red leather gloves, and matching red lipstick. A long reddish-brown wig frames her face. Her lips are parted, as if she is about to speak. *miss kimberley* belongs to Lola Flash's series *Surmise* featuring individuals with a range of gender expressions that do not match normative assumptions: men who wear feminine clothing and long hair, women who dress in male clothing and have short hair, boys who wear tutus, and individuals who otherwise refuse gender-binaries. Flash is dedicated to the practice of portraiture, and to enhancing the beauty, pride and power of her sitters. Working with a 4 x 5 film camera, she carefully stages photographs of subjects against a white background, removing any surrounding distractions or context to focus on the individuals and their ability to control our gaze. Flash explains, 'The series *Surmise* aims to encourage my audience to regard each model as a person first, and to not assume their sexuality, gender or pronoun. It also begs for us not to assume anything at all.' [AJ]

JAMIL HELLU  
*Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (a.k.a. Faluda Islam) grew up in Pakistan. In Arabic poetry, a deer often symbolizes an effeminate young man. In Brazil, the word deer ('veado') is commonly used as a slang to insult gay men.* 2017  
 Digital pigment print

In this image, Hellu stands resting his hand on the shoulder of drag performer, artist and curator Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Jr, who sits with his legs crossed, and with his own elaborately manicured hand resting on his thigh. On Bhutto's right open palm is a deer, which symbolizes effeminate masculinity in both Brazilian popular discourse and Arabic poetry. By taking possession of this pejorative symbol, the pair at once defy and rework its negative associations. Since both men are queer and from Catholic and Muslim backgrounds that have historically shunned homosexuality, this image also highlights the contradictions that emerge through the union of religious, ethnic and cultural traditions with gender and sexual identity. Hellu's position combines the role of photographer and subject to create what he calls an 'us' rather than an 'other' within the image. 'Woven together', the photographer has written, 'our histories connect us to a larger dialogue about the complicated past we represent and the future we want to create'. [CM]





STEVE REINKE AND JAMES RICHARDS  
*What Weakens the Flesh is the Flesh Itself*, 2017  
 Digital video, sound  
 40 min.  
 Archive of the Schwules Museum\*, Berlin

Chicago-based Steve Reinke and Berlin-based James Richards may be artists separated by twenty years of age and the Atlantic Ocean, but they share a fascination with psychically haunting images that 'elicit, fulfill or negate some desire'. Their collaborative videos combining various media clips are deeply unsettling, producing ambiguous, often visceral sensations rather than straightforward knowledge. *What Weakens the Flesh is the Flesh Itself* originated in production designer and actor Albrecht Becker's (1906–2002) auto-erotic photo collection held by the Schwules Museum\* in Berlin. In these staged and manipulated self-portraits, Becker both poses in his street clothes and shows off his radically modified, tattooed body – including a sculptural penis. The video evolves into a profound meditation on masculine self-fashioning and the materiality of flesh and of analogue and digital images, where the double identity of the artists commingles with Becker's split personas in the shadows of the archive. For film scholar Erika Balsom, the video is ultimately 'a means of feeling out how generations of men shape each other – in care and cruelty, pain and pleasure – as they live and die'. [JD]

GIUSEPPE CAMPUZANO  
*Letania*, 2012  
 Digital collage and silkscreen on paper  
 50 x 30 cm

*Museo Travesti del Perú* is both a performance project that evolved while Giuseppe Campuzano was alive and an archive that persists past his death in 2013. The characters that Campuzano performed are rooted in his research on Chinese transvestite opera singers in late nineteenth-century Lima, paintings of sexualized black figures observed by scientist explorers, and reports of recent histories of homicide against transgender sex workers in Peru. The character pictured here is one that Campuzano developed to subvert normative binary genders within official Peruvian history. As a former Spanish colony, Catholicism runs deep in Peru. This character activates this religious history through the silver metallic crown that frames the head and face, which resembles the crown of the Virgin Mary. Her seven sorrows are traditionally symbolized by the impaled and flaming heart emblazoned on the figure's chest. Phrases that encircle the figure – like 'in(ve)stigadora inventario inventado cronica/o geneología' and 'poscolonialidad del placer ciudadana no humana' – which roughly translate as 'in(ve)stigator inventory invented chronic genealogy' and 'postcoloniality of non-human civic pleasure' – introduce rhetoric that resists the power of ideology and bureaucracy regulating the human body. For Campuzano, the body of the transvestite subject is a primary source of political power, and this image/text combination activates *travesti* as both sacred, mystical figures and figures subject to the violence and limitations imposed upon them by the largely Catholic, Peruvian nation-state. [CM]







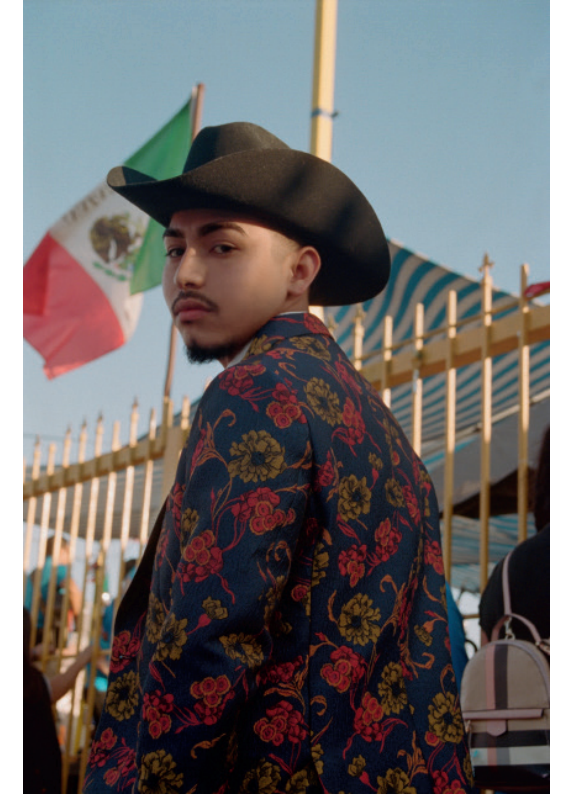
EVELYN TAOCHENG WANG  
*Dusk*, 2017  
 Video installation, 12 min. 40 sec.

*Dusk* is a video installation that returns again and again to the uncomfortable space between easily recognized poles: day and night; now and then; reality and fantasy; man and woman; young and old; beauty and undesirability. The transitive nature of the film is set from the start: it opens with illustrations of dinghies turning in all directions and Wang struggling against a setting sun to steer a small boat with a single oar while an engine hangs flaccidly off the stern. In another scene, Wang seems to struggle to reconcile her position within a binary gender structure. She sits silently and somewhat awkwardly between a beautiful heterosexual couple, this time in a motorboat scuttling down a placid river. As the vessel proceeds down river, the relaxed, semi-naked couple take in the quaint surroundings, catching each other's hair as it blows in the breeze. Wang coyly mimics their movements while text reads: 'you're always more authentic than me'. The video still pictured above, from a 2017 exhibition at De Hallen Haarlem, portrays the end of that scene, as Wang ambivalently abandons the couple on a grassy riverbank, seemingly rejecting that which she can never be, or perhaps never wishes to be. [CM]



RAFA ESPARZA, WITH SEBASTIÁN HERNÁNDEZ  
*Cumbre: look as far as you can see in every direction – north and south, east and west*, 2018  
 Performance  
 Collection, Geffen Contemporary at MOCA, Los Angeles

Rafa Esparza's multi-disciplinary installations and performances address the embodied experience of brown queerness. His work is usually collaborative, often with other queer Latinx artists. In *Cumbre*, the artist explores the power of water to unite and divide us. The piece is a haunting meditation on immigration and the history of brown bodies at risk. Spectators enter the space through a bridge paved with adobe bricks – which he often uses in his work – unwittingly stepping over the artist, who lies beneath it, while a video of the Los Angeles River is projected on the wall. Esparza then cuts his hands and mixes his blood with the water dripping down from a fountain. The gender non-binary performer Sebastian Hernandez enters the space, undresses and dances to Esparza's text about river crossings, his parents' migration, the overt and subtle racisms of the art world, and his place within it. 'I am not your bridge; I am water', he states, as they depart. [DR]



FABIAN GUERRERO  
*Portrait of Jaime*, 2018  
 35mm colour photograph  
 16 x 20 cm

Guerrero's photographs document the lived experiences of queer brown lives. His work gives representation to a new generation of queer Mexicans and Mexican Americans who invest in the *ranchero* and *vaquero* lifestyle without refuting their sexuality. As in *Portrait of Jaime*, they embrace their intersectional identities without a sense of conflict. Guerrero shoots Jaime in the bright light of day and in the centre of the public sphere, framing him in an honorific position in front of the tricolor Mexican flag. His stylishly groomed facial hair, along with his traditional floral print jacket and *Tejana* hat, project elegance and pride. He looks confidently back at the camera while continuing to move forward with a sense of purpose and belonging. [DR]



VAGINAL DAVIS

*Heraclitus*, 2015  
Clay, stucco fragments, Wet N Wild Brickhouse nail varnish, neon nail lacquer, Rival de Loop nylon nail enamel, hydrogen peroxide, glycerin, witch hazel, Pam, Aqua Net extra-strength hair spray, Jean Nate perfume  
15.2 × 45.7 × 11.4 cm

Part of a series of wall-mounted sculptures, *Heraclitus* sits at the intersection of queer resistance, feminist critiques of idealized gender representation, and a punk commitment to working-class aesthetics. Its heavy clay base invokes the brick that was thrown through the window of the Stonewall Inn in 1969 during the riots that led to the gay-liberation movement. The blood-red nail polish that coats its surface recalls both the fierce nails of the drag queens at Stonewall and Davis' own style of 'terrorist drag', which defies digestible and formulaic drag practices. By citing cheap drug-store brands like Wet N Wild and Aqua Net as materials, Davis roots the sculpture in everyday beauty rituals. Stucco and Pam cooking spray further situate this object within a discourse of working-class domesticity, while the roughly modelled surface suggests blue-collar labour. It also evokes a constantly changing sea or river, which chimes with the work's title, since Heraclitus described persistent change as the essence of the universe. Thus queer history and working-class aesthetics coalesce in a way that refuses stasis and perhaps warns against pursuing fixed and monolithic notions of gender or sexuality untouched by class positioning. [CM]

F. MARQUESPENTEADO

*FH – Frederic Hauser*, 2016  
Tennis rackets with hand-embroidery on PVC, leather books and marble trophy  
Dimensions variable

To create *FH – Frederic Hauser*, the artist f.marquespenteado combines embroidery and found objects in an installation of items representing an imagined character. The artist carefully stitches Hauser's likeness into a vintage tennis racket from which the strings have been removed. Rackets on either side of the central portrait continue the background, a body of water dotted with red rocks. The subject's initials, 'FH', are penned in the upper left of the installation's pink panelled background. Placing the racquets on a shelf with books and trophies, the installation creates an arrangement that looks like a typical personal display of pictures and objects associated with a loved one. f.marquespenteado has chosen to use a name with undefined gender and to work with materials – needle, thread and fabric – that are typically associated with femininity. The artist is interested in the friction created by presenting a male subject with feminine materials and in challenging assumptions about who utilizes or is represented by what medium. f.marquespenteado's delicate and excessively detailed tableau represents the lengths to which one might go in order to fulfill a fantasy that resides beyond conventional gender and sexual definition. [AJ]



NABIL VEGA  
*Visiting Thahab*, ongoing  
Multimedia project with performance, video and photography

*Visiting Thahab* emerges out of queer Muslim identity in a post-9/11 United States. In this image, the faceless character that the artist calls Thahab ('gold' in Arabic) sits on a rock as crisp white waves rush in from the turbulent grey sea behind. For Vega, the draped gold lamé not only conjures the traditional Burqa, but also constructs a figure that flamboyantly resists gendered associations. Muslims in the US are frequently treated as outsiders and potential subversives – a status that Vega queers here with a figure isolated against the sea rather than assimilated into contemporary American culture. Situated in ordinary American spaces – hotel rooms, supermarkets and city squares – in other iterations of this project, this queer character attracts attention by being a glittering but strange 'other'. [CM]



PHRANC  
*Red Dress (Please don't make me wear this)*, 2018  
Kraft paper, paint, cardboard and thread  
91.4 × 106.7 × 93.9 cm

The butch-lesbian, multi-disciplinary artist Phranc, works on the front lines of queer and feminist politics, creating a place for lesbians in a homophobic and misogynist world. Her work is full of charm, humour and joy. Calling herself the 'cardboard cobbler', she makes sculptures of quotidian life out of cardboard and paper that she then sews together and paints. In her exhibition *Swagger* (2018), she displayed a series of outfits that she wanted to wear – butch garments like Chinese lantern shirts, tomboy trunks, sailor hats – as well as the brightly coloured dresses she had once been forced to wear. For all its oppressiveness, *Red Dress (Please don't make me wear this)*, is rendered as a thing of beauty. Phranc presents it in motion, as if inhabited by some ghostly figure, perhaps a femme lover, anyone but Phranc. 'The dresses I was forced to wear when I was young only made me more determined to dress the way I do today', she explains. 'I wear outfits that make me feel strong, strong enough to walk out the door and into the world with my head held high.' For Phranc, the personal remains political, and she dresses the part. [DR]

Phaidon Press Limited  
Regent's Wharf  
All Saints Street  
London N1 9PA

Phaidon Press Inc.  
65 Bleecker Street  
New York, NY 10012

phaidon.com

First published 2013  
Revised and updated edition in paperback 2019  
© Phaidon Press Limited 2013

All works are © the artists or the estates  
of the artists unless otherwise stated.

ISBN 978 0 7148 7834 8

A CIP catalogue record of this book is available from  
the British Library and the Library of Congress. All rights  
reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced,  
stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or  
by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording  
or otherwise, without the written permission of Phaidon Press.

This edition:  
Commissioning Editor: Rebecca Morrill  
Project Editor: Catalina Imizcoz  
Designer: Hans Stofregen  
Artwork: Albino Tavares and Christopher Lacy  
Production Controller: Sarah Kramer

Printed in Hong Kong

Section Illustrations:  
p. 4: Fred W. McDarrah, *Outside the Stone Wall*, 1969  
p. 6: Diana Davies, *Donna Gottschalk holds poster 'I am your  
worst fear I am your best fantasy' at Christopher Street  
Gay Liberation Day parade*, 1970  
p. 11: Hal Fischer, *Gay Semiotics*, 1976  
p. 13: Kay Tobin Lahusen, *Barbara Gittings Protesting  
at Independence Hall, Philadelphia, July 5, 1966*  
p. 14: Pepe Espaliu, *Carrying Project, Barcelona*, 1991  
p. 47: Brassã, *Lesbian Couple at Le Monocle*, 1932  
p. 280: Sharon Hayes, *In the Near Future*, 2005

Cover:  
Joe Brainard, *Untitled (Garden)(detail)*. c. 1967

The publisher and the authors are  
indebted to the following contributors  
for their expertise and collaboration,  
and for their texts:

JON DAVIES, curator, writer, and PhD  
candidate in Art History at Stanford  
University. He curated the exhibition  
'Coming After' at The Power Plant, Toronto,  
where he was Assistant Curator. He also  
wrote a book on Paul Morrissey's film  
*Trash* (1970) and co-edited issue 5  
of *Little Joe* magazine with Sam Ashby;

ALEXIS BARD JOHNSON, PhD Candidate  
in Art History at Stanford University  
and a 2018–2019 Luce/ACLS Dissertation  
Fellow in American Art. Her dissertation  
is titled 'Turning the Page: Image  
and Identity in US Lesbian Magazines'.  
Her essay on Andy Warhol and drag was  
published in *Contact Warhol: Photography  
Without End* (MIT Press, 2018);

CYLE METZGER's dissertation is titled  
'Deep Cuts: Art and the History of  
Transgender Identity in the United  
States', as part of his PhD in Art History  
and PhD Minor in Feminist, Gender and  
Sexuality Studies from Stanford University.  
He is co-editor for the first transgender  
issue of the *Journal of Visual Culture*;

DAVID ROMÁN, Professor of English  
and American Studies at the University  
of Southern California. He has published  
widely in theatre and performance studies,  
Latinx studies and queer studies.  
His books include *Acts of Intervention:  
Performance, Gay Culture & AIDS, O Solo  
Homo: The New Queer Performance* (both  
1998) and *Performance in America* (2005).