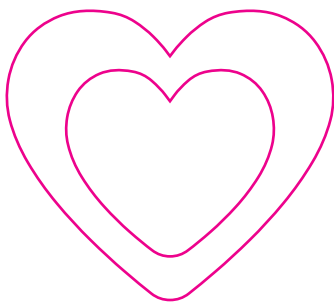


Mike Lerjen

TRANS* ARCHITECTURE, A DEFINITION

A dive across generations, to
uranus and beyond



**theoretical statement of the master in
architecture 2024**
LERJEN Mike

**Professor responsible for the
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MALTERRE-BARTHES Charlotte

Pedagogical director
DIETZ Dieter

EPFL guide
LEDERMANN Gianna



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Part -2

6

Acknowledg- ment

Acknowledgment

I am deeply thankful to Gianna, Janus, Joanne, Agnès, Leticia, Daniella, Aloys, Harry, Pierry, Sandro, Frédérico, Amel, Nath, Alice, Tiago, Léo, Camyl, Dimitri, Nicolas, Simone, Adam, Yann, Raph, Kathy, The DRAG lab, Charlotte, Nicolas, Yohann, Seb, Pierre, Léon, Luis, Selen, Maud, Alies, Paul, Hanya, Félix, Erwan, Mabi, Abi, Dany, Louise, Emilie...

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Part -1

How to read

8

In an analog manner as Paul Préciado is writing dysphoria mundi, and as the expressive body employs language to challenge assumptions about gendered political stances, what is articulated and how it is conveyed is trying to evade strict categorization of the traditional theoretical statement. This project aims to be described as dysphoric or, perhaps more fittingly, as non-binary; it rejects traditional boundaries between "theory and practice, philosophy and literature, science and poetry, politics and art, the anatomical and the psychological, sociology and skin, the banal and the incomprehensible, debris and meaning."¹

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At the same time, as a non-binary person writing for trans* people, I must be aware of the elitist nature of knowledge production in universities. The thesis is undoubtedly an indigestible part; it is enshrined in an academic framework and aims to deploy my readings of the semester as well as my nuanced opinions and understanding of the subject, this position makes my text hard to reach for an audience outside the walls of the institution. Indeed, talking about Michel Foucault right from the introduction is the epitome of this. The dysphoric moments are also intended to soften my discourse and open up discussion on other forms of knowledge production that go beyond the white, heterosexual, cisgender framework of the architectural institutions.

How to read

¹ Préciado, Paul, *Dysphoria mundi*, (Paris, Edition Grasset & fasquelle, 2022)

That's why this book is composed of two different types of moments. One of them is an essay, it's a thread that links together all of the parts, it is laid out using a serif font and a simple grid to encourage easy

reading. The background is white and the text is magenta. The other one is a collection of dysphorical elements. It is composed of some lists, poems, songs, and questions. The layout is less strict, and the use of the grid is more complex and irregular. The typography is a sans-serif (it is Amiamie, an inclusive font that you can

download on byebyebinary.com).

This state of flux should not be perceived as detracting from the book's purpose as a vehicle for unveiling truth and desire. Embracing this mutant structure, the book, amidst its apparent disorder, strives to approximate, even if only asymptotically, the transitional processes unfolding from the personal to the global scale. Moreover, I think that

doing research with a trans* perspective goes hand in hand with the idea of sewing together the form and content.

In this nuanced approach to presentation, the work not only challenges traditional expectations but actively invites readers to navigate the interplay between structure and fluidity. The deliberate juxtaposition of elements, both in content and design, fosters an immersive reading experience that encourages reflection and engagement with the diverse array of ideas presented.

Part 00

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Introduction

Three years of bachelor, 13 months of internship, and 1 year of master and I am still waiting for one of my professors or assistants to mention the name of a trans* person. This theoretical statement is mainly guided by my need to find transness in architecture and to start understanding space and learning how to think of space in a way that I can relate to. I also want to investigate how trans* people have engaged with space and architecture in the past.

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In my theoretical statement I am interested in transporting the dynamics of spatial production beyond conventional cisgender heterosexual norms. I will use the following question as a guide for my inquiry: What are the elements needed to build a trans* architecture?

I have spent the past month reading Paul Preciado, Jack Halberstam, Sandy Stone, Tal Madesta, Lucas Crawford, Julia Serano and I am excited yet angry that so many have written about transness in space and that none of them have made it into my curriculum. This absence might be the reason why my theoretical statement will be constructed as a literature review for the most part. The goal is here to build a trans* bibliography in parallel with articulating a trans* narrative on architecture.

Introduction

This literature review will then be used to analyse two trans* historical figures, Brandon Teena and Orlando. Both of them will be situated and movie sequences will be analysed in parallel to understand how transness is interacting with space time and emotions.

This analyse will help to articulate a definition of what trans* architecture could be. Rather than answering, I will try to broaden the horizon and create new doors that could be opened following this research, as the conclusion to my essay.

16

Saim, Sadiq,
director. *Joyland*.
Film Constellation,
2022. 2hr., 7mn.

René, Gaveau, di-
rector. *Adam est...*
Ève. Orex-Films,
1954 1hr., 32mn.

Sébastien, Lifshitz,
director. *Casa Su-
sanna*. Arte, 2022,
1hr., 37mn.

Anna, Kerrigan, di-
rector. *Cowboys*.
Samuel Goldwyn
Films, 2022, 1hr.,
26mn.

Max, Currie,
director. *Rurangi*,
The Yellow Affair,
2020, 1hr., 27mn.

Isabel, Sandoval,
director. *Brooklyn
Secret*. Lingua
Franca LLC, 2019,
1hr., 30mn.

Anahita, Ghazvin-
izadeh, director.
They. Optimale
Distribution, 2017,
1hr., 20mn.

Jamie, Patterson,
director. *Tucked*.
Belstone pictures,
2018, 1hr., 20mn.

Jennie Livingston
director. *Paris is
Burning*. Off-White
Productions,
1990, 1hr., 18mn.

Sean Baker, di-
rector. *Tangerine*.
Magnolia Pictures,
2015, 1hr., 28mn

Stephan, Elliott,
director. *The Ad-
ventures of Pris-
cilla, Queen of the
Desert*. Roadshow
Entertainment,
1994, 1hr., 43mn.

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Part 01

Part 01 - Literature review

18

Literature review

“Everyone in this room desire sex change”
Eva Hayward

Unlocking the potential of transgender architecture calls for a paradigm shift, where structures go beyond form to actively participate in the political shaping of bodies. As a matter of fact, the exploration of transgender architecture requires a nuanced approach, inviting an examination of the definition of what architecture is. Utilizing Michel Foucault’s call for a shift to a biopolitical model positions architecture not as a passive representation but as a dynamic political artefact entrusted with the profound responsibility of constructing and producing the body itself.² In essence, Foucault’s conceptualization invites us to view architecture as a dynamic force that plays a pivotal role in shaping the very essence of human existence. This biopolitical framework is instrumental in shaping the evolution of modern architectural landscapes. This approach not only allows for the examination of the impact of colonization and capitalist progression but also creates opportunities for a thorough exploration. Specifically, it delves into the formation of gendered, sexual, and racial subjects within the architectural realm.³

Embracing this dynamic perspective, we embark on an exploration of transgender architecture—an

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2 Preciado, Paul, “Architecture as a Practice of Biopolitical Disobedience,” *Log*, no. 25 (2012): 122.
3 Idem.

intricate tapestry woven from the threads of identity, societal expectations, and the tangible structures that compose our built environment. This journey ventures beyond the conventional boundaries of architectural discourse, delving into the nuanced complexities of how transgender experiences intersect with and influence the spaces we inhabit.

A little stop might be needed here, as a matter of fact, the concepts of homosexuality and heterosexuality are products of a binary and hierarchical classification system designed to maintain the dominance of the pater familias over the reproduction of life. Homosexuality, heterosexuality, intersexuality, and transsexuality are framed within a colonial and capitalist epistemology, prioritizing sexual practices associated with reproduction as a means of managing populations and sustaining the workforce, as well as facilitating consumption. It is important to recognize that these categories are constructs imposed by systems of power, rather than accurate reflections of the complexities of life. In essence, capital, not life itself, perpetuates its own reproduction. Thus, these designations serve as a map imposed by power, not an accurate representation of life's diverse experiences.⁴ When diving into the definition of trans* architecture those boundaries are not to be forgotten. Moreover, this thesis being produced in an academic context I am confronted with the limit of means used to get to that definition.

The listing of these limits is not only to be interpreted from a negative point of view, they are also a framework within which new rules of play can be invented and limits can be pushed. My statement does not aim to legitimise trans* discourse and queer theory in the academic sphere, and the limits of the discourse I am constructing will not stop at problems of translation of my uranism.

«Then my dream returns and I understand that my trans condition is a new form of uranism. I'm not a man I'm not a woman I'm not heterosexual I'm not homosexual I'm not bisexual. I am a dissident of the sex-gender system. I am the multiplicity of the cosmos locked in a binary political and epistemological regime, and I cry out to you. I am an uranist confined within the limits of the technoscientific capitalism.»

Preciado, Paul, *Un appartement sur uranus: Chroniques de la traversée*, Points (Paris, Edition Grasset & Fasquelle, 2021), 26.

Our conceptualizations of genders and bodies are shaped by the norms of particular architectural ideals, particularly the notion that «the home» serves as a fitting metaphor for our bodies. Experiencing a sense of comfort and belonging within one's own body is undeniably a crucial requirement, acknowledged by few, if any. Yet, could the intensity of this necessity to feel at home in one's body be

influenced by the constrained and confining concepts our culture associates with the notion of «home»?⁵ To what degree does the concept of a «home» in the context of trans*-embodiment align with capitalist, middle-class, and heteronormative ideals? Our exploration aims to unravel the intricate dance between identity and the physical environment, shedding light on how architectural design both reflects and shapes societal norms. Through this nuanced examination, I hope to contribute to a deeper understanding of the multifaceted relationship between transgender experiences, architectural spaces, and the pervasive influence of biopolitical forces on the shaping of our built environment.

This statement endeavours to bring together the stories of trans* individuals and the challenges they've faced. It aspires to broaden our perspective on gender, moving beyond conventional expectations and limitations. The idea is to illustrate that there is a diverse range of identities and stories beyond what we typically encounter. To borrow Paul Preciado's words «To imagine is already to act: to reclaim imagination as a force for political transformation is already to begin to mutate.»⁶

Fundamentally, the overarching objective is to reshape our collective perceptions of gender, fostering a space where the diverse experiences of trans*

individuals actively contribute to a more nuanced understanding of gender dynamics. The hope is that, through this exploration, new ideas and narratives will surface, disrupting established thought patterns and cultivating more open and diverse conversations. It is crucial to ponder this ambition and to go back on the foundations that are building those perceptions. Tackling architecture history in this specific subject is key as trans* realities often are excluded from the general narrative.

This process of exclusion entails a delicate interplay between two pivotal elements: an internally constructed, well-defined entity, and its external counterpart. Within the realm of architectural ideology, this internal entity takes the form of the body of texts and rules meticulously crafted during the Renaissance, coalescing into what we recognize as the «system of architecture» with its roots in classical principles.⁷ Despite the ebb and flow of historical transformations, this internal construct has persistently shaped Western architectural thought, maintaining its foundational influence even amid the apparent disruptions of the early 20th century.

The system of architecture, deeply entwined with logocentrism and anthropomorphism, especially the male anthropomorphic perspective, can be traced back to the seminal contributions of Vitruvius.

5 Lucas Cassidy Crawford, "Breaking Ground on a Theory of Transgender Architecture," *Seattle Journal for Social Justice* 8, no. 2 (2010):519

6 Preciado, Paul, *Dysphoria mundi*, (Paris, Edition Grasset & fasquelle, 2022), 58.

7 Diana Agrest, *Architecture from without: Theoretical Framings for a Critical Practice* (Cambridge, Massachusetts [etc: MIT Press, 1991):173.

Trans* architecture, a definition

ej lave mes balls dans la bathroom
un autre hookup frette
on fourre

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y'er gone sans dire un mot
l'opposite de gossip
gay culture of silence

Lather rinse repeat (hot guy dans un bar à mtl) by Xénia Gould

assis seul au bar
l'absence de s'aimer
une grosse envie de chier

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Similarly to our own creation myth, his narrative of origin commences with two entities: the male and the female. The foundations of architectural standards are rooted in gender norms.⁸ The subsequent reinterpretations during the Renaissance and the modern movement have solidified its enduring presence. This system is not merely defined by the elements it includes; equally vital is its delineation through exclusion. Inclusion and exclusion, rather than disparate notions, form integral components of the same conceptual framework. Entities deemed excluded or left out are not unequivocally discarded; instead, they find themselves intertwined in a complex process of repression.

Repression, in this context, transcends a mere act of exclusion, as it neither expels nor repels an external force. Rather, it harbours within itself an interior realm of representation—a nuanced space of repression. This internal landscape becomes a repository for elements that, though seemingly excluded, are intricately interwoven with the fabric of the system of architecture.⁹ As we navigate the complexities of cultural and architectural evolution, understanding the dynamics of inclusion and repression becomes essential, prompting a nuanced exploration of the boundaries that shape our cultural narratives and architectural paradigms. If we use the ideas of Diana Agrest today, The bodies that

8 Lucas Cassidy Crawford, "Breaking Ground on a Theory of Transgender Architecture," *Seattle Journal for Social Justice* 8, no. 2 (2010): 520.
9 Diana Agrest, *Architecture from without: Theoretical Framings for a Critical Practice* (Cambridge, Massachusetts [etc: MIT Press, 1991]:175.

are being excluded are not only the ones of women, but they also are the bodies of trans* people or any bodies outside of the norms of the cisgender heterosexual valid white men. If we keep in mind that Heteronormativity has been invented in the 19th century¹⁰ and that cisgender is a more recent creation, it shows that the way we define the norm is always evolving. Those norms are also exported outside of Europe through colonial processes.

This complex process of repression shows that architecture is, in a way, an archive of gender, and we can ask ourselves how transgender is already inherent and repressed by architecture.¹¹

In history, there are many examples of trans* people, from monks assigned a female identity at birth who then adopted a masculine social identity and presentation, to cross-dressing women in the Middle Ages and people arrested for wearing clothing of the opposite sex, all of which have been recorded by various historians.¹²

The link between colonialism and transphobia emerges strikingly. Because gender identities are strongly linked to culture, colonial regimes set out to destroy representations that did not fit into white standards. This repression of transphobia in Europe has by no means evolved linearly. However, one

10 Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction* (New York: Random House, 1978), 101.
11 Lucas Cassidy Crawford, "Breaking Ground on a Theory of Transgender Architecture," *Seattle Journal for Social Justice* 8, no. 2 (2010):523
12 Mallet, Clovis, *Les genres fluides: de Jeanne d'arc aux saints trans, oblique/s* (Paris, Les éditions arkhe, 2020):10.

of the moments that still have an impact on our identities is the long years of pathologisation that we have undergone. However, in 1991 Sandy Stone published *The Empire Strikes Back, a post-transsexual manifesto*, which paralleled the rise of queer thought with Teresa Lauretis and Sam Bourcier opening the doors to the liberation and the revolution¹³ of our identities and digging deep into new paths for trans* thought.

The interplay between history and trans* identities is marked by nuances and complexity. Thus the next section will start by a brief introduction on the matter. Then, analysis of two relatively contemporary historical figures will follow.

¹³ Madesta, Tal, *La fin des monstres, récit d'une trajectoire trans*, (Paris La Déferlante, 2023):63.

With iT
I become the death Dickinson feared
With iT
I'm a red admiral on this ship
And I raise
With infinite forms of coronation
I rule
Over my all my dead impersonations

'Cause I've got it
I'm a man now
I've got it
I'm a man now
And I won't let you steal it, I bought it for myself
I'm a man now (She lies, she lies)

I hate
The production work pulling my hair
Because
Their teeth should ravage a golden beard
I've lost
Some eyeless friends whose blood runs cold
When you people
In silence pretense tends to be old

'Cause I won
I'm a man now
'Cause I've got it
I am a man now
And I won't let you steal it, I bought it for myself
I'm a man now (She lies, she lies)
Oh lord!

She wants to be a man, a man
But she lies

She wants to be born again, again
But she'll lose
She draws her own crotch by herself
But she'll lose
Because it's a fake
It's a fake, it's a fake, it's a fake

No! I've got it
I'm a man now
Yes, I've got it
I am a man now
And there's nothing you can do to make me change my mind
I'm a man now (She lies, she lies)
Oh lord!

She's a man now
She's a man now
And there's nothing we can do to make her change her mind
She's a man now
She's a man now
She's a man now
And there's nothing we can do to make her change her mind
She's a man now
She's a man now
She's a man now
And there's nothing we can do to make her change her mind
She's a man now

Part 02

Part 02 - Bodies in time

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Bodies in time

When investigating history, we face important questions of comprehension and methodology. Moulton Mo raises some of these and tries to come up with a non binary approach to gender history. They bring up Laura Doan's query: How can we construct a history of sexuality when the individuals in question did not employ such a concept? Doan advocates for a critical approach to queer history that engages with the past on its own terms, acknowledging that imposing analytical categories, like sexuality, may significantly distort historical perspectives that did not rely on such classifications.

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This is not merely a concern about anachronistic language but rather a crucial undertaking to prevent contemporary categories from overshadowing past ways of understanding and potentially influencing future perspectives. This question also arise from my own concern to stop perpetuating white-cis-colonial methods when viewing history. The concept of Bottom historiography developed by Freeman is a good entry point to this complex problem. We should not acquire a conveyance of authority or tradition. Instead, we should undergo a transmission of receptivity, embracing a pleasurable openness to novel reinterpretations of the past and unforeseeable future possibilities.¹⁴ Rather than seeing history from above we should let it penetrate ourselves.

14 Elizabeth Freeman, "Time Binds, or, Erotohistoriography," *Social Text* 23, no. 3-4 (2005): 64.

Trans* architecture, a definition

Throughout this essay I am using some songs, lists or text and you can find here the right referencing:

Poem p.24-25

Gould, Xénia, . "Lather rinse repeat (hot guy dans un bar à mtl) " In Des fleurs comme moi. P.15. Sudbury: Éditions Prise de parole, 2023.

34 Song p.30-31

Chris, "it", Track 1 on Chaleur Humaine, because music, 02 June 2014, Soundcloud,

List p.42-51

"Trans Murder Monitoring, 2023," TvT (blog), November 13, 2023, <https://transrespect.org/en/trans-murder-monitoring-2023/>.

Text p.56-61

SANDY Stone, "The Empire Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto," Camera Obscura: Feminism, Culture, and Media Studies 10, no. 2 (May 1, 1992): 150–76.

Text p.70-81

SERANO, Julia. "trans woman manifesto" in "Whipping Girl: A Transsexual Woman on Sexism and the Scapegoating of Femininity." Ebook. Lesbian and Gay Studies. Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2007.

Dysphoric Bibliography

This Dysphoric Bibliography is also here to offer some of the references that I haven't put in my text but that have somehow sculpted my ideas through this semester.

From time to time I will also give some context to them.

Articles

35

BEGÜM Tuğlu. "Bodies (Re) Gained: Gender and Identity in Elif Shafak's *Pinhan* and Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*." International Journal of Languages, Literature and Linguistics, September 2016, 90–95.

My énoncé being very white and European-centred, it is an interesting article to speak about Orlando from another perspective.

BROWN, Elspeth H., and BEAM Myrl. "Toward an Ethos of Trans Care in Trans Oral History." The Oral History Review 49, no. 1 (January 2, 2022): 29–55.

BUTLER, Judith. "Why Is the Idea of 'Gender' Provoking Backlash the World Over?" The Guardian, October 23, 2021, sec. US news.

CASTRICUM, Simona. "When Program Is the Enemy of Function... Gender-Nonconforming Experiences of Architectural Space." Architecture and Culture 5, no. 3 (September 2, 2017): 371–81.

HARITAWORN Jin, KUNTSMAN Adi, and POSOCCO Silvia, eds. *Queer Necropolitics*. New York: Routledge, 2014.

HATFIELD, Joe Edward. "Moments of Shame in the Figural History of Trans Suicide." Cultural Studies 37, no. 6 (November 2, 2023): 813–45.

MUÑOZ, José Esteban, "Performing Desidentity" Multitudes, Volume 82, Issue 1, (January 2021):177 - 82

ROOKE, Alison. "Trans Youth, Science and Art: Creating (Trans) Gendered Space." *Gender, Place & Culture* 17, no. 5 (October 1, 2010): 655–72.

Books

36 BOURCIER, Sam. *Queer zones: la trilogie*. Paris: Éditions Amsterdam, 2021.

FAUSTO-STERLING, Anne. *Sex/Gender: Biology in a Social World*. The Routledge Series Integrating Science and Culture. New York: Routledge, 2012.

FAYE, Shon. *The transgender issue: an argument for justice*. London: United kingdom: Penguin random house UK, 2022.

FEINBERG, Leslie. *Transgender Liberation: A Movement Whose Time Has Come*. In *The Transgender Studies Reader*. Routledge, 2006.

FEINBERG, Leslie. *Transgender warriors: making history from joan of arc to Dennis Rodman*. (Boston, beacon press, 1996)

This is my favorite book of the selection, it is so great to read and to see all of these transgender lives!

FURMAN, Adam Nathaniel, and MARDELL, Joshua. *Queer Spaces: An Atlas of LGBTQ+ Places and Stories*. London: RIBA Publishing, 2022.

With the DRAG lab we organized some events regarding queer spaces in Lausanne and we had the opportunity to hold a book launch with the two editors. I think it's a very useful book to understand the limits of queer cartography.

HALBERSTAM, Jack. *In a Queer Time and Place, Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives*. New York: New York University press, 2005.

HALBERSTAM, Jack. *Trans*: A Quick and Quirky Account of Gender Variability*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2018.

I had the chance to participate in a collective reading of the introduction of the french translated version of this book. It was at la neo martine, a night in December 2023 in Lausanne and it really moved me.

RENDELL, Jane, PENNER, Barbara, and BORDEN, Iain, eds. *Gender Space Architecture: An Interdisciplinary Introduction*. London: Routledge, 2000.

SCOTT, Joan W. *Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis*. *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (1986): 1053–75.

SPENCER-HALL, Alicia, and GUTT Blake, eds. *Trans and Genderqueer Subjects in Medieval Hagiography*. Amsterdam University Press, 2021.

Mo argues that challenging our ways of understanding goes beyond simply acknowledging the otherness of the past. They rely on the insights from queer and trans* studies, emphasizing that engaging with history is an ongoing conversation with our contemporary context. According to Carolyn Dinshaw, our desires and concepts are integral to the interplay across time inherent in historical writing. Molton Mo embraces a non-binary methodology, proposing that we do not need to opt for a strict dichotomy between past and present. Instead, we can approach our analytical categories with a degree of flexibility, creating room for a more comprehensive understanding of ways of being in both the past and the future.¹⁵

I would argue that studying transness in any field is crucial. For example, Sargan advocates for the development of a trans* codicology¹⁶ within the trans* community, particularly for individuals like himself deeply immersed in archival research and seeking intellectual sustenance. By proposing an approach to trans* book history that perceives trans* identity within the records, not just imposed upon them, and by acknowledging that knowledge is inherently embedded within the affective body, trans* codicology broadens the horizons of historicizing trans* experiences. This approach not only recognizes but also values the emotional and psychological needs of those engaged in the practice.

15 Mo Moulton, "'Both Your Sexes': A Non-Binary Approach to Gender History, Trans Studies and the Making of the Self in Modern Britain," *History Workshop Journal* 95 (June 23, 2023): 77.
16 The study of manuscripts and their interrelationships.

The same logic could be applied in architecture. As individuals in the trans* community who are related to the practice or the creation of space, we should immerse ourselves in the research of trans* theory/history of architecture.

Returning to what Sargan is arguing, this immersion emphasizes the importance of understanding emotional responses to the material form as a transtemporal force, thus offering a method to contemplate and navigate through systemic gaps in written records. In championing this methodology, trans* codicology enables a more comprehensive exploration of trans* experiences, ensuring that the emotional dimensions and psychic needs of researchers are not only acknowledged but also integrated into the historical narrative.¹⁷

The importance of trans* representation in the history of architecture follows the same lines that Sargan is building. If the narration of my essay is built upon trans* bodies rather than themes or time it is because I profoundly believe that recognizing trans* individuals and linking their experience of space through a sensitive lens is key to finding what a trans* architecture could look like.

17 Sargan, J. D. "What Could a Trans Book History Look Like? Toward Trans Codicology" *Criticism* 64, no.3-4 (2022) : 571-86

Brandon Teena

In the annals of transgender activism during the burgeoning wave, a dark chapter unfolded just outside Falls City, Nebraska, on December 31, 1993. It marked the grim crescendo of a narrative that began with the murder of Brandon Teena. Brandon, a young trans man seeking solace from a tumultuous past in Omaha, found himself entangled in a tragic web of deceit and violence in the rural expanses of Falls City.

As the first whispers of Brandon's existence reached the public, his life became a focal point for various media ventures. These ranged from the sensational true crime paperback «All She Wanted» by Aphrodite Jones to the immersive online multimedia installation «Brandon,» commissioned by the Guggenheim. The documentary «The Brandon Teena Story» and the feature film «Boys Don't Cry,» featuring Hilary Swank's award-winning portrayal of Brandon, further etched this chilling saga into public consciousness.¹⁸

Brandon's journey, an attempt to escape an

¹⁸ Susan Stryker, *Transgender History, Seal Studies* (Berkeley, CA: Seal Press : Distributed by Publishers Group West, 2008).

Trans* architecture, a definition

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Tiffany Banks
 Karla Santos
 Tante Butet
 Naomi Cabral
 Alexia Silva De Santana
 Bianca Carvalho Gonçalves
 Natasha
 Joyeey Akter Nagini
 Mayté Mejía
 Juraj Vankulic
 Daniely Medeiros Gonçalves
 Ester da Silva
 Bárbara Rafaela
 Daniella Santos («Danny»)
 Melissa Núñez
 Victória Jackson
 Britney Hernández Vargas
 Jessica Zoe («Yulia»)
 Samantha Nicole Quirino
 Evelyn Sampaio De Moraes
 Liz Hernandez
 Jessica «Jessy» Silva
 Kauana Vasconcelos
 Carla Pereira
 Kimberly Fernanda Mendoza Sevilha
 Renata Nicole Duarte Reyes
 Keyti Sayuri Rodríguez Vásquez
 Martha Torres Lomeli
 Nazma Akhtar
 Chepina Arteaga Morante
 Jerry Rodrigues
 Kelly Romero Hernandez
 Karen Sánchez Alvarez
 Maiken/Dani Cooper
 Emma Borhanian

Reported trans* people murdered in the world from october 2022 to septembre 2023

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J. Royos
 Marta Castaña Torres
 Bruninha da Silva
 Daniel Davis Aston
 Kelly Loving
 Rihanna Rodrigues Dos Santos
 Brenda
 O. E. B. Pineda
 Diamond Jackson-McDonald
 Olvin Osório Doroteo
 Ángela María Bernal Ospina
 Ana Paula Dos Santos
 Adriana Santos
 Gabriela
 Jossi Córdova Macas
 Destiny Howard
 Jaqueline Fyoruti
 Claudia Díaz Pérez
 Endriely Prestes Aguiar
 Mar'Quis 'MJ' Jackson
 Ximena Madrid Flores
 W. de Oliveira Rodrigues
 Ariana Díaz Chávez
 Caelee Love-Light
 Lully Pimentel
 Kamilla Nogueira / Camila De Souza
 Jady
 Aaiyza
 Sheyla
 Patricia Ramírez
 Brauny Alcántara
 Kauany Bacelar
 Elaine Englis
 Liza Kistauri
 Ecem Seçkin

Trans* architecture, a definition

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Tailla Ariany Santos
 T. L. de Sousa
 Jasmine «Star» Mack
 K. B. Misador
 Rayca Pereira De Jesus / Rayka Pereira
 Samantha Fuentes
 Tiana Pereira de Souza
 Victor
 Minal
 Fran Jungers Neto
 KC Johnson
 Sofia Agustina Bravo
 Pinki
 Stheffany Ashley da Silva («Eyshila») Neves
 Denisse Cabaly
 María José Torres Astros
 Tortugita
 Dani Millán
 La Gata
 Erika Quintana Ávalos
 Paris Beristain Vergara Valério
 María Jose Rivera Rivera
 Unique Banks
 Ale Castillo Limache
 Vera Lúcia Lopes Siqueira («Julia Cristina»)
 Franchesca Gomez
 Rafaela Moraes Izaias
 Samantha Campana
 Greyci Kelly
 Paris Alexsandry
 Nety Cosme
 Zachee Imanitwitaho
 Z. A.
 Sandra
 Lelé

Reported trans* people murdered in the world from october 2022 to septembre 2023

45

Aithana Camila Azul Vargas Caicedo
 Aylla Sofia
 Brianna Ghey
 La Pájara
 Luara De Souza Machado
 Michelle Jesús P. C. «Jaki»
 Mishi
 Priscila Aguado Hutaco
 Sofia Gonçalves De Oliveira
 Ruby Ferrer
 Rayane Cássia Bittencourt Nogueira
 Camila Sánchez
 Cataleya
 Andrea Lopez
 Mirela
 Katia
 Mahnoor
 Sabrina Medeiros
 Shakira
 Sana
 Cashay Henderson
 Shaina Vanessa Pretel Gómez
 Thalyta Gabriely Alves Sousa
 Lorena Fox
 Violeta Navarrete
 Lichi
 Paris Marchant Dioses
 W. P. da Silva Souza
 Juana Mena Hernández
 Negão
 Amanda Rodrigues Ribeiro
 Jordana
 Caju
 Joyce Kelly
 Jenny

Trans* architecture, a definition

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Renna Rodrigues / Rena de Moura
 Alondra Chacon Avila
 Alya
 Joseline
 Keyly Daniela Macias Cortés
 Laila
 Camila La Crespa
 Michele Souza
 Mala
 Maria Fernanda Hilton
 Mateo Briones Alvarado
 Luna Ramírez Soto
 Tasyiah Woodland («Siyah»)
 Rebeka Vendaval
 Victoria Pereira
 Kenia
 Kethlyn da Silva Nascimento
 Mónica Jiménez Belmont
 Karla Santos
 Brigitte
 La Pemona
 Cecibel «Ceci»
 Tania Viviana Sandoval Ramírez
 Jordana Cortez
 Sofia Inés Fernández
 Ariel Mendoza
 Ashley Burton
 Eduarda Emanuelly
 Bruna Brasil
 Mimi Pereira da Silva Filho
 Rasheeda Williams («Koko Da Doll»)
 Tati Guzmán
 Lina Franco
 La Divina / La Johan
 Stephany Villar

Reported trans* people murdered in the world from october 2022 to septembre 2023

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Banko Paso/Banko Brown
 LaKendra Andrews
 Kauanne
 Bebo
 Karina Guevara
 Jayden Miller
 L. F. Rodríguez Mier
 Samantha
 Kamrany
 Maryori Sousa
 Teffy Balizari
 Dania Sharith Polo Solórzano
 Shakira
 Sheyla Cabezas Reyes
 Ome Gandhi
 Natasha
 Yanina Martinez
 Jenny
 Sarita Pinheiro de Oliveira
 Raynanda Mineiro
 Stephany Jama Cotto
 Vitória Damas
 Luisa Fernanda Negrete
 Giyo Castillo
 La China
 Ashia Davis
 Chiquita
 Luisa Fernanda Parra
 Ramona Torres da Silva
 Luna Bravo
 Michelly / Michely Moreira
 Lilia / Lila
 Samira Lescar
 Emily Isabel Colstt
 Valentina Moran («Tina»)

Trans* architecture, a definition

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Dolly
 Ivanna Divina Jhons
 Joana Smith / Joanna Smitt
 Juiliana Chávez Flores
 Sofia
 Flávia Herrera Rodríguez
 Pamela
 Chanell Perez Ortiz («Uvita»)
 Patty
 Khushi
 Dustu
 Jacob Williamson
 July
 Joselyn Lino
 Hulya Sadighova
 Liliana Veroni («La Chaqueña»)
 Fede
 Natália González Santiago
 Fernielle Mary Mora
 Noa Milivojev
 Francheska Rivas
 Katherine Massiel Rivera («Julia»)
 Anna Ivankova
 Grazele Junqueiro
 Yormary
 Bianca Ferreira da Rocha («Bia»)
 Thyalla dos Santos
 Franklin Pabón Camacho
 R. L. da Silva Júnior
 Lucas Peres
 Cláudia da Costa
 Camdyn Rider
 Julia Nicolý Moreira da Silva
 Nicole
 Guendi/ Wendy

Reported trans* people murdered in the world from october 2022 to septembre 2023

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Bella
 Derin S.
 Karina Gómez
 DéVonnie J'Rae Johnson
 J. Pamudulan
 Consejito
 Susan Fernández
 Luis Ángel Díaz Castro
 Marimar Kim
 Jordana Borbor Cruz («Itaty»)
 Natasha
 Luciana Sandoval
 Lovely Page
 J. Amihan
 Adriana
 Caio Linhares
 Shiirya / Shyriia
 Tiago da Silva
 Valentina De Paz
 Raja Patra
 Rath Kisan
 Cleo Quinteros Hernández
 Éber Albarrán («Ever»)
 Juriana Sison Orario
 M. Rosa Mamauag
 Babul Mridha
 Alexa Andreevna Sokova
 Bre'Asia Bankz
 Carolina 'Carol' Pereira
 Thallita Costa
 Campanilla
 Samara Cibebe Ferreira Gomes
 Eloise Andrade
 Iasmim Santos Silva
 YOKO

Trans* architecture, a definition

Anna Luisa Pantaleão
Laiq
Aysel
Soraya Álvarez
Daniele «Dani» Soares
Noor Alsaffar («Noor BM»)
Sherlyn Marjorie
Michelle
Neelu
Armin

Reported trans* people murdered in the world from october 2022 to septembre 2023

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unhappy home life, took him to Falls City, where he embarked on a romantic relationship with a young woman and created a friendship with some of her friends, John Lotter and Marvin Thomas Nissen among them. The tragedy began when, after committing a minor offense, Brandon was detained in a female cellblock. The revelation about Brandon's biological attributes ultimately led to brutal events inflicted by the men. Despite Brandon reporting the sexual assault to the county sheriff, justice remained elusive.

The tragic denouement unfolded a few days later at a friend's rented farmhouse on New Year's Eve. There, Nissen and Lotter perpetrated a cold-blooded act, taking not only Brandon's life but also the lives of two other young individuals present in the house. The legal aftermath saw Lotter sentenced to death, while Nissen faced a lifetime of imprisonment without the possibility of parole.

The Falls City tragedy, crystallized through various media lenses, serves as a haunting reminder of the complexities and challenges faced by individuals navigating the uncharted territories of gender identity, as well as the grim consequences that can unfold when prejudice and violence intersect.¹⁹ Lucas C. Crawford pointed out that «If it wasn't obvious why institutional sex-segregated

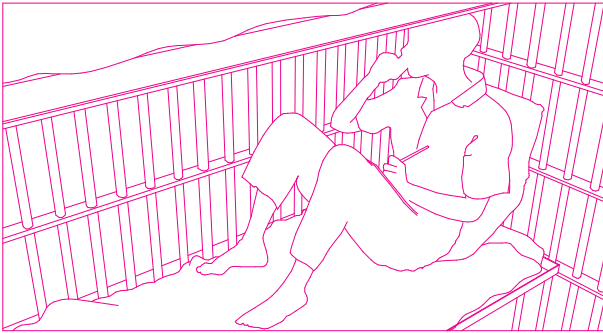
architectures (from public washrooms to shelters) were dangerous for transgender people before 1993, it should have become obvious thereafter.»²⁰

Brandon Teena's body and the prison cell he occupied were both involved in a reciprocal process of inscription. In this context, the authority of the jail cell to label Brandon as «woman» relies on the subtle gender norms ingrained in buildings, shaped by centuries of architectural tradition and collective memory. In the framework of Derrida's ideas²¹, the prison space harks back to the «commencement» of Brandon Teena's life and identity, attempting to establish an «original» gender upon which the «commands» of the law can be imposed. Upon Brandon's release from prison and subsequent rape and murder, we observe, in a manner akin to Foucault's concept, that a panopticon not only confines but also generates its own outlaws. This illustrates one way in which buildings function as archives, revealing our culture's inclination to trace back, often anonymously, to origins, including presumed origins of gender. This dragging back produced by architecture is shown in the movie by Kimberly Peirce. Soon after Brandon left the prison he was labelled as a woman by John and Nissen who violently decided to check his genitals in his girlfriend's house bathroom.

19 Susan Stryker, *Transgender History, Seal Studies* (Berkeley, CA: Seal Press : Distributed by Publishers Group West, 2008) Xxx.

20 Lucas Cassidy Crawford, "Breaking Ground on a Theory of Transgender Architecture," *Seattle Journal for Social Justice* 8, no. 2 (2010): 516

21 Ibid. 518.



Buildings have the potential to transform into virtual archives of emotions, where the collective memories and emotional encounters people share with specific architectural elements shape a location as significantly as any other factor.²² In essence, navigating through certain spaces prompts us to access our personal reservoirs of emotional experiences. This architectural storage of emotions represents another perspective on how buildings generate emotional archives for those who inhabit them.

This question of the archive is also present when thinking about transgender's bodies. Crawford argues that our bodies should be lived as archives rather than homes.²³ In fact, trans* bodies serve as living archives, actively preserving the potential to transcend binary gender norms. Simultaneously, these bodies unintentionally document the violence perpetuated by our culture against those who endeavour to challenge and move beyond such norms. This interpretation of the archive recognizes the inherent impossibility of achieving a complete return to an original state—no surgery or bodily alteration can restore us to our «commencement» or a definitive state of selfhood. Importantly, it is precisely this unattainability that propels an individual's unquenchable desire to engage with the archive nevertheless. All individuals might

22 Lucas Cassidy Crawford, "Breaking Ground on a Theory of Transgender Architecture," *Seattle Journal for Social Justice* 8, no. 2 (2010): 519

23 *Ibid.* 533

To attempt to occupy a place as speaking subject within the traditional gender frame is to become complicit in the discourse which one wishes to deconstruct. Rather, we can seize upon the textual violence inscribed in the transsexual body and turn it into a reconstructive force. Let me suggest a more familiar example. Judith Butler points out that the lesbian categories of "butch" and "femme" are not simple assimilations of lesbianism back into the terms of heterosexuality. Rather, Butler introduces the concept of *cultural intelligibility*, and suggests that the contextualized and resignified "masculinity" of the butch, seen against a culturally intelligible "female" body, invokes a dissonance that both generates a sexual tension and constitutes the object of desire. She points out that this way of thinking about gendered objects of desire admits of much greater complexity than the example suggests. The lesbian butch or femme both recall the heterosexual scene but simultaneously displace it. The idea that butch and femme are "replicas" or "copies" of heterosexual exchange underestimates the erotic power of their internal dissonance. [44] In the case of the transsexual, the varieties

[...]take advantage of the dissonances created by such a juxtaposition to fragment and reconstitute the elements of gender in new and unexpected geometries.

of performative gender, seen against a culturally intelligible gendered body *which is itself a medically constituted textual violence*, generate new and unpredictable dissonances which implicate entire spectra of desire. In the transsexual as text we may find the potential to map the refigured body onto conventional gender discourse and thereby disrupt it, to take advantage of the dissonances created by such a juxtaposition to fragment and reconstitute the elements of gender in new and unexpected geometries. I suggest we start by taking Raymond's accusation that "transsexuals divide women" beyond itself, and turn it into a productive force to multiplicatively divide the old binary discourses of gender—as well as Raymond's own monistic discourse. To foreground the practices of inscription

and reading which are part of this deliberate invocation of dissonance, I suggest constituting transsexuals not as a class or problematic "third gender", but rather as a *genre*—a set of embodied texts whose potential for productive disruption of structured sexualities and spectra of desire has yet to be explored.

In order to effect this, the genre of visible transsexuals must grow by recruiting members from the class of invisible ones, from those who have disappeared into their "plausible histories". The most critical thing a transsexual can do, the thing that *constitutes* success, is to "pass." [45] Passing means to live successfully in the gender of choice, to be accepted as a "natural" member of that gender. Passing means the denial of mixture. One and the same with passing is effacement of the prior gender role, or the construction of a plausible history. Considering that most transsexuals choose reassignment in their third or fourth decade, this means erasing a considerable portion of their personal experience. It is my contention that this process, in which both the transsexual and the medicolegal/psychological establishment are complicit, forecloses the possibility of a life grounded in the *intertextual* possibilities of the transsexual body.

To negotiate the troubling and productive multiple permeabilities of boundary and subject position that intertextuality implies, we must begin to rearticulate the foundational language by which both sexuality and transsexuality are described. For example, neither the investigators nor the transsexuals have taken the step of problematizing "wrong body" as an adequate descriptive category. In fact "wrong body" has come, virtually by default, to *define* the syndrome. [46]

It is quite understandable, I think, that a phrase whose lexicality suggests the phallogocentric, binary character of gender differentiation should be examined with deepest suspicion. So long as we, whether academics, clinicians, or transsexuals, ontologize both sexuality and transsexuality in this way, we have foreclosed

the possibility of analyzing desire and motivational complexity in a manner which adequately describes the multiple contradictions of individual lived experience. We need a deeper analytical language for transsexual theory, one which allows for the sorts of ambiguities and polyvocalities which have already so productively informed and enriched feminist theory.

Judith Shapiro points out that "To those...who might be inclined to diagnose the transsexual's focus on the genitals as obsessive or fetishistic, the response is that they are, in fact, simply conforming to *their culture's* criteria for gender assignment" [emphasis mine]. This statement points to deeper workings, to hidden discourses and experiential pluralities within the transsexual monolith. They are not yet clinically or academically visible, and with good reason. For example, in pursuit of differential diagnosis a question sometimes asked of a prospective transsexual is "Suppose that you could be a man [or woman] in every way except for your genitals; would you be content?" There are several possible answers, but only one is clinically correct. [47]

Small wonder, then, that so much of these discourses revolves around the phrase "wrong body". Under the binary phallocratic founding myth by which Western bodies and subjects are authorized, only one body per gendered subject is "right". All other bodies are wrong.

As clinicians and transsexuals continue to face off across the diagnostic battlefield which this scenario suggests, the transsexuals for whom gender identity is something different from *and perhaps irrelevant* to physical genitalia are occulted by those for whom the power of the medical/psychological establishments, and their ability to act as gatekeepers for cultural norms, is the final authority for what counts as a culturally intelligible body. This is a treacherous area, and were the silenced groups to achieve voice we might well find, as feminist theorists have claimed, that the identities of individual, embodied subjects were far less implicated in physical

norms, and far more diversely spread across a rich and complex structuration of identity and desire, than it is now possible to express. [48]

And yet in even the best of the current debates, the standard mode is one of relentless totalization. Consider the most perspicuous example in this paper, Raymond's stunning "All transsexuals rape women's bodies" [what if she had said, e.g., "all blacks rape women's bodies"]: For all its egregious and inexcusable bigotry, the language of her book is only marginally less totalizing than Gary Kates' "transsexuals... take on an exaggerated and stereotypical female role", or Ann Bolin's "transsexuals try to forget their male history". Both Kates' and Bolin's studies are in most respects excellent work, and were published in the same collection as an earlier version of this essay;[49] but still there are no subjects in these discourses, only homogenized, totalized objects-- fractally replicating earlier histories of minority discourses in the large. So when I speak the forgotten word, it will perhaps wake memories of other debates. The word is *some*.

Transsexuals who pass seem able to ignore the fact that by creating totalized, monistic identities, forgoing physical and subjective intertextuality, they have foreclosed the possibility of authentic relationships. Under the principle of passing, denying the destabilizing power of being "read", relationships begin as lies--and

Under the principle of passing, denying the destabilizing power of being "read", relationships begin as lies...

passing, of course, is not an activity restricted to transsexuals. This is familiar to the person of color whose skin is light enough to pass as white, or to the closet gay or lesbian... or to anyone who has chosen invisibility as an imperfect

solution to personal dissonance. Essentially I am rearticulating one of the arguments for solidarity which has been developed by gays, lesbians and people of color. The comparison extends

further. To deconstruct the necessity for passing implies that transsexuals must take responsibility for *all* of their history, to begin to rearticulate their lives not as a series of erasures in the service of a species of feminism conceived from within a traditional frame, but as a political action begun by reappropriating difference and reclaiming the power of the refigured and reinscribed body. The disruptions of the old patterns of desire that the multiple dissonances of the transsexual body imply produce not an irreducible alterity but a *myriad* of alterities, whose unanticipated juxtapositions hold what Donna Haraway has called the promises of monsters-- physicalities of constantly shifting figure and ground that exceed the frame of any possible representation. [50]

The essence of transsexualism is the act of passing. A transsexual who passes is obeying the Derridean imperative: "Genres are not to be mixed. I will not mix genres." [51] I could not ask a transsexual for anything more inconceivable than to forgo passing, to be consciously "read", to read oneself aloud--and by this troubling and productive reading, to begin to *write oneself* into the discourses by which one has been written--in effect, then, to become a (look out--dare I say it again?) posttranssexual. [52]

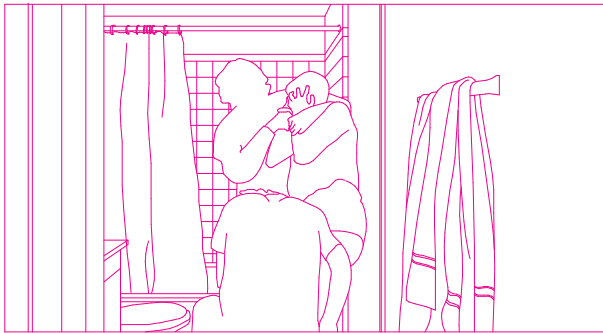
Still, transsexuals know that silence can be an extremely high price to pay for acceptance. I want to speak directly to the brothers and sisters who may read/"read" this and say: I ask all of us to use the strength which brought us through the effort of restructuring identity, and which has also helped us to live in silence and denial, for a revisioning of our lives. I know you feel that most of the work is behind you and that the price of invisibility is not great. But, although *individual* change is the foundation of all things, it is not the end of all things. Perhaps it's time to begin laying the groundwork for the next transformation.

...to begin to rearticulate their lives not as a series of erasures [...], but as a political action ...

Notes:

44. Judith Butler, 1990. "Gender Trouble". New York: Routledge
45. The opposite of passing, being read, provocatively invokes the inscription practices to which I have referred.
46. I am suggesting a starting point, but it is necessary to go much further. We will have to question not only how body is defined in these discourses, but to more critically examine who gets to say what "body" means.
47. In case the reader is unsure, let me supply the clinically correct answer: "No".
48. It is useful as well as gratifying to note that since the first version of this essay appeared in 1991, several coalition groups, one of which is appropriately named Transgendered Nation, have begun actively working to bring the rich diversity within transgendered communities to public attention. Their action at the 1993 conference of the American Psychological Association, which was debating the appropriateness of continuing to include transsexuality in the next edition of the official diagnostic manual (DSM), appeared brave and timely. Of course, several arrests (of transgendered demonstrators, not psychologists) ensued.
49. These essays appeared in Kristina Straub and Julia Epstein (eds.), 1991: "Body Guards: The Cultural Politics of Gender Ambiguity". New York: Routledge.
50. For an elaboration of this concept cf. Donna Haraway, 1990, "The Promises Of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others", in Paula Treichler, Cary Nelson, and Larry Grossberg [eds.]: Cultural Studies.
51. Jacques Derrida, 1980. La Loi Du Genre/The Law Of Genre (trans. Avital Ronell). In Glyph 7:176 (French) [176]; 202 (English) [202].
51. I also call attention to Gloria Anzaldúa's theory of the Mestiza, an illegible subject living in the borderlands between cultures, capable of partial speech in each but always only partially intelligible to each. Working against the grain of this position, Anzaldúa's "new Mestiza" attempts to overcome illegibility partly by seizing control of speech and inscription and by writing herself into the discourse. The stunning "Borderlands" is a case in point; cf. Gloria Anzaldúa, 1987, Borderlands/ La Frontera: The New Mestiza. San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute.

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be—or have the potential to be—affected by a more profound affliction than that posed by the coherent trans* subject of identity politics: a potent gender fever.²⁴ I believe that the idea of refusing the narrative of making our bodies home is key to finding our unranians identities. It does not mean that we need to suffer our whole life or that we will never really be ourselves, it shows us that our identities are always developing and changing and that being trans* might be embracing this state of perpetual motion. The way architecture works as an archive and the violence with which it always tries to take trans* bodies back to an «original» form is precisely what should change.

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By going further and using Crawford's idea of the body as an archive, we can go beyond the vision of architecture as a technology of gender assignment to open up our horizons. Let's go beyond the discourse of public toilets as the gravity center of trans* bodies in architecture.

The idea, developed by Sandy Stone in her post-transsexual manifesto, that trans* bodies should use passing not as a goal but as a card in their games is one of the doors through which we can slip. Trans* bodies develop strategies for subverting the established order, and perhaps trans* architecture is an architecture that listens to bodies and that lets desires penetrate it, a bottom architecture.

24 Lucas Cassidy Crawford, "Breaking Ground on a Theory of Transgender Architecture," *Seattle Journal for Social Justice* 8, no. 2 (2010): 534

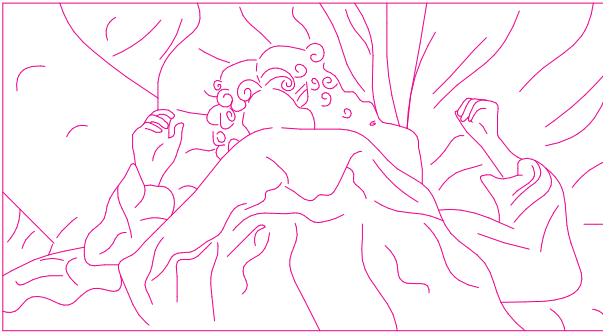
Orlando

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When questioning myself on the definition of trans* architecture it is not a surprise that the figure of Orlando appears. Orlando was born in the book «Orlando: A Biography» by Virginia Woolf, published in 1928. It is a unique and imaginative novel spanning four centuries, exploring identity, gender, and the passage of time. The story follows Orlando, an Elizabethan nobleman turned woman, navigating through centuries, encountering historical figures, and witnessing societal changes. Woolf's narrative blends satire and celebration of gender roles, prompting reflections on identity constraints imposed by societal norms.

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Orlando's figure will later on be used in a movie by Sally Potter in 1992 and in a more recent one by Paul Preciado in 2023. In spite of the ultimate influence of heteronormative legal norms, Orlando presents a glimpse into the potentialities of gender embodiment. Woolf's exploration of the simultaneous existence of masculinity and femininity, a theme frequently discussed by the author, manifests in her fifth novel in a manner that

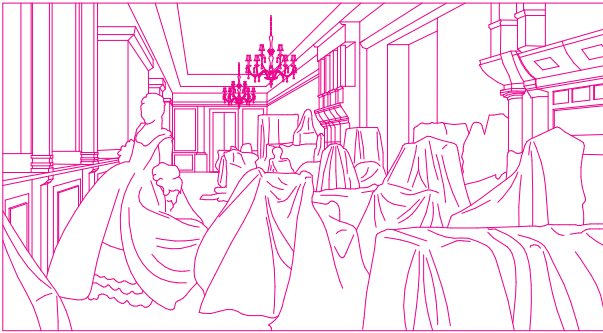


might have surpassed her own initial understanding. When Woolf's narrative is examined alongside other fictional and autobiographical trans* narratives, it becomes evident that there is a persistent yearning to delve into alternative temporalities and embodiments.

The figure of Orlando is used in my essay and in Preciado's movie because it becomes crucial to actively construct new, hybrid pathways that allow individuals to navigate their unique gender embodiment and temporal progression. Failing to consciously challenge normative expectations related to gender and temporality, and not replacing them with a system accommodating multiplicity, is a disservice to the trans* and other non-normative communities. By standing idle, we inadvertently contribute to the manipulation and erasure of queer history and embodiment through the actions of corrupted, colonial power structures. Therefore, there is a pressing need for intentional efforts to subvert these normative frameworks and create a more inclusive space that respects and validates the diverse experiences within trans* and non-normative communities.²⁵

I investigate the figure of Orlando, following Lucas Crawford's ideas. In the context of «Orlando: A Biography,» transgender are described as having

²⁵ Morgan Danielle Beers et al., "Orlando Had Become a Woman": Trans Embodiment and Temporality in Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*, 2020, 9.



heightened capacity for empathy.²⁶ The text proposes that empathy, primarily, is a sentiment that challenges our preconceived notions of space; the empathetic individual extends themselves into an entity where their original presence is absent. The empathy needed to detach the human subject from its own self involves projecting or sensing it «into» something that has not yet come into existence. Achieving such projections inherently involves a non-conventional connection to both the future and the past, as one must be capable of feeling an identity that currently lacks a reference point.²⁷ Therefore speaking about empathy is also speaking about the transtemporality and its relation to self-identity. *Orlando: A Biography* reinstates the queer dimensions of time as a sensed phenomenon, not merely an abstractly measured one. The capacity to perceive time not as a straightforward progression but as a process of unpredictable transformation allows for the potential to be emotionally moved and undergo change.²⁸ This relationship between transness and time is also the link between trans* individuals. Transgender identities are timeless, no matter the complexity of their definitions.

When «time» is transformed into a «body,» it reverts to being three-dimensional, tangible, and dynamic. Furthermore, it acquires a sentient quality and becomes something subject to movement. An

²⁶ Lucas Crawford, *Transgender Architectonics: The Shape of Change in Modernist Space*, Hardcover (New York: Routledge, 2016), 88

²⁷ *Ibid.* 92

²⁸ *Ibid.* 93

THIS MANIFESTO CALLS FOR the end of the scapegoating, deriding, and dehumanizing of trans women everywhere. For the purposes of this manifesto, trans woman is defined as any person who was assigned a male sex at birth, but who identifies as and/or lives as a woman. No qualifications should be placed on the term “trans woman” based on a person’s ability to “pass” as female, her hormone levels, or the state of her genitals—after all, it is downright sexist to reduce any woman (trans or otherwise) down to her mere body parts or to require her to live up to certain societally dictated ideals regarding appearance.

Perhaps no sexual minority is more maligned or misunderstood than trans women. As a group, we have been systematically pathologized by the medical and psychological establishment, sensationalized and ridiculed by the media, marginalized by mainstream lesbian and gay organizations, dismissed by certain segments of the feminist community, and, in too many instances, been made the victims of violence at the hands of men who feel that we somehow threaten their masculinity and heterosexuality. Rather than being given the opportunity to speak for ourselves on the very issues that affect our own lives, trans women are instead treated more like research subjects: Others place us under their microscopes, dissect our lives, and assign motivations and desires to us that validate their own theories and agendas regarding gender and sexuality.

Trans women are so ridiculed and despised because we are uniquely positioned at the intersection of multiple binary gender-based forms of prejudice: transphobia, cissexism, and misogyny.

Transphobia is an irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against people whose gendered identities, appearances, or behaviors deviate from societal norms. In much the same way that homophobic people are often driven by their own repressed homosexual tendencies, transphobia is first and foremost an

expression of one’s own insecurity about having to live up to cultural gender ideals. The fact that transphobia is so rampant in our society reflects the reality that we place an extraordinary amount of pressure on individuals to conform to all of the expectations, restrictions, assumptions, and privileges associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.

While all transgender people experience transphobia, transsexuals additionally experience a related (albeit distinct) form of prejudice: cissexism, which is the belief that transsexuals’ identified genders are inferior to, or less authentic than, those of cissexuals (i.e., people who are not transsexual and who have only ever experienced their subconscious and physical sexes as being aligned). The most common expression of cissexism occurs when people attempt to deny the transsexual the basic privileges that are associated with the trans person’s self-identified gender. Common examples include purposeful misuse of pronouns or insisting that the trans person use a different public restroom. The justification for this denial is generally founded on the assumption that the trans person’s gender is not authentic because it does not correlate with the sex they were assigned at birth. In making this assumption, cissexists attempt to create an artificial hierarchy. By insisting that

By insisting that the trans person’s gender is “fake,” they attempt to validate their own gender as “real” or “natural.”

the trans person’s gender is “fake,” they attempt to validate their own gender as “real” or “natural.” This sort of thinking is extraordinarily naive, as it denies a basic truth: We make assumptions every day about

other people’s genders without ever seeing their birth certificates, their chromosomes, their genitals, their reproductive systems, their childhood socialization, or their legal sex. There is no such thing as a “real” gender; there is only the gender we experience ourselves as and the gender we perceive others to be.

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Oppositional sexists attempt to punish or dismiss those of us who fall outside of gender or sexual norms because our existence threatens the idea that women and men are “opposite” sexes.

While often different in practice, cissexism, transphobia, and homophobia are all rooted in oppositional sexism, which is the belief

that female and male are rigid, mutually exclusive categories, each possessing a unique and nonoverlapping set of attributes, aptitudes, abilities, and desires. Oppositional sexists attempt to punish or dismiss those of us who fall outside of gender or sexual norms because our existence threatens the idea that women and men are “opposite”

sexes. This explains why bisexuals, lesbians, gays, transsexuals, and other transgender people—who may experience their genders and sexualities in very different ways—are so often confused or lumped into the same category (i.e., queer) by society at large. Our natural inclinations to be attracted to the same sex, to identify as the other sex, and/or to express ourselves in ways typically associated with the other sex blur the boundaries required to maintain the male-centered gender hierarchy that exists in our culture today.

In addition to the rigid, mutually exclusive gender categories established by oppositional sexism, the other requirement for maintaining a malecentered gender hierarchy is to enforce traditional sexism—the belief that maleness and masculinity are superior to femaleness and femininity. Traditional and oppositional sexism work hand in hand to ensure that those who are masculine have power over those who are feminine, and that only those born male will be seen as authentically masculine. For the purposes of this manifesto, the word misogyny will be used to describe this tendency to dismiss and deride femaleness and femininity.

Just as all transgender people experience transphobia and cissexism to differing extents (depending on how often, obvious,

or out we are as transgender), we experience misogyny to differing extents too. This is most evident in the fact that, while there are many different types of transgender people, our society tends to single out trans women and others on the male-to-female (MTF) spectrum for attention and ridicule. This is not merely because we transgress binary gender norms per se, but because we, by necessity, embrace our own femaleness and femininity. Indeed, more often than not it is our expressions of femininity and our desire

This is not merely because we transgress binary gender norms per se, but because we, by necessity, embrace our own femaleness and femininity.

to be female that become sensationalized, sexualized, and trivialized by others. While trans people on the female-to-male (FTM) spectrum face discrimination for breaking gender norms (i.e., oppositional sexism), their expressions of maleness or masculinity themselves are not targeted for ridicule—to do so would require one to question masculinity itself.

When a trans person is ridiculed or dismissed not merely for failing to live up to gender norms, but for their expressions of femaleness or femininity, they become the victims of a specific form of discrimination: transmisogyny. When the majority of jokes made at the expense of trans people center on “men wearing dresses” or “men who want their penises cut off,” that is not transphobia—it is trans-misogyny. When the majority of violence and sexual assaults committed against trans people is directed at trans women, that is not transphobia—it is trans-misogyny. [1] When it’s okay for women to wear “men’s” clothing, but when men who wear “women’s” clothing can be diagnosed with the psychological disorder transvestic fetishism, that is not transphobia—it is trans-misogyny. [2] When women’s or lesbian organizations and events open their doors to trans men but not trans women, that is not transphobia—it is trans-misogyny. [3]

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In a male-centered gender hierarchy, where it is assumed that men are better than women and that masculinity is superior to femininity, there is no greater perceived threat than the existence of trans women, who despite being born male and inheriting male privilege “choose” to be female instead. By embracing our own femaleness and femininity, we, in a sense, cast a shadow of doubt over the supposed supremacy of maleness and masculinity. In order to lessen the threat we pose to the male-centered gender hierarchy, our culture (primarily via the media) uses every tactic in its arsenal of traditional sexism to dismiss us:

1. The media hyperfeminizes us by accompanying stories about trans women with pictures of us putting on makeup, dresses, and highheeled shoes in an attempt to highlight the supposed “frivolous” nature of our femaleness, or by portraying trans women as having derogatory feminine-associated character traits such as being weak, confused, passive, or mousy.

2. The media hypersexualizes us by creating the impression that most trans women are sex workers or sexual deceivers, and by asserting that we transition for primarily sexual reasons (e.g., to prey on innocent straight men or to fulfill some kind of bizarre sex fantasy). Such depictions not only belittle trans women’s motives for transitioning, but implicitly suggest that women as a whole have no worth beyond their ability to be sexualized.

3. The media objectifies our bodies by sensationalizing sex reassignment surgery and openly discussing our “man-made vaginas” without any of the discretion that normally accompanies discussions about genitals. Further, those of us who have not had surgery are constantly being reduced to our body parts, whether by the creators of tranny porn who overemphasize and exaggerate our penises (thus distorting trans women into “she-males” and “chicks with dicks”) or by other people who have been so brainwashed by phallocentrism that they believe that the mere presence of a penis can trump the femaleness of our identities, our personalities, and the rest of our bodies.

Because anti-trans discrimination is steeped in traditional sexism, it is not simply enough for trans activists to challenge

In other words, by necessity, trans activism must be at its core a feminist movement.

binary gender norms (i.e., oppositional sexism) —we must also challenge the idea that femininity is inferior to masculinity and that femaleness is inferior to maleness. In other

words, by necessity, trans activism must be at its core a feminist movement.

Some might consider this contention controversial. Over the years, many self-described feminists have gone out of their way to dismiss trans people and in particular trans women, often resorting to many of the same tactics (hyperfeminization, hypersexualization, and objectification of our bodies) that the mainstream media regularly uses against us.[4] These pseudofeminists proclaim, “Women can do anything men can,” then ridicule trans women for any perceived masculine tendency we may have. They argue that women should be strong and unafraid of speaking our minds, then tell trans women

These pseudofeminists consistently preach feminism with one hand while practicing traditional sexism with the other.

that we act like men when we voice our opinions. They claim that it is misogynistic when men create standards and expectations for women to meet, then they dismiss us for not meeting their standard of

“woman.” These pseudofeminists consistently preach feminism with one hand while practicing traditional sexism with the other.

It is time for us to take back the word “feminism” from these pseudofeminists. After all, as a concept, feminism is much like the ideas of “democracy” or “Christianity.” Each has a major tenet at its core, yet there are a seemingly infinite number of ways in which those beliefs are practiced. And just as some forms of democracy

and Christianity are corrupt and hypocritical while others are more just and righteous, we trans women must join allies of all genders and sexualities to forge a new type of feminism, one that understands that the only way for us to achieve true gender equity is to abolish both oppositional sexism and traditional sexism.

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It is no longer enough for feminism to fight solely for the rights of those born female. That strategy has furthered the prospects of many women over the years, but now it bumps up against a glass ceiling that is partly of its own making. Though the movement worked hard to encourage women to enter previously male-dominated areas of life, many feminists have been ambivalent at best, and resistant at worst, to the idea of men expressing or exhibiting feminine traits and moving into certain traditionally female realms. And while we credit previous feminist movements for helping to create a society where most sensible people would agree with the statement "women and men are equals," we lament the fact that we remain light-years away from being able to say that most people believe that femininity is masculinity's equal.

Instead of attempting to empower those born female by encouraging them to move further away from femininity, we should

We must stop dismissing it as "artificial" or as a "performance," and instead recognize that certain aspects of femininity (and masculinity as well) transcend both socialization and biological sex

instead learn to empower femininity itself. We must stop dismissing it as "artificial" or as a "performance," and instead recognize that certain aspects of femininity (and masculinity as well) transcend both socialization and biological sex - otherwise there would not be feminine boy and masculine

girl children. We must challenge all who assume that feminine vulnerability is a sign of weakness. For when we do open ourselves up, whether it be by honestly communicating our thoughts and

feelings or expressing our emotions, it is a daring act, one that takes more courage and inner strength than the alpha male facade of silence and stoicism.

We must challenge all those who insist that women who act or dress in a feminine manner take on a submissive or passive posture. For many of us, dressing or acting feminine is something we do for ourselves, not for others. It is our way of reclaiming our own bodies and fearlessly expressing our own personalities and sexualities. It is not us who are guilty of trying to reduce our bodies to mere playthings, but rather those who foolishly assume that our feminine style is a signal that we sexually subjugate ourselves to men.

In a world where masculinity is assumed to represent strength and power, those who are butch and boyish are able to contemplate their identities within the relative safety of those connotations. In contrast, those of us who are feminine are forced to define ourselves on our own terms and develop our own sense of self-worth. It takes guts, determination, and fearlessness for those of us who are feminine to lift ourselves up out of the inferior meanings that are constantly being projected onto us. If you require any evidence that femininity can be more fierce and dangerous than masculinity, all you need to do is ask the average man to hold your handbag or a bouquet of flowers for a minute, and watch how far away he holds it from his body. Or tell him that you would like to put your lipstick on him and watch how fast he runs off in the other direction. In a world where masculinity is respected and femininity is regularly dismissed, it takes an enormous amount of strength and confidence for any person, whether female- or male-bodied, to embrace their feminine self.

But it is not enough for us to empower femaleness and femininity. We must also stop pretending that there are essential differences between women and men. This begins with the acknowledgment that there are exceptions to every gender rule and stereotype, and

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this simply stated fact disproves all gender theories that purport that female and male are mutually exclusive categories. We must

We must move away from pretending that women and men are "opposite" sexes, because when we buy into that myth it establishes a dangerous precedent.

move away from pretending that women and men are "opposite" sexes, because when we buy into that myth it establishes a dangerous precedent. For if men are big, then women must be small; and if men are strong then women must be weak. And if being butch is to make

yourself rock-solid, then being femme becomes allowing yourself to be malleable; and if being a man means taking control of your own situation, then being a woman becomes living up to other people's expectations. When we buy into the idea that female and male are "opposites," it becomes impossible for us to empower women without either ridiculing men or pulling the rug out from under ourselves.

It is only when we move away from the idea that there are "opposite" sexes, and let go of the culturally derived values that are assigned to expressions of femininity and masculinity, that we may finally approach gender equity. By challenging both oppositional and traditional sexism simultaneously, we can make the world safe for those of us who are queer, those of us who are feminine, and those of us who are female, thus empowering people of all sexualities and genders.

Notes:

1. Viviane K. Namaste, *Invisible Lives: The Erasure of Trans sexual and Transgendered People* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 145, 215-216; Viviane Namaste, *Sex Change, Social Change: Reflections on Identity, Institutions, and Imperialism* (Toronto: Women's Press, 2005), 9293.

2. American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, Text Revision (DSM-IV-TR)* (Washington, D.C.: American Psychiatric Association, 2000), 574-575.

3. Jacob Anderson-Minshall, "Michigan or Bust: Camp Trans Flourishes for Another Year," *San Francisco Bay Times*, August 3, 2006, and my open letter in response to that article (www.juliaserano.com/frustration.html). For more on how lesbian attitudes toward trans women tend to be far more negative than toward trans men, see Michelle Tea, "Transmissions from Camp Trans," *The Believer*, November 2003; Julia Serano, "On the Outside Looking In," *On the Outside Looking In: A Trans Woman's Perspective on Feminism and the Exclusion of Trans Women from Lesbian and WomenOnly Spaces* (Oakland: Hot Tranny Action Press, 2005); Zachary I. Nataf, "Lesbians Talk Transgender," *The Transgender Reader*, Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle, eds. (New York: Routledge, 2006), 439-448.

4. For an overview of feminist anti-trans-woman sentiment, see Pat Califia, *Sex Changes: The Politics of Trans genderism* (San Francisco: Cleis Press, 1997), 86-119; Joanne Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 258-262; Kay Brown, "20th Century Transgender History and Experience" (www.jenellerose.com/htmlpostings/20th_century_transgender.htm); and Deborah Rudacille, *The Riddle of Gender: Science, Activism, and Transgender Rights* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2005), 151-174. For pertinent examples of trans-misogynistic feminist writings, see Mary Daly, *Gyn/Ecology*:

The Metaethics of Radical Feminism (Boston: Beacon Press, 1990), 67-72; Andrea Dworkin, *Woman Hating* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1974), 185-187; Margrit Eichler, *The Double Standard: A Feminist Critique of Feminist Social Science* (London: Croom Helm, 1980), 72-90; Germaine Greer, *The Madwoman's Underclothes: Essays and Occasional Writings* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1987), 189-191; Germaine Greer, *The Whole Woman* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999), 70-80; Sheila Jeffreys, *Beauty and Misogyny: Harmful Cultural Practices in the West* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 46-66; Robin Morgan, *Going Too Far* (New York: Random House, 1977), 170-188; Janice G. Raymond, *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-Male* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979); Gloria Steinem, "If the Shoe Doesn't Fit, Change the Foot," *Ms.*, February 1977, 7686.

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individual's temporal existence is portrayed as a convergence of diverse entities—the temporal body and the human body. While it is acknowledged that time unconventionally resides within us, time is more than a mere intruder that survives by directly 'occupying' the human mind.²⁹ The human mind actively influences time—manipulating it, introducing queerness to it—by stretching it, compressing it, and disrupting its flow, precisely by operating at varying speeds.

Crawford links the notion of time and space in a delicious way. The family residence in «Orlando: A Biography» is portrayed as both a reflection and a generator of the prevailing sentiments of its time. This representation of the house is intricately connected to the text's theories on time. As Orlando, driven by youthful ambition, endeavours to leave a lasting legacy, the house becomes a focal point with its three hundred and sixty-five rooms meticulously furnished. The irony lies in the use of transient and movable decorations in the pursuit of establishing a sense of permanence, underscoring the nuanced way in which Woolf depicts the impact of space.

The house is depicted as a living entity of time, transforming much like Orlando does. In the nineteenth century, Orlando's home becomes a tangible symbol of the era's spirit after the

protagonist's gender transformation. As time progresses, the house undergoes changes, such as becoming damp and the walls «sweating» at the turn of the century. The narrative voice in the text emphasizes that these domestic evolutions are not simply personifications but are rooted in the inseparability of space from its inhabitants and contents.

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29 Lucas Crawford, *Transgender Architectonics: The Shape of Change in Modernist Space*, Hardcover (New York: Routledge, 2016), 95

Part 03

Part 03 - Bodies in space

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Bodies in space

Throughout this work, I sought to articulate how a trans* architecture could be imagined. At the start, I discussed the link between the production of space and the production of gender norms. The link between the production of heteronormativity or ideas like the family and the rise of capitalism shows clearly that architecture does not exist as a passive element but that it actively participates in the production and maintenance of power structures.

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Following my literature review I explain how architecture forges links with trans* bodies and how it tries tirelessly to return these to an "original" state. Architecture emerges as an active agent in delineating a demarcation between trans* bodies and others, functioning as a tool to sustain the overarching heteronormative, cisnormative, patriarchal, and capitalist system. To become trans*, architecture had to embrace its status as an emotional archive and pivot towards a movable entity. If bodies evolve in space, it is interesting to consider an architecture capable of transitioning from the small to the large scale. This conceptual shift challenges the traditional notions of static, rigid architectural structures and underscores the need for a more inclusive, responsive built environment that accommodates the diverse and dynamic experiences of trans* individuals. I am also asking myself how trans* necessities could be translated spatially, and how traditional architecture

like housing or even renovation could create space that arises from trans* specificities.

Many questions are rising, if architecture is to be approached as a sensitive tool, it is interesting to ask how. This questions the role that architecture has had for decades of invisibilising the bodies that create it. While a white cisgender straight architect has decreed that architecture begins when two bricks touch, then I argue that trans* architecture begins when the earth to produce the brick is extracted from the ground, or when the knowledge to produce it is passed on between bodies. So how do we position ourselves as architects if our role in architecture is no longer that of the star or the builder? Maybe trans* architecture also challenges how space and ideas are created. Ideas are never the product of a single mind but are always co-created. It seems that trans* architecture encourages us to see the production of space as a collective process involving a multitude of human beings as well as non-humans.

Trans* architecture is perhaps a tool for questioning our relationship with our identity. It extends beyond the physical spaces we occupy, permeating into the realms of cultural, social, and psychological dimensions. It prompts a reconsideration of the narratives and histories that have shaped our collective consciousness, challenging us to question

the normative structures that have defined our sense of self. By reframing our relationship with time and the body's capacity to exist as an archive, it seems that trans* architecture would open up the possibilities of our existence rather than chaining us to our past. Perhaps, as a friend of mine suggested,³⁰ we are all trans* and it's architecture that makes us binary.

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