



## A Syllabus on Transgender and Nonbinary Methods for Art and Art History

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**Tourmaline, Salacia, 2019**, 16 mm film, color, sound, 6:04 min., installation view, Chapter, NY (artwork © Tourmaline; photograph by Dario Lasagni, provided by the artist and Chapter NY, New York)

The following syllabus is intended to introduce central topics and methods from transgender studies to art history. It proposes some ways that art and art history's key themes might be reimagined.

**David J. Getsy and Che Gossett**

## **A Syllabus on Transgender and Nonbinary Methods for Art and Art History**

Art history has been slow to engage the robust and decades-old interdisciplinary field of transgender studies. In comparison to fields such as literature or film studies, there has been a dearth of engagement. At the time we submitted this syllabus (March 2021), the term “transgender” had appeared in *Art Journal* in only thirty-six articles or reviews (with three incidents of “nonbinary” and five of “transsexual,” in comparison to 135 of “queer”). The *Art Bulletin* had three occurrences of “transgender”—with a decade between each occurrence. (“Transsexual” and “nonbinary” have each appeared once in that publication.) The reluctance of art history to engage with trans and nonbinary histories and topics is not for a lack of artists. Contemporary artists have been making work that gives form to the politics and emotions of transgender, nonbinary, and intersex experience in exciting ways. They are on the forefront of trans visibility, and their work has more often been discussed in other fields such as performance studies, film studies, and Black studies.

This syllabus seeks to address this disciplinary caesura by offering a set of short, thematic bibliographies as a means to prompt new alliances between transgender studies and art history. The syllabus does not rehearse the foundations or historiography of transgender studies; consequently, we have forgone many important and now-classic texts that a more comprehensive introduction to the field and its ongoing development would entail. Instead, we organized the syllabus according to general themes that we thought would be useful to teachers and researchers of art and art history. It offers one possible entry into transgender studies, with a concentration on recent texts. Our idea was to take terms that circulate in conversations about art (“form,” “materiality,” and so on) and demonstrate how transgender and nonbinary positions compel us to look at those terms differently. Rather than focus on individual artists, we tried to find texts that spoke with each other about these broad themes. While there are occasional texts in the syllabus that address a single artist's practice, we have weighted the selection in favor of the methods and concepts around which each thematic section is organized. We developed the order of the texts in each bibliography organically through our discussions and editing, and they are listed in our suggested reading sequence. (We also encourage readers to freely reorganize our lists as well as the sections themselves.)

The selections in the syllabus represent many positions within the interdisciplinary field of transgender studies. We follow the current understanding of that field as encompassing not just the study of transgender subjects but also descriptive and analytic modes of accounting for and nourishing the complexities and multiplicities of nonascribed genders—in conjunction with a critique of the systemic suppression and erasure of them. Transgender studies demands (and is constituted through) a deep engagement with the critical analysis of race, sexuality, ability, and class. It also requires a trenchant account of political and economic ideologies and institutions that parse life and death—namely, the prison industrial complex, racial capitalism, anti-immigration covenants, medical

research, building and planning codes, educational standards, and legislative prohibitions on the use of one's own body.

To suit the readership of *Art Journal*, the historical focus of the topics lies heavily in contemporary art and recent debates. Even within that chronological frame, we found it necessary to choose only a few foci from among the many pathways, media, and practices of contemporary art. Film and new media, for instance, are represented by only a small selection of texts, since their connections with fields other than art history have resulted in more robust engagements with transgender studies and require their own distinct bibliographies. As well, with a handful of key exceptions (notably, in the Museums and Curating section), most of the texts center on cultural production in the United States (and are written in English). This was a difficult choice to make, since we recognize that this is only one dimension of a global framework for transgender and nonbinary topics. However, the Black, anti- and decolonial, and Indigenous analytics and methods outlined by the scholars and artists whom we have marshalled here address the triangulation of racialization, coloniality, and (un)gendering. These methods are part of diasporic and transnational enterprises, historicity, and discourse. The art and scholarship included in the syllabus show how the conjuncture of Black, Indigenous, and trans analytics problematize settler colonialism, sovereignty, and nationalism and border enforcement.

At present, there are also burgeoning fields arguing for the distinctness of nonbinary and intersex experience—which are only sometimes or partially registered in the history of trans studies. In the present syllabus, we have also aimed to include readings that formulate a nonbinary mode of analysis and history, seeing it as allied with the broader aim of trans studies to make space for a critical assessment of nonascribed genders. There are fewer texts drawn from intersex studies in the syllabus. Intersex studies has a more defined and long-running literature (that has helped to shape transgender studies). Some of the key questions about the regulation of bodies and their capacities look different from the perspectives of intersex studies and trans studies, even though they share much in terms of their broad critique and methods. Our inclusions of texts from intersex studies focus on issues of photography and representation. As intersex studies has decisively shown (especially with regard to the history of medicine, psychiatry, and criminology in the United States), the scientific narratives about gender and sex were constituted through the violent study of intersex bodies and the problem of representation they posed to scientific and psychiatric establishments.<sup>1</sup> Photography was a central tool of that violence—a fact that all histories of photography must address. The historical and methodological issues that intersex studies offer to art history are many; we see the need for another project such as this one that would examine the central place of intersex in histories of representation.

We are very aware of how partial this (or any) syllabus is, but the advantage of the syllabus form is that its content must constantly be adapted, changed, substituted, and updated. We encourage the selective use and remaking of the topics, and we expect that readers will have many additions to our themes and the texts we chose to represent them. We included multiple texts for each thematic section, with the understanding that instructors might use only a selection of those texts or use the groupings as the basis for multiple sessions on a given theme. We have included our own writings in the syllabus as a means of locating some of

1. See Hil Malatino, *Queer Embodiment: Monstrosity, Medical Violence, and Intersex Experience* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2019); Georgiann Davis, *Contesting Intersex: The Dubious Diagnosis* (New York: NYU Press, 2015); Elizabeth Reis, *Bodies in Doubt: An American History of Intersex* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009); Katrina Karkazis, *Fixing Sex: Intersex, Medical Authority, and Lived Experience* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008); Sharon Preves, *Intersex and Identity: The Contested Self* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003); Anne Fausto-Sterling, *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality* (New York: Basic Books, 2000); Suzanne Kessler, *Lessons from the Intersexed* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998); and Alice Domurat Dreger, *Hermaphrodites and the Medical Invention of Sex* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998).

our investments in these topics. With regard to the illustrations: they relate to artists featured in some of the texts, and they were chosen to suggest additional dimensions beyond the examples discussed. In the interest of increasing the audience for this syllabus, it will also appear online with open access on *Art Journal Open*. Whenever possible, links to texts are provided in the syllabus. We thank the *Art Journal* editors for their help with this process.

In the time that we have been developing this list, the literature on transgender, nonbinary, and intersex cultural production has grown rapidly, with exciting new contributions being published every month.<sup>2</sup> We have tried to give significant representation to the most recent literature. One could easily teach a class on the scholarship that has been published in the last two years alone. We see this syllabus as an opening to a dynamic and evolving field that is made possible through the nexus of trans and nonbinary art, pedagogy, and methodology.

## 1. Terms, Language, and Speech

What is the grammar of trans? Here we consider the morphology of trans discourse and the rendering of trans as more “accessible” through negotiated vocabularies. Closely tied to this is a questioning of how this very act of communication and legibility is challenged by Blackness—as ante-, anti-, non- and anabinary in excess and defiance of the categories of man and woman, which have been prescribed by racial and colonial protocols (as Marquis Bey and A. Finn Enke discuss in two of the texts). Dean Spade’s work on making higher education available to trans studies is of cardinal importance, given the history of trans students being marginalized in and ejected from classrooms in secondary education; support is crucial to overcoming these obstacles and providing access to higher education. David Valentine’s work in ethnography and Susan Stryker’s work on the constraints of homonormative narrativity give a materiality and archival substance to the consideration of categorization and nominalism.

Spade, Dean. “Some Very Basic Tips for Making Higher Education More Accessible to Trans Students and Rethinking How We Talk about Gendered Bodies.” *Radical Teacher* 92 (Winter 2011): 57–62. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/radicalteacher.92.0057>.

Steinbock, Eliza. “Call Me They.” In *Shimmering Images: Trans Cinema, Embodiment, and the Aesthetics of Change*, vii–ix. Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2019.

Bey, Marquis. “How Ya Mama ’n’em? Blackness, Nonbinariness, and Radical Subjectivity.” *Peitho* 22, no. 4 (Summer 2020). <https://cfshrc.org/article/how-ya-mamanem-blackness-nonbinariness-and-radical-subjectivity/>.

Stryker, Susan. “Transgender History, Homonormativity, Disciplinarity.” *Radical History Review* 100 (2008): 145–57.

Enke, A. Finn. “The Education of Little Cis: Cisgender and the Discipline of Opposing Bodies.” In *Transfeminist Perspectives in and beyond Transgender and Gender Studies*, edited by A. Finn Enke, 60–77. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012.

Valentine, David. “The Categories Themselves.” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 10, no. 2 (2004): 215–20.

2. A selection of recent special issues of academic journals is an indication: Amelia Jones, ed., “Trans-ing Performance,” *Performance Research* 21, no. 5 (2016); Rox Samer, ed., “Transgender Media,” *Spectator* 37, no. 2 (2017); Shanté Paradigm Smalls and Elliott H. Powell, eds., “Black Queer and Trans\* Aesthetics,” *The Black Scholar* 49, no. 1 (Spring 2019); Dorothy Kim and M. W. Bychowski, eds., “Visions of Medieval Trans Feminism,” *Medieval Feminist Forum: Journal for the Society for Medieval Feminist Scholarship* 55, no. 1 (2019); GPat Patterson and K. J. Rawson, eds., “Transgender Rhetorics,” *Peitho* 22, no. 4 (Summer 2020); and McKenzie Wark, ed., “trans | femme | aesthetics,” *e-flux* 117 (April 2021).

## Further Reference

Currah, Paisley, and Susan Stryker, eds. "Postposttranssexual: Key Concepts for a 21st Century Transgender Studies." Special issue, *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 1, nos. 1–2 (May 2014).

Kapitan, Alex. "The Radical Copyeditor's Style Guide for Writing about Transgender People." *The Radical Copyeditor* (blog), August 31, 2017. <https://radicalcopyeditor.com/2017/08/31/transgender-style-guide/>.

Coman, Jonah. "Trans Citation Practices—a Quick-and-Dirty Guideline." Medium.com (blogging platform), November 27, 2018. <https://mxcoman.medium.com/trans-citation-practices-a-quick-and-dirty-guideline-9f4168117115>.

## 2. Methods

Once one questions the axioms that genders are binary and bodies are dimorphic, the world and history look different and more complex. Methods emerging from transgender and nonbinary positions attend to the multifarious of ways that genders and bodies have historically been sites of resistance, policing, and possibility. These readings introduce methodological positions that can be used widely, and they offer intersections and debates with methods from other fields and positions. Decolonization, visual culture, art historical method, literature, and feminism are among the topics.

Keegan, Cael M. "Transgender Studies, or How to Do Things with Trans\*." In *The Cambridge Companion to Queer Studies*, edited by Siobhan B. Somerville, 66–78. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020.

Boellstorff, Tom, Mauro Cabral, micha cárdenas, Trystan Cotten, Eric A. Stanley, Kalaniopua Young, and Aren Z. Aizura. "Decolonizing Transgender: A Roundtable Discussion." *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 1, no. 3 (August 2014): 419–39.

Metzger, Cyle, and Kirstin Ringelberg. "Prismatic Views: A Look at the Growing Field of Transgender Art and Visual Culture Studies." *Journal of Visual Culture* 19, no. 2 (August 2020): 159–70.

Getsy, David J. *Abstract Bodies: Sixties Sculpture in the Expanded Field of Gender* [selections]. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015: "Preface" (xi–xvii); "From Ambiguity to Openness in Modern Sculpture"; "The Transgender Phenomenon of the 1960s"; and "Transgender Capacity" (19–36, inclusive).

Nyong'o, Tavia. "Non-Binary Blackness: After the End of the World with Samuel R. Delany." *Art Practical*, November 21, 2019. <https://www.artpractical.com/feature/non-binary-blackness-after-the-end-of-the-world-with-samuel-r.-delany/>.

Ahmed, Sara. "An Affinity of Hammers." *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 3, nos. 1–2 (May 2016): 22–34.

Aizura, Aren Z., Marquis Bey, Toby Beauchamp, Treva Ellison, Jules Gill-Peterson, and Eliza Steinbock. "Thinking with Trans Now." *Social Text* 145 (December 2020): 125–47.

### 3. Flesh

What are the boundaries of the body? How does Black thought fracture, throw into disarray, and destabilize the presumptions of normative subjectivity, self-possession, and bodily “sovereignty”? How has the flesh, from its appearance in the work of writers from Hortense Spillers to Toni Morrison, materialized an alternative to the subject as a scene of subjection (for instance, as Saidiya Hartman traces)?<sup>3</sup> How has Blackness—in its gender nonconformity, in its being “ungendered,” and in its aesthetics of fugitivity—meant that the very terms by which embodiment is conceptualized must be rethought anew?<sup>4</sup> Spillers’s work has been extended by C. Riley Snorton, showing both how normative gender and the regulatory binary are established through anti-Blackness and how, within the archive of slavery, there is a Black trans history of existence and resistance to these normative protocols. Black trans studies builds on Spillers’s work to trouble the cisgender/trans binary for its failure to account for the ways that Blackness is always an outlaw to and resistant of the gender binary itself. These works show the dynamism of and interplay between Black feminism(s) and trans studies.

Spillers, Hortense J. “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe: An American Grammar Book.” *Diacritics* 17, no. 2 (Summer 1987): 65–81.

Snorton, C. Riley. “Trans Capable: Fungibility, Fugitivity, and the Matter of Being.” In *Black on Both Sides: A Racial History of Trans Identity*, 55–97. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017.

Detournay, Diane. “The Racial Life of ‘Cisgender’: Reflections on Sex, Gender, and the Body.” *Parallax* 25, no. 1 (2019): 58–74.

Santana, Dora Silva. “Transitionings and Returnings: Experiments with the Poetics of Transatlantic Water,” *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 4, no. 2 (May 2017): 181–90.

Ellison, Treva Carrie. “Black Femme Praxis and the Promise of Black Gender.” *The Black Scholar* 49, no. 1 (2019): 6–16.

Warren, Calvin. “Calling into Being: Tranifestation, Black Trans, and the Problem of Ontology.” *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 4, no. 2 (May 2017): 266–74.

### 4. Bodies

Examinations of the cultural category of “the body” must account for its malleable contours and porous boundaries. Rather than being fixed or sovereign, the body is a relational nexus at which gender is located, worked, and articulated. These texts ask how our accounts of the body have failed to see its transformability. They examine the ways in which the body gains its form and legibility only through its relations and mutual inflections. Scientific, linguistic, pharmaceutical, social, and environmental delimitations of the body are discussed—as are the ways in which these interfaces complicate narrow understandings of genders’ locations within bodies. The final text thinks through colonialism, racialization, and trans to propose transness and Blackness as throwing into crisis the notion of body as property.

3. See Saidiya Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

4. See also Zakiyyah Iman Jackson, *Becoming Human: Matter and Meaning in an Antiracist World* (New York: NYU Press, 2020).





**Del LaGrace Volcano, *Moj of the Antarctic: On the Mountain, Antarctica, 2005***, giclée print, 30 x 36 in. (76.2 x 91.4 cm) (artwork © Del LaGrace Volcano)

Hayward, Eva. “More Lessons from a Starfish: Prefixial Flesh and Transspeciated Selves.” *WSQ: Women’s Studies Quarterly* 36, nos. 3–4 (Winter 2008): 64–85.

Puar, Jasbir K. “Bodies with New Organs: Becoming Trans, Becoming Disabled.” *Social Text* 33, no. 3 (September 2015): 45–73.

Lee, Joon Oluchi. “The Joy of the Castrated Boy.” *Social Text* 23, nos. 3–4 (Fall–Winter 2005): 35–56.

Gill-Peterson, Jules. “How to Bring Your Kids Up Trans.” In *Histories of the Transgender Child*, 195–208. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2018.

Preciado, Paul B. “Money Makes Sex: The Industrialization of the Sexes.” In *Countersexual Manifesto*, translated by Kevin Gerry Dunn, 100–119. New York: Columbia University Press, 2018.

Cassils, and Eliza Steinbock. “On Propagating Collective Resilience in Times of War: A Conversation with Cassils,” *Performance Matters* 4, no. 3 (2018): 108–27. <https://performancematters-thejournal.com/index.php/pm/article/view/109/225>.

Duplan, Anaïs. “A Body That Is Ultra-Body: In Conversation with Fred Moten and Elysia Crampton.” *Ploughshares* (blog), July 13, 2016. <https://blog.pshares.org/a-body-that-is-ultra-body-in-conversation-with-fred-moten-and-elysia-crampton/>.

## 5. Representations

How does one image trans and nonbinary positions in all their varieties and temporal complexities? And, more to the point, who generates those representations? The authors in this section grapple with the need for self-representation and



articulate the struggle against negative stereotypes and the narrow (and injurious) representational conventions that limit and caricature transgender and nonbinary people. The question of the photographic image is central to these issues, and its relationship to evidentiary protocols is both a limit and a site of reclamation. From self-portraiture to the selfie, the artists discussed in these texts demand self-representation even as they critically respond to the ways that their own images are appropriated and misused. Their work bears the weight of a long tradition of the imposition of voyeuristic modes of representing intersex and trans people without consent or coauthorship. The texts in this section register some of that history and propose ways to abandon it.

Halberstam, Jack. "Trans\* Representation." In *Trans\*: A Quick and Quirky Account of Gender Variability*, 84–106. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2018.

Leung, Helen Hok-Sze. "Trans on Screen." In *Transgender China*, edited by Howard Chiang, 183–98. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.

Wark, McKenzie. "Girls Like Us." *The White Review*, December 2020. <https://www.thewhitereview.org/feature/girls-like-us/>.

Malatino, Hil. "Black Bar, Queer Gaze: Medical Photography and the Re-visioning of Queer Corporealities." In *Queer Embodiment: Monstrosity, Medical Violence, and Intersex Experience*, 129–57. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2019.

Johnson, Dominic. "Transition Pieces: The Photography of Del LaGrace Volcano." In *Otherwise: Imagining Queer Feminist Art Histories*, edited by Amelia Jones and Erin Silver, 340–55. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016.

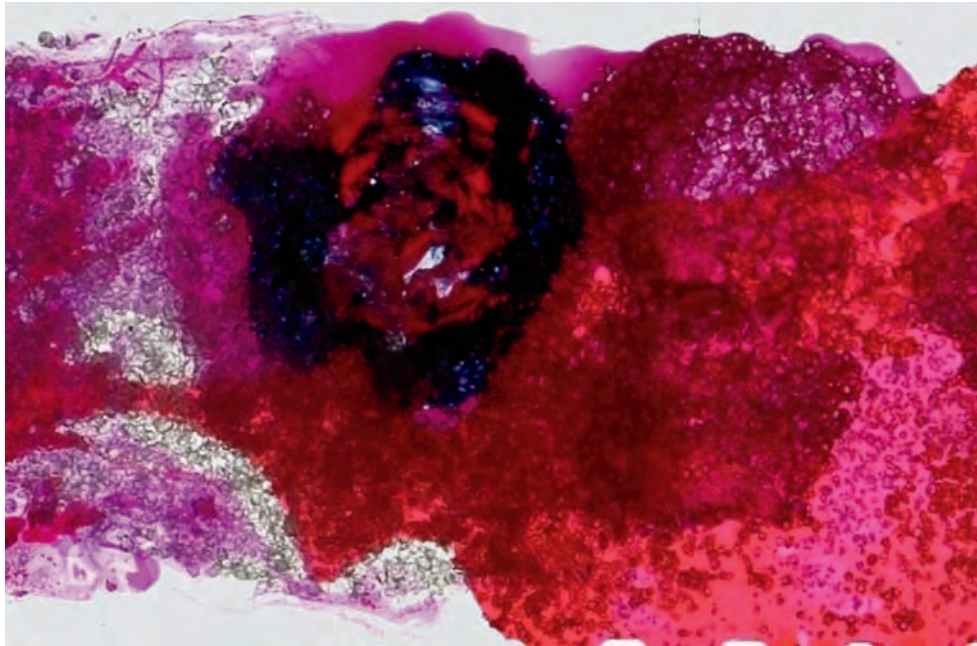
Lehner, Ace. "Trans Self-Imaging Praxis, Decolonizing Photography, and the Work of Alok Vaid-Menon." *Refract* 2, no. 1 (2019): 45–77.

Hernández, Robb. "Pretty in Pink: David Antonio Cruz's portrait of the florida girls." *Journal of Visual Culture* 19, no. 2 (August 2020): 232–45.

Tourmaline. "Filmmaker and Activist Tourmaline on How to Freedom Dream." *Vogue*, July 2, 2020. <https://www.vogue.com/article/filmmaker-and-activist-tourmaline-on-how-to-freedom-dream>.

## 6. Visibilities

Visibility is frequently assumed to be a worthy political goal, but visibility also comes with costs, dangers, and agonisms. What are the roles of the gaze and optics in rendering trans as a legible form? How has trans and nonbinary experience privileged invisibility and nondisclosure, thus evading surveillance—but also history? One must also be critical of instances when trans or nonbinary experience becomes visible, and to whom. These texts explore the limits of visibility and its violence as a political and racial regime of trans representation—especially in the "trap" laid by a neoliberal, mediated project. These texts also point to and open potential aesthetic and artistic forms of visibility that run counter or diagonal to the hegemonic version of trans visibility—that is, particularities, opacities, occlusions, abstractions, and other means of trans presencing not predicated on strict figuration, conventional recognition, or visual representation.



**Eva Hayward, *Premarin Clot 6*, 2005**, painting on 16 mm film cell, salt, nail polish, gel medium,  $\frac{1}{4} \times \frac{3}{8}$  in. (0.75 x 1 cm) (artwork © Eva Hayward)

Gossett, Che. "Blackness and the Trouble of Trans Visibility." In *Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility*, edited by Tourmaline, Eric A. Stanley, and Johanna Burton, 183–90. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017.

Snorton, C. Riley. "A Nightmarish Silhouette: Racialization and the Long Exposure of Tradition." In *Black on Both Sides: A Racial History of Trans Identity*, 139–75, 232–38. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2017.

Salamon, Gayle. "Comportment." In *The Life and Death of Latisha King: A Critical Phenomenology of Transphobia*, 25–61. New York: NYU Press, 2018.

Hayward, Eva. "Painted Camera, 'Her,'" *e-flux* no. 117, April 2021. <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/117/385172/painted-camera-her/>.

Kwak, Young Joon. "Mark Aguhar." *Brooklyn Rail*, July–August 2016. <https://brooklynrail.org/2016/07/criticspage/mark-aguhar>.

Edwards, Adrienne. "Relishing the Minor: Juliana Huxtable's Kewt Aesthetics." Exhibition brochure. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2015. <https://tinyurl.com/HuxtableKewtAesthetics>.

## 7. Opacities

"Opacity" describes a tactic of resistance as well as an incompleteness of visual categorization.<sup>5</sup> This section deals with the vexing of transparency and legibility, and it offers examples of the ways in which trans subjects evade or jam the diagnostic protocols that would survey and delimit them. The opaque is often a direct response to heightened situations of the violence of scrutiny, and its limited cases throw into relief systems of categorization and control. Forms of opacity (for instance, nondisclosure, illegibility, dissemblance, interiority, unrecognizability,

5. Many of the authors draw on the foundational account of opacity in Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation* [1990], trans. Betsy Wing (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997).

or excess) challenge the visual as a means of knowing. Art history and art, which tend to privilege visual interpretation and evidence, must grapple with the right to opacity and the refusal of immediate legibility.

Beauchamp, Toby. "Surveillance." *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 1, nos. 1–2 (May 2014): 208–10.

cárdenas, micha. "Shifting Futures: Digital Trans of Color Praxis." *Ada: A Journal of Gender, New Media, and Technology*, no. 6 (2015). <https://scalar.usc.edu/works/shifting-futures-micha-cardenas/index>.

Stanley, Eric A. "Anti-Trans Optics: Recognition, Opacity, and the Image of Force." *SAQ: South Atlantic Quarterly* 116, no. 3 (July 2017): 612–20.

Gimbrone, Jules. "Touching a Third Sound: Trans-Sensing in a World of Deepfakes." *Walker Art Center Blog*, May 16, 2019. <https://walkerart.org/magazine/jules-gimbrone-trans-sensing-in-a-world-of-visual-dominance>.

Gill-Peterson, Jules. "Trans of Color Critique before Transsexuality." *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 5, no. 4 (November 2018): 606–20.

Rand, Erica. "Cis-Skeletal." In *The Small Book of Hip Checks: On Queer Gender, Race, and Writing*, 93–102. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2021.

Getsy, David J. "Seeing Commitments: Jonah Groeneboer's Ethics of Discernment." *Temporary Art Review*, March 8, 2016. <https://temporaryartreview.com/seeing-commitments-jonah-groeneboers-ethics-of-discernment/>.

## 8. Materialities

Any image has a material substrate. The study of matter and its interconnectedness is central to art history's accounts of art objects and their embeddedness in economic, technological, and ecological systems and histories. Bodies and genders, too, are constituted through material constraints and possibilities. The writers in this section discuss the materials of art and the matter of matter as sites where transgender and nonbinary methods allow for new readings and applications.

Vaccaro, Jeanne. "Felt Matters." *Women and Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* 20, no. 3 (November 2010): 253–66.

Vaccaro, Jeanne. "Feelings and Fractals: Woolly Ecologies of Transgender Matter." *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 21, nos. 2–3 (June 2015): 273–93.

Archer, Nicole. "Dynamic Static." In *Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility*, edited by Tourmaline, Eric A. Stanley, and Johanna Burton, 293–319. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017.

Crawford, Lucas. "The Crumple and the Scrape: Two Archi-Textures in the Mode of Queer Gender." *Places Journal*, March 5, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.22269/200305>.

Barad, Karen. "TransMaterialities: Trans\*/Matter/Realities and Queer Political Imaginings." *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 21, nos. 2–3 (June 2015): 387–422.

## 9. Forms

Questions of form include: How does something appear? How do we delimit a form? How do we make sense of new forms in relation to ones we have seen before? The writers in this section discuss how forms and formal relations are sites at which gender's multiplicity and mutability become registered, arbitrated, and explored for their potential. Drawing on issues surrounding abstraction, recognition, analogy, pseudomorphosis, and unforecasted form, the writers in this section demonstrate that form is not just inextricable from content and meanings but also that its uses and transformations offer capacious ways to engage with transgender and nonbinary experience.

Steinbock, Eliza. "Reparative Practices of Cut and Suture: Resequencing Trans Histories." In *Shimmering Images: Trans Cinema, Embodiment, and the Aesthetics of Change*, 53–60, 172–73. Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2019.

Chen, Mel. "Animals without Genitals: Race and Transubstantiation." *Women and Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* 20, no. 3 (November 2010): 285–97.

Hall, Gordon. "Reading Things: On Gender, Sculpture and Relearning How to See." *Walker Art Center Blog*, August 8, 2016. <https://walkerart.org/magazine/gordon-hall-transgender-hb2-bathroom-bill>.

Smillie, Tuesday. "Radical Imagination, Autocritique and Accountability: Ursula K. Le Guin's Construction of Gethen and the Modelling of Creative Practice as a Radical Tool." In *Seized by the Left Hand—Tuesday Smillie*, edited by Eoin Dara and Kim McAleese. Dundee, Scotland: Dundee Contemporary Arts, 2019. <https://tinyurl.com/SmillieRadicalImagination>.

Lancaster, Lex. "The Wipe: Sadie Benning's Queer Abstraction." *Discourse* 39, no. 1 (Winter 2017): 92–116.

Malatino, Hil. "Three Billboards: Abstraction, Attention, Anonymity." In *Trans Care*, 25–34. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020.

## 10. Built Environments

If gender is constructed, what then is the relationship between trans and the built environment? How does trans interface with material infrastructure that is designed to control and capture? How do trans people navigate design, from the binary bathroom that is a site of anti-trans, racialized surveillance to the massive building projects and political economy of the prison system? Furthermore, what does trans architecture look and feel like? What is portended by thinking about the built environment as trans and through trans?

Beauchamp, Toby. "Bathrooms, Borders, and Biometrics." In *Going Stealth: Transgender Politics and U.S. Surveillance Practices*, 79–106, 155–64. Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2019.

Crawford, Lucas. "How to Beat a Straight Flush: D[iller] S[cofidio] + R[enfro]'s Brasserie and the Rhetoric of Transgender 'Plumbing.'" In *Transgender Architectonics: The Shape of Change in Modernist Space*, 39–65. New York: Routledge, 2016.

Sanders, Joel, and Susan Stryker, "Stalled: Gender-Neutral Public Bathrooms." *SAQ: South Atlantic Quarterly* 115, no. 4 (October 2016): 779–88. See also <https://www.stalled.online>.

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Preciado, Paul B. "My Trans Body Is an Empty House." In *An Apartment on Uranus: Chronicles of the Crossing*, translated by Charlotte Mandell, 184–86. South Pasadena, CA: Semiotext(e), 2019.

#### **11. Museums and Curating (with two case studies)**

The art museum is historically predicated on the mutually reinforcing ideas that the work of art is a present site of aesthetic experience while also being a representative of a context from the past. Both of these positions presume that the work of art makes visible its playing of these roles, but many transgender histories have been tied up with a refusal of scrutiny and visibility. One consequence is that the museum seems to have little place for transgender subjects or, if included, makes them harshly visible as such. In response to this catch-22, trans and travesti artists have conjured their own museums that both redress historical erasure and aim to circumvent the surveillance protocols that tokenize or instrumentalize them. This section includes texts that discuss the roles of institutions and their displays of trans subjects. These are augmented with two case studies of museums created as artworks (but that nevertheless have had an impact as institutions). Chris Vargas's *MOTHA: The Museum of Transgender History and Art* and Giuseppe Campuzano's *El Museo Travesti del Perú* each, in their distinct ways, write history and envision future institutions. As a supplement to these two museum projects, we also include an analysis of a curatorial project that proposes a different answer to the question of trans visibility.

Tang, Jeannine. "Contemporary Art and Critical Transgender Infrastructures." In *Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility*, edited by Tourmaline, Eric A. Stanley, and Johanna Burton, 363–92. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017.

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Rizki, Cole. "Familiar Grammars of Loss and Belonging: Curating Trans Kinship in Post-Dictatorship Argentina." *Journal of Visual Culture* 19, no. 2 (August 2020): 197–211.

## **MOTHA: The Museum of Transgender Hirstory and Art**

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## **El Museo Travesti del Perú**

Campuzano, Giuseppe. "Transvestite Museum of Peru: Processes of Sexed Art, the Political Body, and the Transvestite Nation," with an introduction by Miguel A. López. *Stedelijk Studies*, no. 3 (December 2015). <https://stedelijkstudies.com/journal/transvestite-museum-of-peru/>.

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## **12. Abolition**

Trans abolitionist optics are more relevant now than ever. It has been over a decade since the publication of Eric A. Stanley and Nat Smith's anthology *Captive Genders*, which gathered together activists, scholars, and artists to present a path-breaking consideration of trans resistance to and analysis of the prison industrial complex. Work in this vein has continued, showing how the prison industrial complex is a technology of anti-Black, settler, anti-queer/trans violence and premature death—and how this analysis is indispensable for all emancipatory movements.

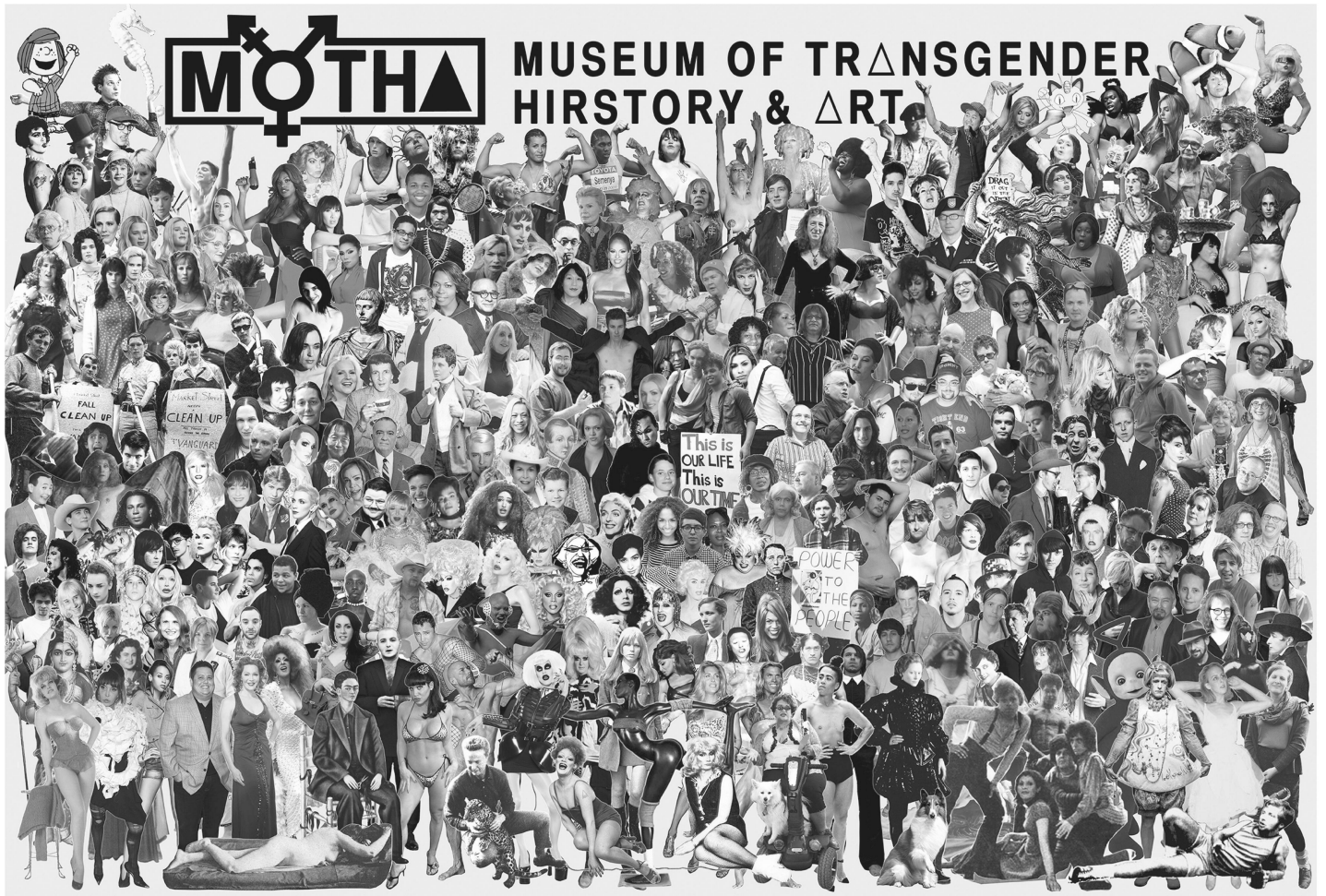
Stanley, Eric A. "Fugitive Flesh: Gender Self-Determination, Queer Abolition, and Trans Resistance." In *Captive Genders: Trans Embodiment and the Prison Industrial Complex*, edited by Eric A. Stanley and Nat Smith, 7–17. Edinburgh: AK Press, 2011.

Gossett, Che. "We Will Not Rest in Peace: AIDS Activism, Black Radicalism, Queer and/or Trans Resistance." In *Queer Necropolitics*, edited by Jin Haritaworn, Adi Kuntsman, and Silvia Posocco, 31–50. New York: Routledge, 2014.

Stanley, Eric A., and Dean Spade. "Queering Prison Abolition, Now?" *American Quarterly* 64, no. 1 (2012): 115–27.

Spade, Dean. "This Is a Protest, Not a Parade." In *Normal Life: Administrative Violence, Critical Trans Politics, and the Limits of Law*, 117–38. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015.





**Chris E. Vargas, *Transgender Heroes***  
**(Promotional Broadside for MOTH), 2013,**  
newsprint, 33 x 27 in. (83.8 x 68.6 cm) (artwork ©  
Chris E. Vargas)

Triburgo, Lorenzo. “The LGBTQ Voices Propelling Prison Abolition: In Conversation with Lorenzo Triburgo,” interview by Pete Brook. *Prison Photography* (blog), April 2, 2018. <https://prisonphotography.org/2018/04/02/the-lgbtq-voices-propelling-prison-abolition-in-conversation-with-lorenzo-triburgo/>.

### 13. The Past in the Present

Breaking with the contemporary focus of the syllabus, this section addresses historical episodes of resistance or visualization through which present-day institutions and practices were forged. It looks both to moments when institutional structures were developed through a policing of difference and revolt as well as to episodes in which trans potentiality exceeded such attempts to categorize or make legible. A longer view—that incorporates the past—shows how intertwined trans histories have been in the establishment of discourses of personhood and citizenship.

DeVun, Leah, and Zeb Tortorici, “Trans, Time, and History.” *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 5, no. 4 (November 2018): 518–39.

Return to chapters from C. Riley Snorton, *Black on Both Sides*, read for sections 3 and 6.

Rand, Erica. “Getting Dressed Up: The Displays of Frank Woodhull and the Policing of Gender.” In *The Ellis Island Snow Globe*, 67–106. Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2005.

Awkward-Rich, Cameron. “‘She of the Pants and No Voice’: Jack Bee Garland’s Disability Drag.” *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 7, no. 1 (February 2020): 20–36.

Adair, Cassius. “Licensing Citizenship: Anti-Blackness, Identification Documents, and Transgender Studies.” *American Quarterly* 71, no. 2 (June 2019): 569–94.

DeVun, Leah. “Animal Appetites.” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 20, no. 4 (2014): 461–90.

Amin, Kadji. “Trans\* Plasticity and the Ontology of Race and Species.” *Social Text* 38, no. 2 (June 2020): 49–71.

### 14. Collectivities

This final section focuses on communities, gatherings, and connections. A thread running through these texts is the importance of collective performance and support, from networks of collaboration to the spaces and times that have enabled community to be visualized, enjoyed, and nourished. Of equal importance is the need to protect such collectivities and the spaces in which they thrive. These texts discuss the acts of renewal, rebuilding, and resistance that counter the endangerment and embattlement of collectivities and their chosen places.

Davis, Vaginal, and Del LaGrace Volcano in dialogue with Lisa Newman. “‘What Have You Done for Me Lately?’: The Institutionalization of Queer Feminist Art Histories.” In *Otherwise: Imagining Queer Feminist Art Histories*, edited by Amelia Jones and Erin Silver, 331–39. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016.



**Wu Tsang, *We Hold Where Study*, 2017**, two-channel HD video, color, sound, 18:56 min., installation view, Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2019 (artwork © Wu Tsang; photograph by John Wronn)

Muñoz, José Esteban. “The Sense of Wildness: The Brown Commons after Paris Burned.” In *The Sense of Brown*, edited by Joshua Chambers-Letson and Tavia Nyong’o, 128–40. Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2020.

Hall, Gordon. “Party Friends.” In *Platforms: Ten Years of Chances Dances*, edited by Aay Preston-Myint, 150–55. Chicago: Gallery 400, University of Illinois at Chicago, 2015.

Gossett, Che. “Pulse, Beat, Rhythm, Cry: Orlando and the Queer and Trans Necropolitics of Loss and Mourning.” *Verso Blog*, July 5, 2016. <https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/2747-pulse-beat-rhythm-cry-orlando-and-the-queer-and-trans-necropolitics-of-loss-and-mourning>.

Stanley, Eric A., Wu Tsang, and Chris Vargas. “Queer Love Economies: Making Trans/Feminist Film in Precarious Times.” *Women and Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* 23, no. 1 (2013): 66–82.

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