Conference

Technologies, Spaces, and Otherness

SITES QUEER

February 7–9, 2019
@ Jesús Amaral Auditorium, Ground Floor, School of Architecture, University of Puerto Rico, San Juan, Puerto Rico
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Workshop

Lucas LaRochelle + Néné Myriam Konaté
Prototyping for Emergent Queer Spaces: Building Queer Furturities Through Affirmative Autoethnography
Based on a long ethnographic study (2007-2017) of the city of São Paulo, Brazil, this keynote explores how the use of online platforms aimed at searching for sex/love has transformed male homosexual desire from the emergence of the commercial Internet in the middle of the 1990s until the dissemination of hookup apps from 2010 onwards. The research was conceived within a queer perspective, attentive to normalizing processes and new inequities within contemporary homosexual sociability. My analysis focuses on how digital platforms—such as chatrooms, websites based on online ads, and hookup apps—insert their users in a market logic based on competition, and they shape subjectivities whose face-to-face relations follow a cost-benefit rationality, mediatic ideals, impersonality, and less commitment to a partner. Lastly, part of the research findings, I discuss how the predominant use of hookup apps in São Paulo is aimed at keeping the user as part of his nuclear family while avoiding to be openly recognized as homosexual.
nuevas formas de desigualdad internas dentro de la sociabilidad homosexual. Mi análisis se enfoca en la manera en la cual las plataformas digitales—tales como chatrooms, sitios web basados en anuncios digitales y apps para encuentros sexuales—insertan sus usuarios en una lógica de mercado basada en competencia, mientras que moldean subjetividades cuyas relaciones de cara-a-cara siguen una racionalidad de costo y beneficios, ideales mediáticos, impersonalidad y menos compromiso con una pareja. Finalmente, como parte de los hallazgos, discuto cómo el uso predominante de las aplicaciones para hookups en São Paulo tiene como objetivo mantener el usuario dentro de su núcleo familiar sin ser claramente reconocido como homosexual.

PANEL 1: TRANSGRESSIONS

Chloé S. Georas, JD
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COLONIALITY, RAPE CULTURE, AND TECHNOLOGY: FROM SEXUAL EXPLICITNESS TO INVISIBILITY IN RESISTANCE ART

This paper explores the dilemmas and tensions posed by sexually explicit and anti-surveillance resistance art in the context of debates on feminist/gender studies, visual culture, rape culture, postcolonialism, and new technologies. Feminist performance artists making sexually explicit works that question the ubiquity and acceptance of sexual and gender violence is not new, but the integration of new technologies, social media, and the internet to these artistic interventions raises novel questions regarding the intersectional phenomenon of rape culture, the deployment of the male gaze, and its postcolonial incarnation, in what I refer to as the techo-coloniality of vision.

Anti-surveillance art, which explores strategies of technological invisibility, unreadability, and purposeful interpretive malfunction, provides a rich space to interrogate how it responds differently to the hypersexualization and commodification of girls and women relative to sexually explicit activist art. This paper, thus, thinks through the differences and continuities of sexually explicit and anti-surveillance art as complex critiques of intersectional forms of gendered discrimination and violence that are inscribed in the digital turn of societies.

Christopher Dietzel
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NON-CONSENSUAL SEXUAL CONDUCT ON QUEER DATING APPS: EXAMINING TENSIONS EXPERIENCED BY MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN

Dating applications present a unique site for queer individuals to explore their sexuality and to foster intimate relationships. However, research has largely overlooked issues of consent in these spaces, including how consent is understood, practiced, and—in some cases—taken for granted.

My paper examines sexual consent and rape culture on dating apps designed for men who have sex with men (MSM). Drawing from the thematic analysis of interviews with 25 self-identified MSM dating app users, I identify MSM definitions of non-consensual sexual conduct on dating apps and explore their understandings of discrimination and sexual violence, including how these issues transcend online and offline sites. I apply a critical intersectional lens and draw on queer theory to challenge traditional societal norms, to scrutinize systems of privilege and oppression, and to explore the range of experiences among diverse MSM. Specifically, I highlight the narratives of MSM with marginalized identities to examine the tensions around sexual consent that people of color and other minorities navigate on dating apps. I conclude my presentation...
with suggestions for awareness campaigns, online interventions, and educational programming, as well as recommendations for dating app usage that MSM can integrate into their daily life. Given society’s current reckoning with sexual violence, these results offer relevant and meaningful insight into the potential dangers of harassment and sexual violence affecting the lives of diverse queer individuals.

A KINDR GRINDR?
MODERATING RACE(ISM)
IN TECHNO-SPACES OF DESIRE

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University of Sussex
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In September 2018, Grindr, the popular social networking app, launched Kindr, a campaign designed to foster a more inclusive and respectful environment for its users. Kindr was launched with a series of videos featuring non-white, HIV positive, differently-abled and Trans people speaking about their experiences of prejudice—in daily life and online. Alongside these videos, Grindr rewrote its community guidelines and placed particular emphasis on moderating and excluding users who engaged in forms of racism, transphobia, femme-phobia, body-shaming, and HIV shaming.

While this initiative was met with much applause from the gay press and queer activists, it also drew criticism from some users of the app, who felt that their ‘preferences’ and desires were being shut down via these new practices of censorship. In this paper, I consider what it means to moderate identities and discourse on a platform designed for social networking and hooking-up. Drawing on the work of Lucas Crawford (2016), Gillespie (2018) and Gerrard (2018), I examine the awkward position Kindr occupies in relation to the platform itself, which is driven by human and non-human practices of filtering, exclusion and discrimination. I then critique the invitation that Kindr extends to users of the app, namely the invitation to moderate and police the platform through practices of reporting and flagging. I contend that this invitation to moderate places a undue burden of responsibility on Grindr’s most marginalised users, who are asked to undertake such work in order to ‘curate’ the platform and keep it ‘clean’.

In September 2018, Grindr—la aplicación social—lanzó Kindr, una campaña diseñada para crear un ambiente más inclusivo y respetuoso para sus usuarios. El lanzamiento de Kindr comenzó con una serie de videos mostrando personas no-blancas, VIH positivas, Trans y de...
varias otras identidades, hablando sobre sus experiencias con el prejuicio en su día a día, tanto en la vida real como en línea. A su vez, Grindr re-escribió sus guías comunitarias particularmente enfatizando sus políticas sobre moderación y exclusión hacia aquellos usuarios que promuevan o tomen parte en prácticas discriminatorias por: racismo, transfobia, femme-fobia, estatus de VIH y oprobios sobre el cuerpo.

Aunque la iniciativa fue recibida muy favorablemente por la prensa gay y por activistas queer, también trajo críticas negativas de parte de algunos usuarios de Grindr quienes sintieron que sus ‘preferencias’ y deseos estaban siendo rechazados por estas nuevas prácticas de censura. En esta conferencia magistral, discuto lo que significa moderar identidades y discursos en una plataforma diseñada para networking social y el ligue (hook-ups). Recurriendo al trabajo de Crawford (2016), Gillespie (2018) y Gerrard (2018), examino la posición incómoda que ocupa Kindr en relación a la plataforma misma, la cual se impulsa por prácticas humanas y no-humanas de filtración, exclusión y discriminación. A partir de esto, hago una crítica sobre la invitación que hace Kindr a los usuarios a moderar y vigilar la plataforma a través de prácticas de reportes y flagging. Afirmo que esta invitación a moderar supone una carga indebida de responsabilidad para los usuarios más marginados de Grindr, a quiénes se les pide que realicen la labor de ‘curar’ la plataforma y mantenerla ‘limpia’.
This paper contributes to existing debates by providing ethnographic details and extending critical analyses that positions Arab same-sex desire within current Arab cultural traditions. Through a series of interviews that emphasize personal narratives for use in an interpretive analysis, I focus on how religion is woven into their lives today. Many have debated the topic of Arab same-sex desire as it relates to Islam and Islamic cultures. For instance, Joseph Massad (2007) asserts that the history of Islamicate cultures show that Arab same-sex desire is separate from global gay identities, and Scott Alan Kugle (2014) argues that queer Muslim lives are marked by active struggle. While focusing on Arab men who have sex with men in the Gulf region of the Middle East, in this paper I consider what their experiences on digital spaces tell us about how religion is woven into their lives today.

Through a series of interviews that emphasize personal narratives for use in an interpretive analysis, I focus on how religion is tied to my participants’ everyday lives, identities, and practices in online spaces. I examine how cultures of faith can be related to my participants’ online behavior, online interactions, and their understandings of the queer-coded online spaces they occupy. Similarly, I argue that religion and cultural faith systems function as a habit for the Arab, same-sex desiring man. This habit manifests in how they conceive of their identities and negotiate with everyday life, in both on and offline spaces.

This paper contributes to existing debates by providing ethnographic details that extend critiques suggesting Arab faith cultures and Arab same-sex desiring individuals are in opposition. Furthermore, it intervenes by providing a critical analysis that positions Arab same-sex desire within current Arab cultural traditions. Through a series of interviews that emphasize personal narratives for use in an interpretive analysis, I focus on how religion is woven into their lives today. Many have debated the topic of Arab same-sex desire as it relates to Islam and Islamic cultures. For instance, Joseph Massad (2007) asserts that the history of Islamicate cultures show that Arab same-sex desire is separate from global gay identities, and Scott Alan Kugle (2014) argues that queer Muslim lives are marked by active struggle. While focusing on Arab men who have sex with men in the Gulf region of the Middle East, in this paper I consider what their experiences on digital spaces tell us about how religion is woven into their lives today.

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Autoethnography has been described as a method that is “both process and product” (Ellis, Adams, and Bochner, 2011) and as a practice that is closely aligned with queer theory in its acknowledgement of complex subjectivities, epistemologies, and transformative intent (Adams and Holman Jones, 2011). Each autoethnographic project is shaped by the researcher’s scholarly expertise and by lived experience. Based on a broader project examining intersections of sexual identity, religion, and latinidad, this presentation explores two approaches to understanding the digital and physical queer geographies of Portland and western Oregon. The first is a conventionally-structured sociolinguistic examination of ways “Latino/Hispanic” users of gay dating apps communicate about desire and social positioning in their online profiles within western Oregon’s white-dominated sexual economy. This look at digital queer spaces is contrasted with Topografías Eróticas, a short experimental documentary project that looks at physical landmarks associated with past relationships of different types. Although the film can be seen as a stand-alone product, what is visible on the screen is one part of an emotionally-charged process of returning to examine (through the camera lens) an array of spaces that hold both traumatic and euphoric memories, wile reconnecting with past partners, and articulating—with both language and image—the significance of these places within my own erotic/romantic life.

La autoetnografía se ha descrito como una metodología que es al mismo tiempo “proceso y producto” (Ellis, Adams, y Bochner, 2011) y una praxis que encaja con la teoría queer en cuanto a su reconocimiento de subjetividades complejas, epistemologías complejas y una intención transformadora (Adams y Holman Jones, 2011). Cada proyecto autoetnográfico lleva la marca de la capacitación formal y la experiencia vivida del investigador. Esta presentación, basada en un proyecto mayor que examina las intersecciones de identidad sexual, latinidad y experiencia religiosa, explora dos acercamientos a las geografías digitales y físicas de Portland y la zona occidental de Oregon. El primero es un análisis tradicional sociolingüístico de las formas de comunicación que utilizan los usuarios “Latino/Hispanic” de aplicaciones geosociales para expresar mensajes sobre deseo y posicionalidad en la economía sexual de Oregon que es dominada por los hombres blancos. Este proyecto se contrasta con Topografías Eróticas, un cortometraje documental experimental que explora puntos de referencia físicos asociados con relaciones íntimas de varios tipos. Aunque el corto puede verse como un producto completo, lo que se ve en la pantalla es una sola parte de un proceso con un fuerte cargo emotivo que revisita espacios que son depósitos de recuerdos tanto traumáticos como eufóricos, mientras ex-parejas vuelven a conectarse, explicando –tanto con lenguaje como imagen– el significado de estos lugares dentro de mi propio mundo erótico/romántico.

**PANEL 3: AGENCY**

**EspicyNipples**

*A transfeminist collective*

*here to fuck things up*

*Dania ‘Betún’ Warhol, More, Rayo Radiante, and fuegitx fuegitx Mayaguez and San Juan, Puerto Rico*

**CYBERTRANSFEMINISM, SELF-DEFENSE, AND COLLECTIVE DIGITAL CARE**

The internet is a space where many battles for freedom, equality, and access have been fought. At the same time, the monopolistic, authoritarian character of censorship and surveillance under a heterocapitalist model in the hands of the military-industrial complex has been revealed. The online co-habitation of multiple ideologies, practices, and identities has given way to the creation of, as feminist writer Paul Preciado (2014) states, “new methodologies of knowledge production and a new political imagination”. Is it possible to resignify the codes of the internet based on a self-defense and collective digital care policy? How can we use technologies to expand what’s visible and generate other ways of life? What would such processes, epistemologies and practices entail?

At EspicyNipples we want to develop a praxis based on open source technologies that enable a transfeminist internet. We believe that cybertransfeminisms have the possibilities of reinventing identities through a new way of inhabiting technologies and creating networks that
generate affective hyperlinks. From our experience as a transmedia cooperative, for this presentation we will focus on eight aspects: censorship, authorship and creative production licenses, self-defense and collective digital care, solidarity economy, online/offline dichotomy, storytelling, networking and hyperlinks, and our body as our first technology.

It is necessary to consciously and collectively redesign the internet to hack these new digital ecosystems, but also we have to assume new practices of creation and collaboration. Our transmedia proposal is a bet for the creation of new narratives through collective transhackfeminist designs.

La internet es un espacio donde se han librado muchísimas batallas por libertad, equidad y acceso. Aun en el tiempo, se ha revelado el carácter monopolico, autoritario, de censura y vigilancia de este espacio bajo un modelo heterocapitalista en las manos del complejo militar-industrial. Ahora bien, la co-habitation en internet de una multiplicidad de ideologías, prácticas e identidades ha dado paso a la creación de, según el escritor feminista Paul Preciado (2014), “nuevas metodologías de producción del conocimiento y una nueva imaginación política”. ¿Es posible re-significar lxs códigos de internet desde una política de la autodefensa y cuidados digitales colectivxs? ¿Cómo podemos utilizar las tecnologías para ampliar lxs códigos de internet desde una nueva forma de habitar las tecnologías y crear redes que generen hipervínculos afectivos?

En EspicyNipples queremos desarrollar una praxis desde tecnologías libres que posibiliten una internet transhackfeminista. Apostamos a lxs cibertransfeminismos como posibilidades de reinventar identidades a través de una nueva forma de habitar las tecnologías y crear redes que generen hipervínculos afectivos desde nuestra experiencia como cooperativa transmediática, para esta presentación nos enfocaremos en ocho aspectos: la censura, autoría y licencias de producción creativa, autodefensa y cuidado digitales colectivxs, economía solidaria, dicotomía online/offline, narración de historias, creación de redes e hipervínculos y la cuerpa como nuestra primera tecnología.

Toca rediseñar la internet de manera consciente y colectiva para hackear estos nuevos ecosistemas digitales, pero también nos toca asumir nuevas prácticas de creación y colaboración. Nuestra propuesta transmediática es una apuesta a la creación de nuevas narrativas a través de diseños colectivxs transhackfeministas.

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Itzayana Gutiérrez
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TWISTING THE PATH AND THE INTERSTICE

EN
My paper articulates two elements: 1) a spatial comparison between the comic book and the video games based on the character of Kaliman, el hombre increíble; and 2) a discussion of the possibilities of the graphic interstice (the blank space between the panels of a comic) and some of its applications to longer temporal models.

Kaliman is the longest-lasting and most widely circulated multimedia campaign of racialized theosophical values in the Hispanic market. It’s characterized by the constant staging of a belligerent homoerotism, encoded in the act of a pro-justice eugenic struggle. Kaliman’s world is formed by an index of exotic landscapes that possess a threatening exuberance which—much like the racialized bodies around the white hero—must be dominated. The space proposed in the video games—while it continues to cultivate this colonialist sadism—accelerates the structures of compulsive interaction through obsessive combat, and adds the use of contemporary military technologies of observation movement and attack.

How can a queer strategy be assembled to de-activate this homoerotic, racist militarism? As a sequenced narrative of boxes and panels laid out on a page, the comic is a format that offers doors, exits, and secret tunnels. Who reads with the intention of finding and creating them is able to not only interrupt and alter the sequences on the page, but also form critical diagrams in dialogue with its own intimacies, experiences, and graphic vocabularies. Considering these queer fabulations, I will discuss some of my graphic experiments in the comic The gap to de-compose violent graphic compulsions, mourn sadistic affects, and intertwine them with chosen sensory traditions.

SP
Mi participación articula dos elementos: 1) una comparación espacial del cómic y los videojuegos de Kalimán, el hombre increíble; y 2) una discusión de las posibilidades del intersticio gráfico (el espacio en blanco entre cuadros de un cómic) y algunas de sus aplicaciones en modelos temporales de arco amplio.

Kalimán es la campaña multimedia de valores teosóficos racialistas de más larga duración y mayor circulación en el mercado hispano. Se caracteriza por la escenificación constante de un homoerotismo beligerante, codificado como acción de lucha justa eugenista. El mundo de Kalimán está formado por un índice de paisajes exóticos y de exuberancia amenazante que —como los cuerpos racializados alrededor del héroe blanco— deben ser dominados. El espacio propuesto por los videojuegos, si bien continúa cultivando este sadismo colonialista, acelera las estructuras de interacción compulsivas de combate y agrega la utilización de tecnologías militares contemporáneas de observación, desplazamiento y ataque.

¿Cómo armar una estrategia queer que desactive este militarismo...
homosexual and racist? How does narration sequenced across panels and pages in the comic create doors and alter the reading experience? A reader, with the intention of discovering and creating, may not only interrupt and alter the narrative. This gap allows for the development of queer architectures. The comic book is a format that can offer doors, opportunities, and experiences. It can be a space where the reader can find and create their own narrative.

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**QUEER ARCHITECTURES, DIGITAL FUTURES, AND THE BAD ROMANCE OF TRANSPARENCY**

EN What can early twentieth century modernist architecture and design teach us about contemporary decolonizing, feminist, queer, and anti-racist practices and protocols for networked digital architecture? European Modernist architecture was driven by ideals of internationally standardized transparency, open communication, open access. There are some striking ideological continuities between these Modernist architectural ideals and contemporary Euro-Atlantic values of unbridled digitization, designing global information networks for unobstructed open access. These continuities need to be understood within a context of modern-colonial regimes of gender, sexuality, and race. If contemporary digital spaces, cultures, and research practices have been designed by modern colonial discourses, politics, and aesthetics of early twentieth century European architecture, we might find generative decolonizing digital models, ethics, and aesthetics in the queer architectures that have been designed against, or sometimes simply asked to, the modern.

This paper will take up two main types of queer architecture: the early twentieth century Sapphic modernist designs of women working with and deliberately against European Modernist architectural ideals (Rault 2011); and the Mexican architectural innovation of the vecindad. I argue that obstruction, threshold screens, opacity, and obscurity work as interruptions to modern, biopolitical projects of transparency, thus modeling anti-colonial architectures for digital futurity and queer life.

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**TRANS-FEMINIST AND QUEER AUDIENCES 4EVAH: X-RECEPTION, DIGITAL ARCHIVES OF LIVE PERFORMANCE, AND NETWORKED INTIMATE PUBLICS**

EN In this paper I think with Beth Coleman’s formulation of X-reality, that is, a “continuum of exchanges between virtual and real spaces”. Through this, I consider the implications for the X-tension of trans-feminist and queer (TFQ) live performance to digital repositories, and the subsequent potential audience interactions with this work, which I’m calling X-reception.

Performance studies—arguably especially TFQ performance studies—has long taken up questions of audiences, spectators and reception. In particular, I think with Jill Dolan’s formulation of the “feminist spectator” to show us how TFQ live performance has relied on audiences and network labors to circulate and be
intelligible within its integral audiences, as well as to outsider audiences, through gossip, reviews, or critical and academic essays. Here I consider how our development of the Cabaret Commons Digital Platform—a user-generated digital archive and gossip rag for grassroots queer and feminist artists, audiences, and researchers—tries to account for the shifting scale of X-reception. We make performance materials available to online audiences, especially as we aim for a Hemispheric audience, extending the possible access to a performance from the temporal and size limitations of the “live” to the potential 4evah and 4everyone of the internet.

Los estudios sobre performance—posiblemente en particular los estudios sobre performance TFQ—tienen una larga tradición de cuestionar públicos, audiencias y recepción. En particular, me inspiro en la formulación que hace Jill Dolan de “espectaduría feminista” para mostrarnos cómo el performance en vivo TFQ se ha valido de la labor de audiencias y redes para circular y ser legible, tanto dentro de los públicos que lo integran, como frente a públicos que le son ajenos. Esto lo ha logrado a través del chisme, las reseñas de opinión y los ensayos críticos y académicos. Considero cómo nuestro desarrollo del Cabaret Commons Digital Platform—un archivo digital generado por sus usuarios, para artistas artistas, audiencias e investigadores queer y feministas—procura atender los ajustes en la escala de la X-recepción. Proveemos materiales de presentaciones en vivo a audiencias en línea, particularmente porque consideramos una audiencia hemisférica. Así extendemos el posible acceso al performance, quebrantando las limitaciones de tiempo y escala que presume el espectáculo “en vivo”, y proyectando hacia el para siempre y para todxs que caracteriza el internet.

In this lecture, I discuss the different ways in which queer people in Puerto Rico construct their non-normative identities and navigate through the island’s complex spatial politics. I use San Juan as my ground zero, in an attempt at creating a cultural and urban register of contemporary queer spatial practices in the Puerto Rican capital city, while considering the important role mobile app technology plays in queer culture, as well as in individual processes of identity-formation and subjective performance. Although the number of LGBTQ venues currently open in San Juan are limited—largely in part due to an unstable economy—I propose that these spatial restrictions are creating ephemeral, mobile, and nomadic uses of space. Based on a series of interviews I conducted with 40 participants who identify as non-straight, I take into account nuanced generational shifts in the uses of these technologies—from Adam4Adam to Grindr, from Myspace to Facebook, and from Instagram to Tinder. These networks have been appropriated by a group of people who—in a small island context, but one that is scattered out and largely non-urban—have used them to connect with and meet others, experiment with their identities, and bring visibility to the LGBTQ community. In this way, by shifting back and forth between digital spaces and urban ones, I speculate on the construction of Puerto Rican queerness and the spaces where it unfolds.
Accompanied by *Los Sites*, a design exhibition showcasing a series of queer sites in Puerto Rico in models and drawings, and by a research website (elsite.xyz), my ongoing research aims to fill a void in the island’s architectural and urban discourse and its relation to the LGBTQ community.

In this presentation, I explore different ways in which queer individuals in Puerto Rico construct their non-normative identities and navigate complex spatial conditions on the island. Using San Juan as a starting point, I aim to create a cultural and urban record of queer spatial practices in the capital today. At the same time, I consider the indispensable role that mobile applications play in the queer culture of the island and in the processes of identity formation.

The number of LGBTQ spaces that are currently open in San Juan is limited, in part due to an unstable economy. I propose that these spatial restrictions are creating ephemeral, mobile, and nomadic uses of space. Based on a series of interviews that I conducted with 40 participants who identify as non-heterosexual, I consider subtle generational changes in the way these individuals use apps and digital technologies – from Adam4Adam and Grindr to Myspace and Facebook to Instagram and Tinder. These networks have been appropriated by a group of individuals who – in a context of a small island, but which is also largely dispersed, suburban, and rural – use them to connect and get to know others like them, experiment with their identities and bring visibility to the LGBTQ community in Puerto Rico. In this way, moving between the digital and the physical, I speculate on the construction of Puerto Rican queer identities and the spaces in which they manifest.

Acompañado de *Los Sites* – una exhibición de diseño mostrando una serie de sites queer en Puerto Rico a través de maquetas y dibujos – y de un website activo de investigación (elsite.xyz), mi trabajo busca llenar un vacío en el discurso arquitectónico y urbano de Puerto Rico en relación a la comunidad LGBTQ.
Media theorist Friedrich Kittler, in his 1984 essay, “The City is a Medium”, defines ‘addresses’ as, “data which allow other data to appear.” For Kittler, addresses provide indications of geographic and other kinds of location but also a kind of constitutive validation above and beyond their function as spatial pointers. In this paper, I consider the transmutation of London’s infrastructure for addressing mail from the mid-nineteenth century to the present as an exemplar worth considering in the context of a profound recalibration of addressability currently underway. Referred to as the development of “deep addressing”, by design theorist Benjamin Bratton, this recalibration requires that we engage with how norms are deployed—in the relation of entities to one another—addressing prioritizes location over identification and categorization. In this context, further consideration is given to the implications of addressing for future subjectivities.

London’s system of postcodes demonstrates the potential of addressing—one that is, simultaneously, digitally precise and culturally resonant, shared by humans and machines. The significance of this hybridity for broader cultures and protocols of addressing is explored in this talk with reference to examples including the Irish Eircode system introduced in 2015, privately initiated global addressing systems such as What3Words, questions about Z-axis addressing, as well as a consideration of the unaddressed and un-addressable. Where queer theory demands that we engage with how norms are deployed—in the relation of entities to one another—addressing provides indications of geographic and non-normative identities. Through exhibitions, publications, and community initiatives—some permanent and some temporary—art, resistance, and activism have been merged. At Sites Queer we ask: What role does activism play in museums in order to reconfigure our histories? How do we measure the effect and affect of the ephemeral actions that help us explore actual in the sistema de ‘addressability’ de la ciudad. Conocido como el desarrollo de “deep addressing”, por el teórico del diseño Benjamin Bratton, esta recalibración requiere que reflexionemos sobre el estatus del direccionamiento, como un lenguaje que es capaz de “contener con las contradicciones afectivas de abstracción semántica.”

El sistema de código postal Londinense demuestra el potencial que contiene el direccionamiento—apunta a uno que es digitalmente preciso y culturalmente resonante, compartido por humanos y máquinas. Mi ponencia explora el significado de esta hibrididad usando ejemplos y referencias, tales como el sistema Irish Eircode, introducido en el 2015. También discuto otros sistemas globales y privados de direccionamiento, tales como What3Words, y levanto preguntas sobre Z-axis addressing, al igual que considero aquello sin-dirección y lo no-dirigible. Mientras que la teoría queer exige que abordemos sobre cómo se efectúan las normas—in relación a entidades, de una a otras—el direccionamiento prioriza la localización antes que identificación y categorización. En este contexto, mi ponencia considera las implicaciones del direccionamiento para subjetividades en el futuro.
our sexualities? How can we narrate our memories without depending on hegemonic institutional structures? In what ways can we subvert the static organization and fixed narratives of museums?

Since its beginnings, Museo Q has developed exhibitions, learning material, contemporary cartographies, talks, and papers. Although Museo Q does not have a permanent building, the lack of an architectural space has allowed the project to enter other territories—in multiple layouts and in front of different audiences. Museo Q flows, walks, and inhabits the city, changing its site periodically.

A terminología se ha fusionado el arte, la resistencia y el activismo. ¿Qué rol ocupa el activismo en los relatos– contienen sesgos machistas, androcéntricos, patriarcales, en especial sus relatos– contienen sesgos heteronormativos o ciscentrados. No obstante, en la última década han surgido investigaciones (Levin, 2010; Sandell, 2017; Reilly, 2018)—que los museos –y en especial sus relatos– contienen sesgos machistas, androcéntricos, patriarcales, heteronormativos o ciscentrados. No obstante, en la última década han surgido en Colombia varias estrategias que desde las artes y la cultura visibilizan y reflexionan sobre sexualidades diversas e identidades no normativas. A través de exposiciones, publicaciones e iniciativas comunitarias –unas permanentes y otras temporales– se han fusionado el arte, la resistencia y el activismo. En esta ponencia nos preguntamos: ¿Qué rol ocupa el activismo en los museos para reconfigurar nuestras historias? ¿Cómo medir el efecto y el

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HEAR, HERE: MAPPING QUEER STORIES IN LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN

Hear, Here is an audio-documentary project in downtown La Crosse, Wisconsin that incorporates short (two minutes or less) oral histories about space. Alerted by orange street-level signs with toll-free numbers on them visitors use their cellular phones to access first-person narratives about the exact location where they stand. The purpose of Hear, Here is to subvert the traditional narratives in La Crosse that focus on Protestantism, prosperity, heteronormativity, and whiteness, in favor of bringing to the fore narratives that prioritize indigeneity, race, queerness, and cultural difference. While Hear, Here is not strictly an LGBTQ space-based project, it incorporates five oral histories about formerly queer spaces including a gay bar, a queer bookstore, and a second-hand tux shop frequented by lesbians. Further stories told by people who identify as LGBTQ mention this identity as a foundational element of the story they tell, thereby mapping queer performance in space and the spatial politics of La Crosse. I participate in this conference to offer background knowledge about the technology used to create Hear, Here for possible use in projects about queer space and also to learn more about narratives of queer spatial practices not yet incorporated into my current work.
Three elements come together in this paper: my experience as a member of Meras efímeras and Burlesquimeras—a “macha” (queer women’s) party-organizing collective and a queer punk burlesque troupe respectively—in Mexico City in the 2000s; my initiative to create a digital archive of the materials created in those projects; and my academic formation in History, Geography, and Information.

Inspired by the metaphysical territory of Machistán—creatively imagined by Meras efímeras and Burlesquimeras—and by the metaphysical territory of Vagistan—imagined by theater academic Kareem Khubchandani, whose drag persona is LaWhore Vagistan—I propose that imagined territories are the magical basis of the labour of organizing a macha party or a drag performance, among other events. I propose that imagined sites such as Machistán and Vagistan constitute a translocal magic queer territory/archive from which the actualized work and affect of organizing parties and performances is developed. As such, this paper explores the chain of relations between imagined utopian territories, the physical sites of queer nightlife, and digital archives.
This keynote lecture considers the queering of space in London from the 1980s to the present as an urban infrastructure project. It begins with an architectural and social history of the London Lesbian and Gay Centre (1983–1992). This hub served diverse lesbian and gay communities and was inserted into the ex-industrial fabric—a former poultry processing facility—through a radical program of funding and governance. The multiple queer sites within this building are analyzed within contemporary international circuits of contemporary gay, lesbian, and feminist politics, with attention to their uses of spatialized technologies that were available to improve connectivity and inclusivity (telephone switchboard, printing press, disability ramp). The Centre closed in 1993, but its legacies reverberate, and many of the organizations it accommodated continue in different forms.

The second part of the lecture looks at more recent queer spaces and spatial activisms, which similarly engage with local sites while extending beyond regional and national borders. The lecture focuses on the successes of LGBTQ+ communities in embedding themselves within obsolete, modernist infrastructural spaces, as well as the negative impacts of recent large-scale infrastructure developments. The latter have prompted these groups to mobilize through digital platforms and engage the technocratic systems of urban planning in order to activate heritage and community value legislation.

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REPRODUCING SPACES OF EXCLUSION:
SESTA-FOSTA AND THE REGULATION OF QUEER POC BODIES

The conflation of sex work with anxieties about trafficking has been mapped onto the street, producing an emerging consensus that exploitation can be abated by criminalizing participants in the most visible spaces of the sex industry. These regulations in the U.S. have produced uneven geographies of inclusion and exclusion, often disproportionately affecting queer persons of color. To counter this marginalization, communal spaces such as Gene Compton’s Cafeteria (The Tenderloin, 1960s), historically offered sex workers support and safety. However, these places—in addition to street corners—were exploited by police officers to target, arrest, and prosecute sex workers. The suppression has propagated digital platforms, which grant LGBTQ+ sex workers of color more agency in navigating their experiences both online and in real life.

SESTA (Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act)-FOSTA (Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act) threaten these platforms by holding websites legally accountable for sex work-related content. Through interviews and analysis of anti-prostitution regulations, this paper considers how SESTA-FOSTA mirror previous laws that hyper-police POC/queer bodies. I argue that, by antagonizing queer participation in both physical and digital spaces, SESTA-FOSTA continue to perpetuate geographies of abandonment and exclusion (Hubbard et al 2008) by...
En la discusión del trabajo sexual se ha producido un consenso emergente: la explotación y el tráfico de sexo pueden ser disminuidos criminalizando a los participantes en los espacios más visibles de la industria del sexo. Estas regulaciones en los Estados Unidos han producido geografías desiguales de inclusión y exclusión, que a menudo afectan de manera desproporcionada a las personas de color. Para contrarrestar esta marginación, espacios comunes como la Gene Compton’s Cafeteria, históricamente ofrecieron apoyo y seguridad a las trabajadoras sexuales. Sin embargo, estos lugares, al igual que las calles, fueron utilizados por la policía para atacar, arrestar y procesar a las trabajadoras sexuales, propagando una migración hacia los cuerpos de personas de color.

Concluyo discutiendo cómo estos espacios de exclusión podrían abolirse a través de política pública y reforma laboral, y especulando sobre cómo los perfiles queer y de personas de color reestructuran la morfología urbana.

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QUEER SPACES AS SITES OF LEGAL RESISTANCE: ENCOUNTERS IN THE ‘GHETTO’

Recent decades have seen the Global North come to a new legal settlement with queers. Law—typically in the form of same-sex marriage or employment and entitlement reform—has been seen as an achievement in itself. The passing of a statute or the decision of a judge is arguably seen as a moment of queer victory. Words have become enough. This has inevitably led to LGBTQ scholars and activists debating questions of ‘what next?’; yet this discourse that focuses on law as a tool, fails to acknowledge laws continuing function as a tool.

Queer spaces—in the form of law, economics, technology and identity politics—are poured into a crucible in which community-level settlements are forged. Historically, notably in New York and San Francisco, law has been used to curb the presence of bathhouses and other commercial public sex spaces. Globally, non-commercial cruising and other public sex environments have been criminalized and policed. In all, technology adds a virtual layer our conceptions of queer public space.

The previously libidinal space of The Castro District in San Francisco has seen nude groups criminalized if they don’t adhere to new regulations. In the UK, commercial pressures have seen the decline in the number of saunas available, notoriously in London, but nighttime economy initiatives have also seen law deployed to protect spaces—as in the RVT Future campaign to ‘preserve’ the historic gay bar and performance space known as the Royal Vauxhall Tavern. This paper explores these developments from a queer, legal theory perspective and consider what the shifting legal status of queer spaces means for queer praxis.
Espacios anteriormente emancipados, como The Castro District en San Francisco, han visto como se criminalizan grupos nudistas que no se adhieren a las nuevas regulaciones. En el Reino Unido, presiones comerciales han hecho disminuir el número de saunas disponibles, especialmente en Londres, aunque también es cierto que la regulación creciente de economías nocturnas ha permitido proteger algunos de estos espacios. Un buen ejemplo es la campaña RVT Future para ‘preservar’ el histórico bar gay y sala de performances conocido como Royal Vauxhall Tavern. Esta ponencia examina estos hechos desde la perspectiva de la teoría jurídica queer y considera el significado del estatus legal cambiante de los espacios queer para la práctica queer.

This joint research project analyzes the textual relationship between words and images produced by media representations of the organized or unbridled actions of the masses in their yearly march through Ashford Avenue in San Juan—Puerto Rico’s capital city—to affirm LGBTTQIP+ pride in the island. Specifically, this work explores the challenges that emerge in the construction of intertextuality between photography and chronicle, when narrating the collective or individual actions that occur in this public space. We focus actions that deviate from the official routes—designed by the state and civic organizations—through self-organization, flexibility, and reconfiguration of the rules and roles assigned by the social and institutional orders and gender. We focus the ethical and aesthetic problems of using writing and photographic techniques to publish these stories simultaneously in this “insecure” cultural space, where the tensions between the correct and the abject are palpable. Likewise, we highlight the ways in which the participants exercise their political and assembly rights through the multiple scenes performed in the streets, which are imbued with a carnival’s irreverence, a political rally’s solemnity and a great show’s spectacularity.

Esta investigación propone un análisis de la relación textual entre las imágenes y las palabras que producen los medios sobre las acciones organizadas o desenfrenadas que manifiestan las multitudes al marchar todos los años por la Avenida Ashford durante la Parada de Orgullo LGTBTTQIP+ en Puerto Rico. Específicamente, este trabajo explora los retos que supone la construcción de la intertextualidad entre la fotografía y la crónica para narrar las acciones colectivas e individuales que ocurren en dicho espacio público. Hacemos énfasis en las acciones que se desvían de las rutas oficiales—diseñadas tanto por el estado como por organizaciones—autoorganizándose, flexibilizando y reconfigurando las normas y roles asignados tanto por el orden social e institucional, como por el género. Nos enfocamos en los problemas éticos y estéticos que implica la utilización de las técnicas de la fotografía y la escritura para publicar estas historias en forma simultánea desde este espacio “inseguro” (en términos culturales) ya que en estos se desatan todo tipo de tensiones entre lo correcto y lo abyecto. Asimismo, profundizamos en las formas en las que los participantes ejercen los derechos de asamblea y reivindicación política a través de múltiples estampas en varias estaciones calles cargadas con la irreverencia del carnaval, la solemnidad del mitin y la espectacularidad del gran show.
QUEERNESS AND MATRIX-SITES: LAS NIETAS DE NONÓ’S PATIO TALLER

During this decade, Patio Taller has served as a space for community and artistic exploration. Located in the San Antón neighborhood of Carolina, Puerto Rico, the parcel of land contains two constructions in cement—one used as living quarters, the other as artistic greenery. Patio Taller has welcomed queer artists, particularly through its residency program, while also being a place for a variety of activities: orientation about crops, animal raising, iguana hunting, experimental performance, and activism gatherings. Patio Taller is also a performance laboratory in the barrio San Antón de Carolina, Puerto Rico, the parcela comprende dos construcciones de concreto—una utilizada de vivienda; otra, de espacio de creación—y una amplia área verde circundante. Patio Taller ha acogido a artistas queer, particularmente a través de su programa de residencias, y también ha sido ámbito para: orientación sobre cultivos, cacerías de iguanas, crianza de pollos, eventos de performance experimental y reuniones de concientización. A su vez, Patio Taller ha sido un laboratorio de donde surgen las piezas del colectivo Las Nietas de Nonó—compuesto por las hermanas Lydela y Michelle Nonó—originates.

This presentation briefly explores the movements between the interior and exterior (of buildings and architectures), between organic and inorganic materialities, and between different notions of self and other present in two theatrical pieces: Domestic Bestiary Manual (2014-on, Patio Taller) and Illustrations on Mechanics (2016-on, itinerant). The ending of Manual, in which virtual sites are counterposed to the physical surroundings, will be highlighted. Contrasting discourses—Foucault’s heterotopias, non-hierarchical ecologies, and Tristan García’s new materialism—are referenced in the formulation of Patio Taller as an example of a matrix-site which engenders and entwines ways of thought and practice. These constantly reposition queernes as a cruelty of political activism vitally linked to other intimate spaces (house, prison, clinic, insides of bodies, cellular nuclei).

Bawdy House, the term used in Canadian legislation for illegal brothel—is a cartography of two of Montreal’s active bathhouses that questions the projected and perceived nature of those institutions, as well as the relation between their interiors and their place in the city. Under/overpass studies an outdoor cruising place, situated on the fringe of dislocated neighborhoods, and its analysis draws on data from digital cruising platforms and documented “anti-indecency” operations—two factors that manifest the acknowledgment of these spaces as historic and relational.

Even with social and technological progress that could serve to displace MSM’s practices to more “private” and “safe” environments, especially in the context of a Canadian metropolis, Body Houses and Under/overpass reveal spatial practices normally invisible and show the continued social significance of making spaces at the border between transgression and institutionalization.
This research examines if and how LGBTQI+ activism may contribute to an individual and collective sense of place through personal experiences of intervening in London’s public spaces. In considering how activism may contribute to discussions on placemaking, the project explores the temporary, mobile, and ephemeral tactics of queer-identifying urban activists. Through walking interviews and map-making, personal perceptions on placemaking through memory and embodiment are examined. The research considers if queer practices of placemaking could provide a nuanced understanding of how spaces are experienced by queer lives.

My work attempts to articulate what queer space is in public space, extending urban planner Petra Doan’s (2015) call to practitioners and scholars to expand their understanding of the white gay male village into more inclusive LGBTQI+ spaces. Planners must ensure that inclusive spaces (fixed, transient, or mobile) consider all LGBTQI+ lives and identities. Coming out is a reiterative process for the LGBTQI+ community—to be unable to do so is to be acutely aware of the violence of being unheard and unseen. Queer Sight is to be seen by and in others, as well as to feel safe in the places we move through and linger in. This paper discusses my research’s first phase of interviews, which explores the histories, narratives, and spatial practices of participants through walking and map-making. Through this discussion I will therefore explore the extent of which activists are agents in queering the city—both in site and in sight—through queer practices of placemaking.

This investigation examines how the activism of the LGBTQI+ community may contribute to public space, at a personal and collective level. This is through the experiences of urban activists as agents in queering the city. Through walking interviews and map-making, personal perceptions on placemaking through memory and embodiment are examined. The research considers if queer practices of placemaking could provide a nuanced understanding of how spaces are experienced by queer lives.

My work attempts to articulate what queer space is in public space, extending urban planner Petra Doan’s (2015) call to practitioners and scholars to expand their understanding of the white gay male village into more inclusive LGBTQI+ spaces. Planners must ensure that inclusive spaces (fixed, transient, or mobile) consider all LGBTQI+ lives and identities. Coming out is a reiterative process for the LGBTQI+ community—to be unable to do so is to be acutely aware of the violence of being unheard and unseen. Queer Sight is to be seen by and in others, as well as to feel safe in the places we move through and linger in. This paper discusses my research’s first phase of interviews, which explores the histories, narratives, and spatial practices of participants through walking and map-making. Through this discussion I will therefore explore the extent of which activists are agents in queering the city—both in site and in sight—through queer practices of placemaking.
NEGOTIATING GENDER DIVERSE WORLDS BUILT ON BINARY EXPECTATIONS

The gender binary is imbued within the social and material fabric of urban spaces across the world—implicitly and explicitly—to the point of near ubiquity, filtering into online spaces. In Britain, the internet has become a battleground between trans and non-binary people, their allies, and those who seek to deny and police the legitimacy of their genders. These online platforms of discussion, conflict, and opinion-sharing are not abstract; online discourses profoundly shape the ‘IRL’ experiences of trans and non-binary people whose very existence often contests such binary thinking.

This paper explores inter-relations between the online and the offline through the narratives of trans and non-binary people living in British cities who participated in my doctoral research. A discussion on cis/trans binaries in gender-segregated spaces will focus upon the Hampstead Lady’s Pond, a ‘very British’ site and focal point for debates around trans-inclusion, which have been amplified by an online survey on the gender policy of the Corporation of London who manage the space. Attention will then turn to people who defy stipulations and expectations that gender is consistently defined and expressed ‘un-problematically’ according to a male/female binary. This will include thinking through how intersecting aspects of identities (including ethnicity, nationality, faith, and gender) coalesced in participants’ experiences in segregated and mixed spaces. Overall this paper considers ways that trans and non-binary peoples’ experiences and voices demand more nuanced and critical thinking on gender, the politics of knowledge and public space, than tend to feature in online debates.

This paper examines the hijras in India and their access to spaces in Mumbai. The hijras are a larger segment of the transgender population and have gained legal recognition under the category of the ‘third gender’ in the landmark Supreme Court (SC) Judgement of India on April 2014. The hijras sit in a complex social position, where—in some contexts—are revered as givers of blessings, particularly for fertility and prosperity in marriage to newly married couples. They are also known for their curses, which they will place on individuals if they are ignored or offended during their occupation of asking for monetary alms in return for blessings.

They are considered ‘hypervisible’ and do not belong to the common public spaces due to their association with occupations like begging or sex-work. Furthermore, the city of Mumbai itself consists of a myriad of invisible lines, where ‘unreadable bodies’ gather in spaces such as red-light districts or slum areas, avoided by the so-called ‘good citizens’. Using a queer theoretical framework, this paper critically examines how Mumbai is an (un) friendly place which limits possibilities of hijras to move around freely. At the same time, it discusses the enclaves of safety for the transgender communities, and their strategies to access such hostile spaces. Hence, considering space with regard to hijras in Mumbai crafts a narrative about social hierarchies, power relations, and gender conceptions of the Indian society.
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**TRANSBELONGING: RE-ORIENTING DISPLACEMENT IN THE NAVIGATION OF URBAN SPACES**

EN  
Through the analysis of nine individual semi-structured interviews conducted with trans people of varying nationalities (Sweden, Puerto Rico, Israel, UK, Australia, Argentina, USA, Germany) living in Berlin, this paper seeks to document their experiences of navigating the internal/external *always becoming* of trans identity in relation to public space, safety, and the notion of home. It situates trans displacements (such as forced migration, estrangement, or exclusion from certain spaces) at the heart of networks of relations, as opposed to perceiving them as marginal, external, or 'other’. This allows us to re-imagine and re-orient (Ahmed 2006), from a collective emic point of view, what it means to be an outsider and what it means to belong.  

These interviews and the resultant analyses follow the interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) method. Due to its interest in the painstaking examination of idiographic experiences and their various hermeneutic layers, IPA methodology is perfectly suited to the investigation of accounts dealing with harassment, violence, displacement, belonging, and identity. In light of Irit Rogoff’s (2000) notion of active *unbelonging*, and with the desire to move beyond spaces of displacement to construct new relations, this paper concludes by presenting lived trans practices of spatial resistance, navigation, and occupation, through which our own spaces and relations—*transbelongings*—take shape between and beyond the margins of what is prescribed.

SP  
Mediante el análisis de nueve entrevistas semi-estructuradas a personas trans de varias nacionalidades (Suecia, Puerto Rico, Israel, Reino Unido, Australia, Argentina, EEUU, Alemania) residiendo en Berlín, esta ponencia trata de documentar sus experiencias a la hora de navegar el ‘siempre deviniendo’ (*always becoming*) interior/exterior de la identidad trans en relación con el espacio público, la seguridad y la noción del hogar. En lugar de percibirlos como marginales, externos u ‘otros’, esta ponencia sitúa los desplazamientos trans (tales como la migración forzada, el alejamiento o la exclusión en algunos espacios públicos) en el centro de otras redes de relaciones. Esto nos permite re-imaginar y re-orientar (Ahmed 2006), desde un punto de vista colectivo emic, lo que significa ‘estar-fuera’ (*to be an outsider*), y lo que significa pertenecer.

Estas entrevistas y las reflexiones posteriores siguen el método de análisis fenomenológico interpretativo (IPA). Debido a su interés por el análisis de experiencias idiográficas y sus varias capas hermenéuticas, la metodología IPA es idónea para llevar a cabo una investigación que se ocupa de cuestiones como el acoso, la violencia, el desplazamiento, la pertenencia y la identidad. A partir del concepto de ‘des-pertenencia activa’ (*active unbelonging*)

**Sites Queer: Technologies, Spaces, and Otherness**

Conference 45
This paper centers on the subversive dance pedagogies of two queer Haitian dance artists in Port-au-Prince. Queer activist and performer Yonel Charles’s labors are twofold: he is artistic director and performer in an LGBT-inclusive performance group that develops work derived from Vodou aesthetics, and he is a peer-health educator for LGBT communities in urban Haiti. Boston-based choreographer and dancer Jean Appolon travels each summer to Port-au-Prince—the city of his youth—and directs a summer dance institute for young Haitians with very little dance training. In these summer intensives, Appolon teaches a number of different movement techniques, but it is in his transmission of the Haitian folkloric repertoire that his most transgressive work is accomplished. Appolon’s corporeal emphasis on the feminine within the Haitian repertoire offers young Haitian students of all genders a route to bodily fortification and power, opening space for young effeminate boys and teenage girls to be free in their bodily expression. While the space of his classes are seen by many from the outside as “too queer,” it is precisely these embodied freedoms that intervene in the heteromasculine and patriarchal configurations of a nation that deeply underscores “proper” performances of Haitianess. I highlight how these artist-activists seize their dance work as pedagogies that instruct young, marginalized, gender non-conforming, and sexually-transgressive Haitians in living differently with care.
activistas aprovechan su trabajo en la danza como pedagogías para empoderar a haitianos jóvenes, marginados, no-binarios y sexualmente transgresivos.

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WITNESSING QUEER FLIGHTS: JOSUÉ AZOR’S PHOTO-DOCUMENTARY OF LOUGAWOU IMAGES IN THE CONTEMPORARY ERA OF ANTI-HOMOSEXUAL UNREST IN HAITI

“Dedouble” is Haitian Kreyòl vernacular that means teleportation and metamorphosis. Through it, the body labors to unbind itself from time, place, socio-cultural conventions, and heteropatriarchal prescriptions. This presentation explores feminist and queer registers of *dedouble* by examining how Haitian documentary photographer Josué Azor images the opaque lifeworlds of male-women and men who desire men who self-present and self-double as hyper sexual and feminine. I translate this self-presentation as *lagouwou*, inspired by Haitian queers’ appropriation of the supernatural creature into their worldview. In popular lore, the *lagouwou* is gendered female and appears human and non-descript by day. She is a winged creature who sheds her skin at night and preys on children. Narratives of the *lagouwou* disclose longstanding cultural and historical panic about these women’s ability to transcend oppressive ideologies and social scripts.

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TRANSFORMISMO: A SPATIAL, CULTURAL, AND RACIAL INTERVENTION IN CHICAGO'S QUEER AND LATINX COMMUNITIES

This paper aims to propose *transformismo* as a queer intervention which disrupts hegemonic discourses in queer geographies, Latinx culture, and US racial dynamics through performance. The focus of this study is *Cabaret Parodia*, a Latinx queer performance group based out of Chicago whose parodies—performed in Spanish and in drag—engage with Chicago’s Latinx queer sites. Cabaret Parodia’s presentations enact what performance theorist Ramon Rivera-Severa names in his text, *Performing Queer Latinidad: Dance, Sexuality, Politics*. Estas manifestaciones involucran intérpretes latinos icónicos, figuras históricas (sean queer o no), idioma, lugares y las vivencias propias de los *performers*. La localización geográfica de Cabaret Parodia, Chicago, da forma a una localización e identidad queer latina en una ciudad reconocida por su inmensa segregación racial.
The queer framework has shaken up the archives. By challenging the cultural insistence of a single, univocal, and disciplined view of identity, queer approaches and readings have spurred the revision and use of new terms and unusual tools from which to question a broader arch of texts and contexts, from Modernity back to Premodernity. In this paper, I propose a re-reading of the effects of the layers of translations of Fray Ramón Pané’s book, *Account of the Antiquities of the Indians*. In 1494, Pané was tasked with researching the system of the Taínos. As part of his process, he describes his interactions, while also commenting, interpreting, discarding, and disagreeing with the material he appears to be documenting. Yet, at one point, the text speaks of how the Taíno men—after having been abandoned by their women—worked on several tree trunks that were then carved. These trees, which were neither male nor female, were shaped to take the form of women and their genitalia, a mimetic exercise of construction of the other striking in its underscoring of artificiality in the process. In this way, as an informant, Pané unknowingly describes the fluidity and plurality in the mix of identity, gender, and sexuality of Taíno mythology.
instancia significativa aparece en el relato de cómo los hombres indígenas, luego de haber sido abandonados por las mujeres, identifican unos árboles que no tienen forma ni de hombre ni de mujer. De acuerdo a Pané, estas criaturas son intervenidas por los hombres quienes los construyen como mujeres, en ejercicio mimético de los genitales y apariencia femeninas. Así el relato da cuenta de la intervención artificial para la construcción de la otredad, en este caso femenina. Identidad, género y sexualidad se cruzan en el relato, cuando el informante Pané describe la pluralidad y fluidez de las figuras de lo que se considera el marco de mitología taína.

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FIVE POINTS TOWARDS A QUEER ARCHITECTURE

EN

Architecture is full of queers but there has never really been a queer building. There is no queer architecture in the way there is classical or modern or deconstructivist architecture, or any of the regional vernaculars. Yes, certain buildings have been called queer (or gay, really), as when Susan Sontag singled out the rococo churches of Munich as “camp.” But her claim for those buildings is an ex post facto coincidence of the built environment with the affinities an audience elected for itself long after the completion of the architectural work. Sontag chose these buildings to be queer, they weren’t conceived that way.

If queerness has never had its architecture, this is a problem that architecture is well-equipped to solve. Architecture, in fact, has long been in the business of transposing cultural phenomena into principals for the construction of built form—smuggling novel architecture into culture on the grounds that the apparently radical has in fact always been there. From Alberti’s “discovery” of architecture in Vitruvius at the moment of Rome’s obsession with antiquity, to Corbusier’s induction of “Five Points”; from the artifacts of the industrial revolution, to Denise Scott Brown and Robert Venturi’s meditations on Las Vegas, architecture ritually makes itself anew by declaring the recovery of principles from some (frequently extra-disciplinary) ur-source. This paper and collection of drawings similarly identifies a queer architectonics in the dress, manner, and domestic environs of five canonical queens.

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COMING OUT: BECOMING PORNOGRAPHIC

EN

Can pornography broaden our understanding of what it means to “come out”? This question’s importance becomes evident when the mainstream media’s “coming out” narrative assumes a brand of homonormativity characterized by gay marriage, hate-crime legislation, and military inclusion. While the sexual implications of “coming out” are assumed, they are rarely examined. Today “coming out” as sexual can mean circulating one’s naked selfies across social media on a global scale.

We each become pornographic when producing, consuming, and exchanging pornographic images. We must consider how these new forms of pornographic currency subsequently expands the social potentialities of the “coming out” narrative. Can this most marginalized form of media become a platform showcasing marginalized and alternative understandings of gay identity politics?

Utilizing a Deleuzian understanding of affective becoming, I consider the symbiotic relationship that pornography has to radical politics by showcasing performers who actively reorient the idea of “coming out” from a sexual narrative into a politicized “coming out.” Like Colby Keller when he “came out” as a Trump voter, which was intended to perpetuate the destruction of the two-party system. These type of departures from gay political orthodoxies speak to
an enlivened, erratic, and rhizomatic affective sense of becoming that is, according to Deleuze and Guattari, "perpetually in construction": Keller stresses the messy journey of becoming as a process, over the linearity associated with a sexual understanding of "coming out." Drawing from these concepts, "becoming out" and "becoming pornographic" are ideas rich in potential to offer us wider and more radical political visions.

Actualmente la idea de “salir del closet” en los medios de comunicación se conforma a la homonormatividad caracterizada por el matrimonio homosexual, la legislación sobre los delitos de odio y la inclusión de los gays en el ejército. Sin embargo, rara vez examinamos las implicaciones sexuales de “salir del closet”. Tales consideraciones adquieren una nueva urgencia en estos tiempos cuando las redes sociales nos ofrecen la oportunidad de circular nuestras selfies desnudas alrededor del mundo. Cada uno de nosotros se deviene pornográfico cuando produce, consume e intercambia imágenes pornográficas en espacios aparentemente no sexuales. Debemos considerar cómo estas nuevas formas de intercambio pornográfico expanden las potencialidades sociales de las políticas de identidad gay. ¿Pueden estos medios marginados convertirse en una plataforma que muestre un nuevo tipo de “salida” en la que se puedan expresar alternativas a las políticas de identidad gay?

Utilizando la idea devenir de Deleuze, considero la relación simbiótica que la pornografía tiene con las políticas radicales. Analizo a los artistas que reorientan la idea de “salir del closet” de una narrativa sexual a una “salida” politizada. Por ejemplo, Colby Keller “salió” como simpatizante de Donald Trump, con la intención de destruir el sistema bipartidista de los Estados Unidos. Este tipo de desviaciones de las ortodoxias políticas homosexuales se refieren a un sentido afectivo animado, errático y rizomático del devenir que está “perpetuamente en construcción” (Deleuze y Guattari). Keller enfatiza el complicado proceso de devenir, a diferencia de la linealidad implícita en la comprensión sexual de “salir del closet”. Basado en estas ideas, “salir del closet” y “devenir pornográfico” son conceptos con el potencial para ofrecernos visiones políticas más radicales.

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Panel Presentation

Reclaiming cultural gateways and sovereign queer sacred roles in our Indigenous societies require dramatic courage and dynamic action. A byproduct of this labor aims to support healthier intersectional nation-states. This moderated panel discussion activates perspectives offered from diverse esteemed Indigenous queer artists, curators, educators, and mobilizers that use their practices to create safe spaces for themselves and those that are not yet strong enough to step forward in self-generated power to help heal and enrich communities.

First-hand accounts in the field are illustrated through international, Indigenous, and interdisciplinary art projects, as well as personal journeys. These narratives illuminate the challenges and triumphs in the pursuit to erect new totems and open quantum portals to the creative queer Indigenous imaginary. The knowledge shared is informed by ways of ancestral cultural memory, academic research, and accompanied by images projected for the audience. We are committed to cultural continuums and the generative transformations of global Indigenous queer kinship networks, and welcome audience members to self-identify and participate in this necessary movement.
La reclamación de alternativas culturales de los principales roles queer en nuestras sociedades indígenas requiere de gran valor y acciones dinámicas. Este panel de discusión revela distintas perspectivas ofrecidas por diversos y aclamados artistas, curadores, educadores y facilitadores indígenas. Los utilizan su práctica para crear espacios seguros, tanto para ellos como para quienes aún no tienen fuerza suficiente para avanzar con contundencia, y así ayudar a sanar y enriquecer sus comunidades.

En este panel se discutirán proyectos artísticos interdisciplinarios de índole internacional e indígenas, a la vez que trayectos individuales. Estas narrativas brindan luz sobre los retos y logros que existen en la búsqueda de erigir nuevos tótems y abrir portales cuánticos para el imaginario queer indígena. El conocimiento se comparte mediante formas de memoria cultural ancestral y investigación académica, y estará acompañado de imágenes proyectadas para la audiencia. Estamos comprometidos con la continuidad cultural y las transformaciones de redes de parentesco globales, sobre todo aquellas que son indígenas queer. Invitamos a los miembros del público a participar de este movimiento.

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SAME COUNTRY, DIFFERENT WORLD: MAKING THE CASE FOR THE “INTRANATIONAL” SEXILE

Después de 20 años, Manolo Guzmán usó el término “sexilio” para definir minorías (sexo y género) que se van de sus países natales en búsqueda de comunidades más acogedoras. A través de este concepto, reflexionó sobre sus propias migraciones regionales para dar contexto a las motivaciones políticas, intelectuales y personales que los inspiraron a solicitar proyectos lésbicos en la edición “Lesbians in the City” de la revista lésbica Sinister Wisdom. ¿Cuál es el papel del barrio LGBTQ+ para crear y sostener los derechos de la comunidad? ¿Cómo afecta esta comunidad a la migración intranacional? ¿Cómo se transforma la cultura de un pueblo que tiene una “diáspora” intranacional queer? ¿Cómo afecta el costo de vida a los barrios gay? Documenté mi participación en desfiles puertorriqueños y dyke en Portland, OR, Chicago, IL, Cleveland, OH y New York, NY, con fotos, reflexiones y notas de campo. Con estos documentos y estas recolecciones, comienzo a contestar estas preguntas.

Ashley Coleman-Taylor, PhD
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AFREKETE AS ARCHIVE: TOWARD DIASPORIC BLACK FEMME EROTIC SUBJECTIVITY

En el siglo XX, Manolo Guzmán utilizó el término “sexilio” para definir minorías (sexo y género) que se van de sus países natales en búsqueda de comunidades más acogedoras. A través de este concepto, reflexionó sobre sus propias migraciones regionales para dar contexto a las motivaciones políticas, intelectuales y personales que los inspiraron a solicitar proyectos lésbicos en la edición “Lesbians in the City” de la revista lésbica Sinister Wisdom. ¿Cuál es el papel del barrio LGBTQ+ para crear y sostener los derechos de la comunidad? ¿Cómo afecta esta comunidad a la migración intranacional? ¿Cómo se transforma la cultura de un pueblo que tiene una “diáspora” intranacional queer? ¿Cómo afecta el costo de vida a los barrios gay? Documenté mi participación en desfiles puertorriqueños y dyke en Portland, OR, Chicago, IL, Cleveland, OH y New York, NY, con fotos, reflexiones y notas de campo. Con estos documentos y estas recolecciones, comienzo a contestar estas preguntas.

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AFREKETE AS ARCHIVE: TOWARD DIASPORIC BLACK FEMME EROTIC SUBJECTIVITY

El objetivo de este artículo es...
realidades y nuestras ideas del futuro. Me interesa en los modos en que la feminidad africana queer como una figura ‘femme’ negra, cuyo poder puede interpretarse como transgresiva a través del discurso religioso disperso africano; y segundo, mostrar las maneras en que un análisis de archivo sobre Afrekete puede ser utilizado para celebrar y honrar a las femmes negras en las ‘costas’ —en lo fluido, y la intersección dinámica entre mundos, identidades, temporalidad y espacialidad. Utilizo el trabajo de Omiseke’eke Tinsley y de M. Jacqui Alexander para posicionar la subjetividad erótica como un lente a través del cual explorar la femme de la diáspora africana y el proceso de auto-creación que forja tanto nuestra realidad existencial como nuestras ideas sobre el futuro. Estoy interesado en las maneras en que la subjetividad erótica de la femme negra, como la de Afrekete, puede informar un análisis crítico de encarnación que activa lo divino. Utilizando la patografía de Audre Lorde, Zami, y su invocación de Afrekete, exploré como la subjetividad erótica de femme negra de Afrekete informa la autodeterminación y autonomía de Lorde mientras ella redefine el sexo, la sexualidad y las relaciones. Mis impresiones sobre la subjetividad erótica de la femme negra, son el resultado de una praxis profundamente personal, espiritual e intercultural. A través de esta ponencia, propongo que un entendimiento de la diáspora de la ‘femme’ negra debe estar sustentado en un archivo de subjetividad erótica queer.

La meta de esta ponencia es, primero, posicionar la figura Afrekete de Audre Lorde como una figura ‘femme’ negra, cuyo poder puede ser interpretado a través del discurso religioso disperso africano; y segundo, demostrar las maneras en que un análisis de archivo sobre Afrekete puede ser utilizado para celebrar y honrar a las femmes negras en las ‘costas’ —en lo fluido, y la intersección dinámica entre mundos, identidades, temporalidad y espacialidad. Utilizo el trabajo de Omiseke’eke Tinsley y de M. Jacqui Alexander para posicionar la subjetividad erótica como un lente a través del cual explorar las femmes de la diáspora africana y el proceso de auto-creación que forja tanto nuestra realidad existencial como nuestras ideas sobre el futuro. Estoy interesado en las maneras en que la subjetividad erótica de la femme negra, como la de Afrekete, puede informar un análisis crítico de encarnación que activa lo divino. Utilizando la patografía de Audre Lorde, Zami, y su invocación de Afrekete, exploro como la subjetividad erótica de femme negra de Afrekete informa la autodeterminación y autonomía de Lorde mientras ella redefine el sexo, la sexualidad y las relaciones. Mis impresiones sobre la subjetividad erótica de la femme negra, son el resultado de una praxis profundamente personal, espiritual e intercultural. A través de esta ponencia, propongo que un entendimiento de la diáspora de la ‘femme’ negra debe estar sustentado en un archivo de subjetividad erótica queer.

I wonder why the LGBTQ community needs to “write our history”. Why not write about the Here-and-the-Now? We thrive in a persistent present which, according to Giorgio Agamben, portrays us as primitives who open the eyes to an incipient, unspeakable Now that is never still, shuns structure, is ungraspable. As Agamben suggests, we “stand” on the broken back of the present, always missing our date with the Now. Like Agamben’s, Doreen Massey’s practices of space-emplacement run through social space-time constructions requiring we “stand” here-and-now. These practices may be symbolic and/or factual, metaphorical and/or located, their goal being “taking a stand”. I suggest this is a political act with regard to gender issues in a world instituted by multiple spaces that, according to Massey, cross-cut, intersect, align, challenge, and/or antagonize one another. I argue that queer spaces and emplacements are dislocated, fractured, and paradoxical, requiring constant space-emplacement reappropriation as a concrete right to citizenship to be secured through activism and resistance.

To test my argument on securing queer spaces and emplacements, I will discuss fragments from Manuel Ramos Otero’s La Novelabingo (1976), Angel Lozada’s La patografía (1998), and Mayda Colón’s Prosac (2015). These texts have a democratic approach to gender, condemn male privilege in gay communities, seek emplacing women and lesbians, and stand against racial, political, and national prejudice. Each face the present, and stand Here and Now.

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**Prototyping for Emergent Queer Spaces: Building Queer Futurities Through Affirmative Autoethnography**

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*Undergraduate Student - BFA Design and Computation Arts Concordia University*

+nènè myriam konaté  
*Co-founder, Collective Culture Montreal*  
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**EN**  
The practice of queering space does not seek to embed a given environment with a visible orientation of non-normative sexuality or gender, but rather to disrupt and critique a reality in which cis-heteronormativity is rendered the norm. To queer space is to point to the limits of current realities that do not adequately consider the interests and safety of marginalized bodies, and in doing so, points to other possibilities. Similarly, improvisation and intersectionality ask that we develop complex understandings of ourselves as well as the contexts in which we operate by moving beyond dyadic conceptions and practicing radical openness. They ask that we stand firmly in our yes’s and that we ask why and how individual experiences are made possible in order to then explore the ways in which our understandings of past and present are inextricably related to our ability to manifest certain futures.

Drawing from this framework, Prototyping for Emergent Queer Spaces acts as an incubator for the co-creation of a queer design methodology rooted in the (re)contextualization of individual and collective narratives that channel radical openness as an alternative to increasingly impenetrable architectures. The workshop commences with a
presentation on Queering The Map and the insights it has generated in regards to the potentials of personal narratives as blueprints for how we might develop queer spaces. Participants will then be asked to share a moment, memory, or history of queer experience—noting the implicating objects/architectures/infrastructures. These stories will then be (re)contextualized through nènè myriam konaté’s ‘Yes and... also’ improvisation exercises, mobilizing our narratives as affirmations that encourage us to say ‘yes’ to ourselves and each other, in order to imagine what can and/or what could be. Drawing from these exercises, we will co-create a design methodology, as posters, that enables queer futurity. Using this methodology as our common ground, we will enter a rapid-prototyping session to develop a series of artifactual prototypes for Emergent Queer Spaces that will make tangible the outcomes of the workshop and serve as catalysts for the continued reimagining of a queerer, more radically open world.

La práctica de queering space –o hacer queer un espacio– no busca dar una orientación visible de sexualidad o género no-normativos a un ambiente en particular, sino más bien busca interrumpir y criticar una realidad regida por la cis-heteronormatividad. Queering space muestra los límites de ciertas realidades que no consideran adecuadamente los intereses y la seguridad de los cuerpos marginados –busca apuntar a otras posibilidades. La improvisación y la interseccionalidad exigen que vayamos más allá de las concepciones diádicas, que mantengamos una permeabilidad radical para poder ensanchar tanto la comprensión compleja de nosotros mismos, así como la de nuestros contextos.

Este proyecto requiere de afirmaciones y preguntas firmes sobre las especificidades de cada experiencia para estudiar cómo las interpretaciones del pasado y del presente están vinculadas a los futuros que pueden o podrían materializarse. ‘Prototipos para espacios queer emergentes’ utiliza los modelos mencionados anteriormente, convirtiéndose una incubadora para la co-creación de una metodología de diseño queer arraigada en la (re)contextualización de historias individuales y colectivas, inspiradas en una permeabilidad radical alternativa de aquellas estructuras sociales que parecieran volverse cada vez más impenetrables.

El taller comienza con una presentación sobre Queering The Map y los avances que el proyecto ha generado sobre el potencial de las historias personales y su importancia para el desarrollo de espacios queer. Luego, los participantes serán invitados a compartir un momento, una memoria o una historia de su experiencia queer, señalando objetos/arquitecturas/infraestructuras implicadas en sus relatos. Estas narraciones serán (re)contextualizadas usando los ejercicios ‘Yes, and... also’ de nènè myriam konaté, con el fin de movilizar su historias de forma afirmativa e imaginar “lo que podría ser”. Partiendo de estos ejercicios, crearemos juntos una metodología de diseño, concebido como posters, cuyo único fin es el de fomentar futuros queer. Finalmente usaremos esta metodología durante una sesión de
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Work in Progress Show

LOS SITES

February 7–27, 2019
@José Torres-Martínó Gallery, Ground Floor, School of Architecture, University of Puerto Rico, San Juan, Puerto Rico

Regner Ramos
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MICHAEL
LOS SITES: SPATIAL SPECULATIONS OF QUEER SAN JUAN

In front of you—whether in these pages or in the actual space of the show—are a series of architectural models called Los Sites. Although they each depict the location of a queer space in Puerto Rico, you won’t find their complete stories here—whether ‘here’, for you, means this book or this gallery.

Like the stories of queer people and their spaces in Puerto Rico, my Sites Queer research is fragmented and scattered in different locations: a conference in the School of Architecture’s auditorium, a design exhibition in its gallery space, a self-publishing performative website (ElSite.xyz), a site-specific workshop called AQUÍ, as well as other sites of discussion that will emerge in the coming months.

Divided into a series of experiments and speculations, Sites Queer is a research project funded by FIP1 (Fondos Institucionales Para la Investigación) exploring how mobile technologies are changing and informing queer practices and queer spaces in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Through the project, I attempt to validate queerness within architectural discourse creating a cultural register of the public spaces where it unfolds today, particularly when in Puerto Rico, the architecture discipline has been unconcerned with creating an architectural record, history, or theorization of LGBTQ spaces and practices.

To do this, I borrow architectural representations, methods, and vocabulary, and I queer them in an attempt to question their established meanings and contest their fixity. The recurrent focus of the word site is in itself part of the discussion. In architecture, a site is a fixed, measurable, quantifiable plot of land often regulated by governmental regulations and normative, political structures. Through research, writing, drawing, and model-making, I attempt to destabilize the fixed notion of sites by discussing them as digital spaces, as well as sites of queer identity-formation and subjective becoming. In this way, my research project discusses three relational structures: queer bodies, spaces, and technologies.

That my Sites Queer research project is primarily split into two different methods—architectural model-making (Los Sites) and performative writing (El Site)—is, admittedly, part caprice, part strategy. Throughout the process, fickleness and subjective preferences have played an important role, not just in referencing formative spaces during my boyhood, but also in opening up possibilities for unforeseen and accidental themes that have organically surfaced through model-making and writing stories.

Los Sites and El Site are a product of research by design—something I became interested in while conducting my doctoral studies at The Bartlett School of Architecture. My project parts from the premise that research, particularly within the humanities, should embrace its subjective nature instead of fighting against it. This is something poststructuralist theorists Donna Haraway and Rosie Braidotti emphasized in their work, aiming to destabilize any illusion that a researcher is fully objective.
Instead, Haraway and Braidotti argue that a subject (researcher or otherwise) is embodied within a continuous state of becoming—fragmented, never fixed, never whole, and always situated from within their own subjective specificity. This is also what architect and feminist theorist Jane Rendell upholds, when in her book, *Site Writing: The Architecture of Art Criticism*, she states that her aim is “to articulate the position of the writing subject and her choice of objects of study and subject matters, processes of intellectual enquiry and creative production”. Like Rendell, I too am interested in exploring what kind of writing and architectural production can emerge from acknowledging my own identity during boyhood and the sites of queerness in rural Puerto Rico, in the Aguadilla municipalities. These spaces are relevant to me, but they are not singular to me. As a tool to generate conversations and discussions, this research’s ambition is that readers of *El Site* and visitors of *Los Sites* might be able to relate to these seemingly trivial and mundane stories and places. I suspect that at times they may resonate strongly with others’ experiences growing up as queer citizens of a patriarchal, misogynist, and religious Island.

Although they find their beginnings at the rural, northwest coast of the Island, like myself, *Los Sites* ultimately extend to the capital of Puerto Rico. Throughout its recent history, San Juan has had a strong relationship with queer spaces embedded within its urban fabric. Due to the hostile climate surrounding homosexuality, its criminalization, the strong presence of Christianity, the death of members of the community during the AIDS crisis, the high numbers of migration towards the US mainland, among other factors, the history of San Juan’s LGBTQ spaces—let alone those of the other, more conservative 77 municipalities—is dislocated, marginal, limited, and silent (Laureano, 2016). *Los Sites* is my attempt at creating a register of San Juan’s urban spaces today. These are often ephemeral, appropriating heteronormative public spaces and queering them through short-term, non-straight spatial practices, artistic performances, nighttime activities, and cultural events. The appropriation of urban spaces by queer Puerto Ricans carries on a legacy which dates back to the 1960s, when the first queer urban circuits where identified and documented. These are spaces that have been occupied—at times illicitly—to fulfill a series of needs: visibility, rights, work, sociability, desire, and sex.

As speculative models, *Los Sites*, reference and point towards spatial queerness. They are architectural provocations that suggest recurrent themes in my research of San Juan’s queer spaces: fragmentation, mobility, unfixity, displacement, constraint, whim, and ephemerality. Through *Los Sites* I seek to undo knowability, question normative structures, dispute architectural conventions, and confront architectural discourse.

To do this, I generate certain gestures, such as removing the actual queer buildings and reimagining them as single marbles, imprinting out-of-bounds shapes onto the site’s surface for the marbles to occupy. The models are also movable objects, and they can be reconfigured and rearranged amongst themselves, creating new landscapes and topographies. Through their different heights and color schemes, they allow multiple, accidental, and surprising readings, suggesting spaces of programatic ambiguity and ephemerality, as well as spaces that are Othered, often invisible to those outside of the queer circuit.

These design decisions consider the importance of architecturally discussing queerness, while also acknowledging that queer spaces are at times strategically hidden as a way of protecting themselves and ensuring the safety of those inside them. These formal gestures—and design strategies—are rooted in significant moments of queerness during my own boyhood. In this way, although *Los Sites* are registers of particular queer locations within San Juan, they also act as my own autobiographical artifacts.
The following models are a cultural and architectural register of queer spaces in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Many of these are bars and nightclubs, but others are educational spaces, such as the University of Puerto Rico’s Río Piedras Campus, which acts as an unmissable hub for identity experimentation and queer performance. Several of these queer spaces were identified by myself and by my research assistants, while others were revealed, discussed, and disclosed by queer people that I interviewed during September and October 2018, as part of my research.

This project started in January 2018. As it’s progressed and time’s gone by, more and more queer spaces—in San Juan and in other municipalities—have been brought to my attention. This work-in-progress show includes a selection of sites materialized as architectural models, while others exist in a series of map drawings, creating a spatial cartography of ephemeral queer spaces that are there one minute, gone the next.

You’ll notice that four of the site models are located outside of Puerto Rico’s capital city. These are rural sites in the Island that, in different ways, are related to key moments in my life—in my becoming a queer subject during childhood and on the threshold of adulthood. I’ve included them for two reasons. First, they were the catalysts and origins for Los Sites. These locations are largely responsible for the project’s bizarre and playful aesthetic, as well as for the project’s autoethnographic tone, where I mark myself as a subjectively situated researcher and designer. Secondly, they act as important reminders that queer spaces can be found anywhere, not just in cities. It’s my hope that as this research develops, I’ll be able to trace more spaces, meet more people, and document more stories of how queerness unfolds not just in secondary cities, but, very importantly, in rural spaces in Puerto Rico.

Each model has a title. Each model has a story. These stories are narrated and published on El Site.
The Yard That Could Also Be a Square
(My elementary school)
Aguadilla, Puerto Rico

The green square at Carib Christian School in Aguadilla, Puerto Rico wasn’t all green. There weren’t even any trees there. The school’s entire site was made up of a mix between rock slabs, patches of grass and red, powdery dust that looked like something you’d find on the surface of Mars. With hundreds of micro feet stomping every day during recess making it impossible for grass to grow, the common areas for us to play (green square included) left us covered in red—a nightmare for our parents to clean off of our gray (for boys) and pink (for girls) uniforms. While some kids’ uniforms were dirty from sliding into home, from falling from the monkey bars or from tripping at a race, my knees were dusty red from all the kneeling that went on at the square’s frequent games of marbles.

The green square wasn’t actually square. It was rectangular, with its longer sides facing west and east, and its shorter sides facing north and south. Its perimeter was delimited by a wooden fence painted maroon, to match our uniform’s pants/trousers/pantalones. A sidewalk bordered the square on the outside of the fence. Its north side faced one of the classroom buildings, west faced the teacher’s lounge (formerly the Pre-kinder classrooms), south faced the school’s Baptist chapel and the administration offices, while east faced the pickup area’s roundabout.

That square was one of my earliest encounters with the complex dynamics of public spaces, and it’s the site where I was first made aware that my queerness needed to be hidden. The square—embedded with the heteronormative coding of most Christian locales—was the hierarchical space of the school, one of the most openly visible spaces and—with the roundabout, the restrooms and water fountains adjacent—one of its most highly transited, controlled and policed spaces. Looking back, the irony of being told to hide who I was at that particular site isn’t lost on me. At the time though, it added immense pressure that would partially define my early years of boyhood, particularly since even God was there on the south side scrutinizing my every move. And I’m sure even He heard what I said to Michael.

–Published on El Site on May 5, 2018
Barrio Piedras Blancas
(My home, our bulldogs’ house, and la casa de Mama Lucy)
Aguada, Puerto Rico

… I recently redrew our Piedras Blancas home’s topography on a piece of tracing paper that I placed on top of a printed site plan that my research assistant prepared for me in my office. Retracing its contour lines, remembering what might be what, speculating on distances, noticing discrepancies on the should-be-accurate-topography, attempting to accurately offset the in-between contour lines, I thought to myself, “What’s the point?” The lines on the drawing said certain things but meant nothing. I noticed a small square next to my house—that, too, reduced to a square—and I recognized it: the bulldogs’ house. I was too little to remember them, but the bulldogs’ house, once they were no longer with us, became my playhouse. I would sweep the floor, tidying up before my cousin, Willito, would ‘come home from work’ to greet his ‘wife’. Played by me.

–Published on El Site on April 6, 2018
Los Sites: Spatial Speculations of Queer San Juan Work in Progress Show

03

*Río Is Hot*  
(La IUPI)  
San Juan, Puerto Rico

04

*Río Is Hot*  
(Casa Ruth, La Beckett, and Librería Mágica)  
San Juan, Puerto Rico
05

*Río Is Hot*
(El Vidy’s)
San Juan, Puerto Rico

06

*Río Is Hot*
(Club 77, Mondo Bizarri, Tiki Bar, Paseo de Diego, and Baker’s Bakery)
San Juan, Puerto Rico
That September I decided to leave the club, focus on writing and eventually work toward opening my own club by myself. It would be a queer club specifically. But I took De Show with me and we kind of hopped around different venues in Río Piedras. We did one at El Local, but mostly it was in Río Piedras; we were at La Beckett at one point. We did a rooftop party there after their karaoke; that was really chaotic cause it was really crowded and full of their karaoke crowd. We were at El Ensayo for a while, we had an issue there with the manager not showing up one night—they’re under new management now, it’s nothing against whoever’s managing now. That night we ended up at Baker’s Bakery last minute. It was our queer pride show and we were like “What are we gonna do? They’re not even here to open the door and it’s 9:30.” So Baker’s graciously took us in and we performed there. Then, the hopping around was a lot, so we settled in at the Tiki Bar—El Escondite—that’s right next to Mondo. It’s no longer open. We kept running monthly, stopped during Hurricane Maria. Then we did a couple of farewell shows for people at el Paseo de Diego, with a generator and the spotlight from the police [she laughs]. We’ve done shows at the Tiki and Mondo since. When Mondo was running with a generator, we did it beside Mondo, instead of just using the generator power for the Tiki, because it’s so much bigger. Now we have a campaign to open a new bar, called LoverBar.

—Published on El Site on January 7, 2019
El Monte de Abuelo
(My great grandfather’s house and woodlands, my grandparent’s house, and my uncle’s abandoned house)
Aguada, Puerto Rico

-Willito: “Vamos a hacer una promesa de que nunca vamos a pelear.”
-Yo: “Okay.”
–Published on El Site in Summer 2018
I Fell in Love at the Seaside
(Hyatt Regency Cerromar)
Dorado, Puerto Rico

I’m sitting on a beach lounger at the once-glorious Hyatt Regency Cerromar. It’s sunset, but the cloudy sky hides all orange and reveals only purple. We’ve spent a few days together at my family’s timeshare after we met on Myspace this 2006, where we immediately became fast mates, as you people say. I’ve given up on explaining to my friends that there’s nothing going on between you and I, and that I actually like your girlfriend very much.

I’m watching you throw your flip-flop in the air and catching it over and over as you leave footprints in the sand. I chuckle to myself; at 6’2” you’re like an oversized kid. We’re in tropical paradise, but you are what’s exotic (I’m a sucker for your accent, among many, many other things). It’s dawning on me that I’m suddenly overwhelmed with happiness which must by why these tears are trickling down my cheeks, and like that song from The Kooks you yourself introduced me to, I—alarmingly, trepidatiously, bittersweetly, powerlessly, giving in—realize this is love.

You will not, cannot, correspond.
I’ve never felt more like myself than I have since you arrived. I’ll never come back here without thinking of you.

—Published on El Site on October 2, 2018
Bendito Sea Santurce
(Tía Maria’s Liquor Store)
San Juan, Puerto Rico

Bendito Sea Santurce
(El Hangar and El Nie Bar)
San Juan, Puerto Rico
¿Ay, Pa’ La Placita?
(Asere Cubano and El Patio de Lila)
San Juan, Puerto Rico

Polo Norte, Old San Juan
(La Sombrilla Rosa and Polo Norte Gay Bar and Lounge)
San Juan, Puerto Rico

… I think a lot of us were shocked when on May 26, 2018, Polo Norte’s profile picture on Facebook was updated to a picture showing the bar and a Snapchat Bitmoji character saying, “Bye!” Next to the Bitmoji cartoon—presumably of bar-owner Alexandre Duprey—was the Polo Norte logo. And overlaid across it: ‘Closed’ in big, red letters.

It’s not the first time a gay bar in San Juan has to close, of course, especially given the Island’s financial status and its increasing migration from its inhabitants to the US—members of the LGBTQ community included. It’s always a big loss when any of these spaces close. I’ve said goodbye to a handful throughout the past 10 years—among these have been Krash Klub, S Lounge, Starz, Jirafa Verde, Heaven and Hell, and now Polo Norte.

–Published on El Site on June 27, 2018
Here’s how to play a game of marbles: draw a circle approximately three feet in diameter on solid ground. If you’re playing on a concrete, stone or asphalt surface you can use a rock or chalk to draw the circle. If you’re playing on soil—like I used to do in my elementary’s school square, where the soil resembled red powder—you can use a stick or even your finger to outline the diameter. You’re guaranteed to get a little dirty, but in a post N1H1 world, that’s what we carry hand sanitizer of all scents and fragrances for.

You’ll also need at least one opponent, otherwise you’ll be competing against yourself (that’s okay sometimes). The aim is to—by flinging your marbles with control and precision—acquire your opponents’ marbles by knocking them outside the circle. Now, the exact rules and game variations, I don’t remember because I never cared for them. I played with marbles because they were pretty. They reminded me of the first time I saw a Chinese Checkers set in casa de Mama Lucy, and although I didn’t know how to play, the geometric order, the clarity of the elements that composed the game, enthralled me.

Marbles was one of the few games in Puerto Rico where it was okay for boys to admire and play with something because it was beautiful. Certainly, it was about competition, about playing outside and getting dirty (but not really), but it was also about wanting particular marbles. Boys and girls alike wanted the biggest marble, or the rarest one, the most colorful one or the one whose materiality was different from the rest.

The most common marbles are made of glass and come in different sizes. The prettiest ones are the bolón, the biggest ones. Most of them have swirls of color on the inside—the famous cats-eye. Others were transparent and tinted in different colors, and a variation of these came with specks of colors on their surface. Some marbles were metallic, and although they could be smooth, they were most frequently textured with specks. Others resembled planets in the Solar System. We also had opaque marbles that came in white, with swirls of colors on the outside rather than inside, resembling pieces of candy. This wasn’t entirely arbitrary, they represented hierarchies for marbles. For instance, if you owned a zebra—a glass marble with a continuous, colored spiral inside it—you needed to...
watch out because someone was bound to want to win it over.

The hierarchy and variation of marbles meant that each kid, prior to buying a set—which came packed inside a net-like bag—would peruse the contents carefully to try to get the most varied set with the most amount of valuable marbles. Marbles allowed kids to engage with beauty, color and ornament, correlating a sense of value to them strengthened by the fact that each marble was unique, special. Through the game’s objective, contesting their ownership through a set of rules and gamified performances, marbles acted as un-gendered artifacts of desire.

This became particularly palpable when performing the “sin soplin” oral command. You see, any time someone dropped their marbles outside of a match—and if you’ve ever interacted with a marble, you’ll no doubt recall that due to their spherical shape and material properties, a rogue marble that hits hard ground will bounce around at surprising speed, zooming past in every direction, while its owner frenetically tries to catch them in mid-air; they risked losing them to anyone who caught them and blew on them; this is where “sin soplin” came in to effect, which roughly translates to “without blowing”. Uttering it out loud meant that from that moment on, ownership of the rogue marble remained with the original owner. No blowing mattered.

When I was in the fourth grade, I remember one of my friends, Vanessa, accidentally knocking over her container packed with marbles during class (that was so Vanessa). It was amazing. I remember it vividly, it was as if time froze, and I saw it happen in all its glory, while today retaining the ability to replay it over and over in my head in HD and surround sound.

With a disproportionally loud clatter that left our teacher, Mr. Pérez, paralyzed in silence in front of the chalkboard, Vanessa’s marbles skyrocketed, bounced, clashed and rolled in every direction; with each bounce of each marble, a shrill dong echoed in the classroom walls, immediately followed by the thuds of human bodies hurling themselves on the floor, attempting to grab the marbles, blow on them, and claim legitimate, lawful ownership—in accordance to (un)official marble-playing rules—as Vanessa, bursting in tears, let out a helpless, desperate howl: “SIN SOPLIIIIN!”

—Published on El Site on July 5, 2018

I was somewhere between six and eight years old (back in the early 90s), when I, right next to the fence that outlined my elementary’s school square (or was it a yard), reached over and affectionately pinched Michael’s cheeks.

—“You’re so cute!”

—“Regner. No,” one of my teachers said in a tone that I perceived to be more out of concern than judgment, “you can’t say that to other boys.”

I must have already known it wasn’t acceptable to say those kinds of things, which is why I tried to conceal my crush on Michael (who, to be fair, was one of the cutest boys in my class) by dipping it in patronization: I’d learned it was okay for adults to say that to kids, so I thought I’d follow suit.

It didn’t work.

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Work in Progress Show
Los Sites: Spatial Speculations of Queer San Juan

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