LABELING PRACTICE: A BRAINSTORM SESSION

by Brandt Knapp and Jerome Haferd

OPRAH to RUPAUL: What would you say defines you?
RUPAUL : (laughs) Today? At this moment? ... I'm everything and nothing at all.

— excerpts from interview between Oprah Winfrey and RuPaul Charles on 16 January 2018

The Problem of Fixation

There is a bottomless hole of thought relating to identity and the naming of an architectural practice. We've worn many different hats and struggled with what to "call" our collaboration. We struggle with this question; simply devoting time to it feels indulgent. However, this brainstorm becomes a lens and foil for broader themes and pointed questions. What is an architecture practice to us, today? Fixation can mean the act of making something firm or stable. We see our practice as a set of repeated experiences and performances that ground our work as creative individuals. As we decide what to name ourselves, we ask: how does one allow for fluidity? fluidity, which, paradoxically, is our means of stability?

What's in a Name?

Labels imply naming, and, in turn, Identity. What once was an almost default position – one's last name(s), perhaps followed by "Architect" or "and Partners" – has become an existential task. Some of the naming trends: last names, acronyms, abbreviations, initials, and, more recently, play with symbols and/or an invented or enigmatic word or phrase which somehow is also "commentary" on practice.

For us, the conceptual and literal layers of identity are operative. We each inhabit identities that cut across several categories (gender, race, sexual orientation), and we are "professionals" who have been labeled artists, academics, activists; we embrace a fluid concept of identity. But how much of this fluidity should come through in a name? Or in a pronoun? Maybe we should be Her and His Architects? Another layer that we've been discussing recently is aura. How can a name embody the aura of a practice? I almost want to call ourselves Misty Green. Aura carries a connotation of hazy ambiguity. We propose a working definition that acknowledges multiple (and perhaps opposing) readings – that don't retreat behind a proclivity for romantic generalization. We could say that an androgynous person is both ultra feminine and ultra masculine – that a person has a queer aura. We like queer ideas. Does this mean we should have a queer name?

OPRAH : How do you flow from [being in drag] to the other [out of drag]...
RUPAUL : Very easy - Am I getting paid; or not getting paid?

Different Constraintiations

And, what are we naming? What entity or structure is generative for our practice? Is it a think-tank, a lab, an atelier, a studio, an agency, an office, a project, a firm, a soft, a partnership, an imaginary, a collaborative, a start-up? We engage the public. We do experimental/guerilla research material studies to find new ways to put things together. We address themes of Performance and Play, Abstract vs. Built Form, Nature and Territory. In our East Harlem studio space, we share a building with artists – mostly painters – but also a contractor/sculptor, artist/architect, and other hybrids. While we don't want to be tied down, these are the roots of our practice. Can labels help structure our work? Just as the constraints of architectural design (program, scale, codes, context, lineages) create opportunity and push creativity, labeling our practice could be generative for us. Referencing a clearly defined type provides clarity about a business's mission or project. When you hear "lab," you think "research." Our generation of architects welcomes this kind of specificity in a label, in contrast to the traditional format that places a legal entity (LLP, LLC, INC, etc.) after a name. brandt & jerome LLP? jerome & brandt architecture? Could it be that a pseudo-conventional naming model gives us more liberty than the typology approach (research, lab, etc.)?

Architecture culture isn't known for its business savviness, but we see big shifts in the last 15-20 years. Get Paid Architects? Technology and social concerns are changing work and labor structures. It is inspiring that we can collaborate with one another remotely and work on the same document simultaneously over the cloud. However, we practice best when we are rooted in our city, in our neighborhood, at a desk together. How can we ↙ ↗ rethink business strategies to incorporate new technologies within our preferred work methods? Do labels help?

RUPAUL : Drag doesn't conceal who you are, drag reveals who you really are.

You could say we are packaging our practice, and it's hard to bring up labels and names without talking about branding and marketing. This makes us uneasy! We are about to set up our Limited Liability Partnership, and that process is leading to an evolution in our identity. Maybe we should look to supercouple names or pseudonyms, like *Brangelina... Brarome? HAPP?* What remains clear is that we perform as a unit, and we are conjuring our identity.

Drag What You Will

It is important that our identity reflects our queer approach to business and our desire to learn from our tendencies. As a budding architecture office we constantly renegotiate priorities. How much time should be spent on competition entries? Applications? Grant writing? Client work? Teaching practice? Community building? Business strategy? And, how do we pay our bills? More recently, we have looked to other architects' business models. How did these practices make it through the recession? How have their priorities shaped their practice?

We want our practice to be as complicated and grounding as our identity. Some architecture groups have side practices for "bread and butter" projects. Like a writer working under a pen name, those groups might gain a ton of experience working through these projects. We find this schism in presentation and performance unsettling. We'd like to occupy our multiple territories of production and present as such. We see "passing" – as either a conceptual practice or a client-driven business – as subscription to normative structures. We are proud of our nuts and bolts projects, which teach us skills that add value for our clients. Nuts/Bolts/Architecture - NBA?

Today, architecture seems to be suffering from an identity crisis of its own, one related to authorship and existing power structures. How to use our agency, effect change and claim authorship are important questions for our generation. Becoming HaferdKnapp? As we rethink what a label is, we also ask how can we drag all of our lived experiences, interests, and methods of production into the mix to claim our practice.

OPRAH: why do you think drag is resonating so strongly right now?

RUPAUL : "There's now are a new breed of people out there - a new voice...the kids...don't identify as gay or straight - they're smart, and they're looking for a voice - almost a new belief system that transcends the 20th century - [that is completely of the 21st century...]"●

EDITOR'S NOTE

Last year in a episode of Netflix's Dear White People, out and proud Silvio advises Lionel, a shy and closeted student reporter, to "find your label! I'm a Mexican-Italian, gay, vers, top, otter pup." Labels, Silvio says, "keep people in Florida from drinking Windex."

Labels are inescapable. We often depend on them to make sense of a chaotic world. We label cans, drawings, spaces, art, and people. Labels can be blunt or nuanced; they abstract our bodies and categorize us; and they reinforce or negate identity. In this issue, we examine labels, where and why they exist (is there anywhere they do not exist?) and how they influence us. What does it mean to label someone or ourselves? Why do we label our work and the work of others? Do labels liberate us?

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↘ letters, and resumes, as part of the career workshop series.

"It's like a sex Guggenheim!"
— Anthony Vidler on Nicolas Schöffer's Centre for Sexual Leisure in Theory II

Like infantile children, students cheered and screamed from the pit as the SpaceX rocket broke through the atmosphere.
Some unfortunate students from Elizabeth Moule's studio were rejected from obtaining visas to Italy.

"On the Ground needs to become TMZ" — Spencer Fried

2/07
Professor John Durham Peters presents Weather and Its Media as part of the MED Colloquium talk.

ON THE GROUND

2/01
Professor Kyoung Sun Moon assigns Homework "#1.5"

Louis Kahn Assistant Visiting Professors Florencia Pita and Jackilin Hah Bloom received hard questions on their "Easy Work."

"'Why are they skirting around architecture?'"
"You're trying to trace culture or cite culture, but you never cite architecture, but you're architects."
"Where is the architecture in your heads?"
— Cynthia Davidson

2/02
"Those who do not know the past are condemned to repeat it."
"Release yourself from this bondage, get a pencil"
— Bob Stern

The majority of the third years headed over to New York for a reception hosted by RAMSA specifically for the students.

2/03
First years take the yellow school bus over to Columbus House to chat with clients and to tour the facilities led by director, Alison Cunningham. "Everyone's got the dream ... the house with a white picket fence."

2/04
Super Bowl LII. Some rooted for the Pats, whilst most cheered on the Eagles. Hurrahs and groans echoed the studios every play through the last few minutes.

Tom Brady supporters were too afraid-y to make an appearance after the loss.
The Rudolph Open bracket makes a racquet. Watch out for Nightfall over Twin Peaks (Dan Fetcho and Xiaohui Wen) as a favorite to win it all.

2/05
Justin Garrett Moore, a self-proclaimed "recovering" architect, delivered this year's Eero Saarinen lecture titled "Urban Fields and Design Tools." He was Just-in time for Andrew Benner's delicious Harlem Cocktail, leaving him wanting Moore.

The lecture was not without sound effects: Joel Sanders typed loudly throughout and Alan Plattus's ESPN alert sounded. Red Sox trade?

2/06
Rob McClure and Melissa DelVecchio hold a seminar in Hastings on interviewing, cover↖

SUE ME, I'M AN "ARCHITECT"

by Nicole Doan

Prior to returning to school, I indulged the luxury of spare time, spending unproductive evenings at dinners, bars, parties, and other social functions. Whether alone or with friends, I often find myself struggling to introduce myself definitively to strangers. The conversations feel the same, as though everyone is reading from the same script.

It always began with the same question. "What do you do?"

In my head, I roll my eyes and sigh, wishing that I didn't have to engage in this small talk, which ultimately leads to a level of politics that the person has no idea about – or cares about, for that matter.

"I'm an architect—I mean, designer," I stutter.

Before they can ask me to elaborate, I quickly switch topics. My response is formulaic: answer, shoot them a question, smile, and feign interest. I have this down, yet somehow I am still unsure as to how to label myself "professionally." Of course, it all comes down to a level of professionalism, according to the high and mighty NCARB.

To some, these letters mean nothing, but in the United States, the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB) determine whether or not one may call themselves an architect or even architectural designer. I tell strangers all the time that I am an architect. So sue me.

That is not a joke.

It is undoubtedly easier to introduce myself as an architect, as opposed to a designer, which could mean a plethora of things that could lead to more superfluous questions. What kind of designer? Graphic designer? No? Oh, so you make buildings? Not really? What do you mean? What kind of architecture do you do?

Perhaps I can be more specific by labeling myself as an unlicensed architect.

Me: I am an unlicensed architect!
NCARB: You can't use the term "architect" unless you are licensed.

Me: But I'm specifically saying that I'm unlicensed.

NCARB: It's the title that matters, not the license.

Me: In that case, let me use the title, if the license doesn't matter.

The recursive argument results in the incessant redefinition of keywords such as architect, architectural designer, and design professional, all of which imply a certain level of professionalism, credibility, and responsibility. By calling ourselves architects, we are proving that we are "able to protect the health, safety, and welfare of those who live and work in the built environment", at least according to NCARB. We can't have buildings collapsing on people, can we? We must prove to everyone that we did, in fact, learn something in structures class. At the end of the day, we are doing more than merely creating pretty pictures. Right?

Whatever we decide to call ourselves, there will always be a question of specificity. There is more to architecture than buildings. We are designers, creators, builders, thinkers, theorists, politicians, writers, artists, programmers, anthropologists, and a little bit of a lot of other things. We label ourselves with words that can only imply a small aspect of our being; it is nearly impossible to define one's entire self in a single word.

In a dark bar or a loud party, another stranger will ask what do you do. Whether you or I provide a one word answer, everyone knows that there is more to it. NCARB demands that I may not legally call myself an architect in the United States, and in a professional setting, there are accepted labels that help others understand one's role in the complex industry. However, there is no question that I "do" architecture, even though I do not yet have my license. In a few years, I plan to have my license; I will become an architect. Or if I decide to practice in Germany, for example, I will still be an architect. At the end of the day, I am the only one who determines what I do and do not do, what I am and what I am not●

THE PERSONAL CRUISING REVOLUTION

by Liwei Wang

I think by now, most people are familiar with Grindr, the geosocial hookup app and staple for many gay men. Although Grindr was initially released in 2009 and became known as a gay cruising app, it built upon a legacy of analog cruising: prolonged eye-contact, confirmation (smile or headnod), and one party leading another to a secluded – though public – area like a men's room.

In William Friedkin's 1980 film *Cruising*[1], Al Pacino gave the act visibility in popular culture. However, the activity probably existed in some form or another since Greco-Roman times. When the internet came about, gay men were the first to fulfill its true potential: the ability to coordinate anonymous sex from the comfort of home. Craigslist, launched in 1995, was one of the first digital forums where this happened, and along came new issues and negotiations. Since it is a non-segregated public forum, many chose not to post photos. The very nature of classifieds meant that users resorted to attention-grabbing headlines. (A quick perusal of headlines today in New Haven: VERY GL white boy LF BBC to suck / Son for Dad / Horny and Hosting / Looking for other guys into boxing/mma.) This format led to a lexicon of terms and keywords created to be easily searchable, but also to protect from outsiders and law enforcement. Play means sex, Party and Play (PnP) means sex with hard drugs (usually methamphetamines, or Tina), Party means Party, but parTy means sex with Tina.

The next iteration came with web-based social networks designed specifically for gay male cruising. Adam4Adam, GayRomeo and ManHunt were the big three places to hook up online in the 2000s. They introduced brand-new features: Profiles, photos, private photos, comments, private messages, and most importantly, stats. Stats are searchable fields attached to your profile. Some stats are numbers: Age, Height, Weight. Others are chosen from a given list of descriptors: Body Type (Slim, Average, Toned, Athletic, Muscular, Large), Ethnicity (White, Asian, Latin, Black, Mixed, Middle-Eastern, Native American, Other), Body Hair (Smooth, Shaved, Some Hair, Hairy). There are also stats for sexual preferences: Position (Top, Vers-Top, Versatile, Vers-Bottom, Bottom), Circumcision (Cut, Uncut), Safer Sex (Always, Needs discussion, Never). Cock size does Koolhaas one better (S, M, L, XL, XXL), and the German-founded GayRomeo (Now PlanetRomeo) has a whole field dedicated to fisting (Active, Versatile, Passive, No Fisting). The integration of these stats allowed users to filter their search for a partner. Whereas on classifieds such as Craigslist you searched for what you wanted, these websites filter out what you don't want. Cruising evolved from additive searching to subtractive filtering.

In 2009, Grindr transformed smartphones into cruising devices. It simplified its predecessors' vast list of identifiers into a few simple stats: Age, Height, Weight, Ethnicity, Body Type, Relationship Status and Tribes. Grindr's Tribes is a list of gay identities and subcultures that a person might identify with. A slim, young man might identify as a a twink, whereas an older, larger man might think of himself as a bear. These labels are not merely descriptions of bodies, but allow entry into a community and the support that it provides. Other identities include: Clean-Cut, Daddy, Discreet, Geek, Jock, Leather, Otter, Poz, Rugged and Trans. It is worth noting that those are all the possible descriptors, and you are limited to a maximum of three.

I used Grindr for the first time when I was 19. I had just moved to Calgary for an internship, and could count on one hand the number of people I knew in the city. One of them was my first "boyfriend". I launched the app the day after he broke up with me, and within two days, I managed a date with a man who ended up as a companion for the remainder of my time there. The swiftness of the rebound felt immensely satisfying, and I was hooked on the app after that. Grindr also turned out to be a good way to meet people, to make new friends. Now I never worry about meeting people when moving to a new city, as Grindr gives me access to amazingly diverse gay communities around me. This ability feels liberating--especially as a young, gay man.

Naturally, embedded in Grindr is a litany of complex issues. For example, the ability to filter Grindr's stats, beyond a basic age filter, is a premium feature available only to those who pay for the app's subscription service. As a consequence, users turned to using their profiles to issue warnings to undesirable partners. This led to the widespread usage of explicitly racist (amongst other -ists) warnings such as: no Asians, or white only. When RuPaul's Drag Race Season 8 contestant Kim Chi addressed "No fats, no femmes and no Asians" (three of the most common warning labels found on pre-2016 Grindr, and three that Kim personally identifies with), Michelle Visage (the only straight member of the judging panel) was genuinely surprised and saddened. While this practice has now become far less common, its use reveals a nefarious underside of gay socialization.

I have my own experiences with prejudice in hook-up culture. The issue lies often not in rejection; I am more troubled by a complacent acceptance of the fetishization of Asian men. In the Asian gay community, we often joke about "famous" perpetrators. Indeed, there are a group of people who seem to make it their mission to sleep with every gay Asian man in the country. Which would be sort of fine, except that a specific power dynamic (Asians are submissive) is often presumed. Aware of this behavior, I became suspicious of every romantic and casual encounter, and wondered about potential hookups' previous browsing history. At 21, I had an elucidating encounter that revealed the complex nature of identities in the gay community. I was young and slim, so naturally I identified as "twink" on my Grindr profile. Towards the end of a very nice encounter with a German, we exchanged a few words:

"Do you like twinks?"
"Yes, but you're not a twink."
"What am I then?"
"You're Asian."
"Asians can't be twinks?"
"No, they're just Asian."

After a brief flush of feeling offended, I realized that there was a strange truth to what he had said. If you search "twink" on Pornhub.com, the results only turn up white, slim boys. Sometimes latinos and sometimes (if you're lucky) fair-skinned middle eastern men appears in the results, but never Asian nor black. To get Asian, you have to specify. The exchange taught me that these labels are racially coded, and made me wonder why I had thought to identify with this term in the first place.

This reveals an uneasy relationship between gay porn and gay sex, a correlation between the rise of pornographic websites and the rise of online cruising. While both depend on searchable keyword descriptors in cyberspace, the same terminology and biases integrated with our culture in real life. And unlike our neighbours, there is not a huge separation between porn and life. By and large, it is not unreasonable to expect the action on the screen to happen in your bedroom, and it seems these days every dad and his cousin knows how to deepthroat. In hookup culture, where interactions may only last for an hour, it's easy to conflate pornography with real life. No, not the fun part. It's easy to reduce the person you're chatting with to their image and a few labels.

Yet, labels in themselves are not inherently bad, and extremely rich and resilient communities have grown around certain labels. The bear community formed partly out of a rejection of the standards of beauty perpetrated by the gay porn industry, and the Poz community is an incredible support network for HIV+ gay men living with the stigma of the infection. The associations of these labels are constantly in flux. A pejorative term can be reclaimed, and positive connotations can be corrupted. It's hard to know exactly what to make of these labels that make up such a large part of the gay community. Their role, much like the ending to Friedkin's Cruising, is ambiguous and open-ended●

1. Al Pacino plays an undercover detective investigating a series of homosexual homicides in New York's late-70s leather scene. A highlight of the film is Pacino dancing to intensifying colors and lights after sniffing poppers at a leather bar.

BATTLEGROUNDS AND BACHELOR FLATS

conversation between Jacob Moore and Jay Shockley

Jacob R. Moore is a critic, curator, and editor. His work has been exhibited internationally and published in various magazines and journals including *Artforum*, *Future Anterior*, and *The Avery Review*, where he is a contributing editor. He is the assistant director of Columbia University's Temple Hoyne Buell Center for the Study of American Architecture.

Jay Shockley retired in 2015 as senior historian at the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission, where he had worked since 1979. He helped pioneer the concept of recognizing LGBT place-based history by incorporating it into the Commission's reports. He is a cofounder, together with Andrew S. Dolkart and Ken Lustbader, of the NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project.

This is an excerpt from an interview that was originally published on *Urban Omnibus* (February 8, 2018), as part of *"Intersections,"* a series that asks: as designers and urbanists engage with LGBTQ+ identity, what role do gender and sexuality play in the preservation, design, and management of urban space today?

@UrbanOmnibus

Mattachine Society members John Timmons, Dick Leitsch, Craig Rodwell, and Randy Wicker being refused service by the bartender at Julius', April 21, 1966. Photo by Fred W. McDarrah, courtesy of Estate of Fred W. McDarrah

Jacob Moore: Tell me about the origins of the NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project. It contends very directly with representation in a political sense. It clearly speaks to the way that political representation has changed from the 1960s to the present by engaging with historic sites themselves, reaching much further back in time.

Jay Shockley: Yes, our project pushes way beyond that. Our earliest site that we have currently online is from 1802. Also, it's important to me to point out that the three of us who are the project are all historic preservationists. So as a baseline we would absolutely say that this is architectural because the project is all site-based and every single story that we tell on the website – 111 so far – is architecture and cultural heritage based, unlike so many other projects online.

JM: I'm curious how your approach to that work has taken personal identity into consideration.

JS: I grew up in Baltimore and my family was Maryland-rooted on both sides. It pained me that there were significant buildings, places that I loved, that were torn down. I went to Columbia, I got a part-time job at the Landmarks Commission and ended up being there for 35 years. I worked on everything from 17th-century projects all the way up to World War II. *At a certain point, you realize there are all sorts of categories of buildings in New York—all sorts of categories of people—that are not getting addressed through historic preservation.* One of the great ironies is that there are a huge number of LGBT people in the design profession, in preservation in particular, but also museum directors, curators, historians, professors, librarians, archivists.

JM: Sort of an unspoken truth?

JS: Yes. At various points when I was working at the Commission, people like Jesse Helms and Strom Thurmond were claiming that the LGBT community was destroying American culture when it was exactly the opposite. Back in '92, '93, this organization called OLGAD (Organization of Lesbian + Gay Architects and Designers) briefly popped up. There were about a dozen of us historic preservationists who got together and produced a walking tour map in time for the 25th anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion. We now believe that was the first effort in the entire United States to do a site-based LGBT history.

JM: Can you say more about how Stonewall led the way in terms of designation? And also about the need to expand the public's understanding of LGBT spaces "beyond" Stonewall?

JS: As we were promoting this idea of LGBT place-based history, we'd always get this puzzled look, like, "What on earth are you talking about? What is there beyond bars?" So our motivation was to get this history out. It was to alert all the governmental decision-making bodies, like the Landmarks Commission, the New York State Preservation Office, the National Register of Historic Places, in part to destroy all these myths that history started at Stonewall. In our next round of sites, we're going to include one 17th-century site of execution. There are two documented cases where men in New Amsterdam were killed for a charge of sodomy. It was called "The Place of Executions." It was the original southern shoreline of Manhattan at Whitehall. They were outdoor executions. Beyond this chronological diversity, we're trying to destroy the myth that only Manhattan is where everything happened. But because our project is only extant sites, and there are obviously a whole bunch of sites that just don't exist anymore, it makes it challenging.

JM: What does that mean technically? For example, in the context of this execution place, what's extant about it?

JS: Well whatever they had at the time, whether it was a platform or whatever else, obviously doesn't exist. But elsewhere we're very much incorporating outdoor spaces, like Central Park, so this felt just as legitimate. Another is the earliest gay rights outdoor protest that happened in New York. It was in front of the US Army Induction Center near Battery Park in Lower Manhattan in 1964. The building's been torn down, but the protest happened on the sidewalk in front of the building. That space still exists.

It was organized to protest the army's exclusion and discrimination of gay people in the military. Actually, our first accomplishment, before the website launched, we got Julius' Bar listed on the National Register of Historic Places one day before the 50th anniversary of the 1966 Sip-in. We specifically did that to show that there was a lot of activism pre-Stonewall. And that wasn't even one of the earliest protests in New York. The Mattachine Society's Sip-in was probably the first thing that actually had a result because the state liquor authority, whose policies made it illegal to sell known homosexuals a drink, had to back away from enforcement because they got so much negative publicity.

JM: I've read that it's a lot easier to get these places designated when you can point to other work, outside of preservation, that covers the topic. How does your work rely on or coordinate with history-writing more generally?

JS: It makes it easier if certain sites are discussed; the sad fact of the matter is that there's very little LGBT history out there that's site-based. Honing in specifically on Stonewall, we started a discussion at the National Park Service on having the site listed and we got back a response from the Department of the Interior that was very negative. Absent any other cultural context or precedent, it basically boiled down to: "Why is a 'riot' worthy of commemoration? If you people do something positive then maybe that should be commemorated instead."

JM: Wow. So this was in the early 1990s?

JS: That's right. This is before a group of gay staffers at the Department of the Interior, including a gay Assistant Secretary of the Interior, helped push the nomination forward. Another issue was the fact that to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places you need owner consent, and the owners of the Stonewall were absolutely not interested. The two women considering the nomination at state level worked out an absolutely brilliant, unprecedented concept that allowed it to go forward. They said that if you include not just the Stonewall building but all the streets where the rebellion happened, it could be modeled after a Civil War battlefield, as an outdoor space. The side benefit is that the city of New York now had 50 percent ownership. As long as you have 50 percent compliance in a situation like that, it can proceed. So that's how Stonewall got listed.

We have said for 25 years that if you really analyze the National Register, there are probably thousands of properties already listed that should be interpreted for LGBT history – things like Eleanor Roosevelt's house at Hyde Park or Willa Cather's house in Nebraska. None of those are documented or have any mention of the personal history of their occupants. Walt Whitman's birthplace, his house in Camden, New Jersey – there are hundreds if not thousands of places on the National Register that need to be re-interpreted. Only in the last year or two is the National Register allowing that.

JM: That's interesting that they're now allowing reinterpretation of existing designations. How does that work?

JS: You can now do a cultural overlay, which we did at the Alice Austen House in Staten Island. It was already listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and it is even a National Historic Landmark, but the original nomination never mentioned that she was a lesbian and had a 50-year relationship with another woman who lived with her, and it didn't discuss her as a pioneering female photographer. So that's what we did for that amendment.

JM: Who is the audience for this project? It's very clearly about both places that are important for LGBT people as well as places made important by LGBT people.

JS: I'm glad you mentioned that because we're the first project in the United States that thought of it as two-fold. We wanted it focused on properties of import to the LGBT communities, but we also wanted to highlight the impact we've had on American history and culture. During the height of the culture wars, Fran Lebowitz said, "If you removed all of the homosexuals and homosexual influence from what is generally regarded as American culture, you would pretty much be left with Let's Make a Deal." In terms of constituencies, we are aiming at the LGBT community, but we're also aiming at all the decision-making, governmental bodies. We want this to be a useful database for why properties are important and what properties are in what neighborhoods. We really want it to be used as an educational tool.

Participants of the Stonewall uprising in front of the bar, June 29, 1969. Photo by Fred W. McDarrah, courtesy of Estate of Fred W. McDarrah

JM: Your essay for the National Park Service publication, *LGBTQ America: A Theme Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer History*, discusses the Wilbraham, and in so doing paints the bachelor flat as a type that was leading your team to other sites of significance. Are there other specific examples where cultural heritage becomes represented by a particular architecture?

JS: Mills House on Bleecker Street was a philanthropic project where working class men could move to New York and stay out of evil boarding houses. But since it was built for men only, it was a wonderful place to introduce men coming to New York to gay life. That's a parallel working-class example to the Wilbraham, which was for very upscale professional and upper-middle-class men. By the same token, the YMCA in Harlem played a very important role for LGBT black men coming to New York who had few options for a place to stay, much less live for an indeterminate amount of time. A number of very prominent LGBT African-American men, including Langston Hughes, are known to have stayed there.

JM: How do you think of the acronym "LGBT"? Is there a Q? Have you come up against any challenges when trying to determine what's in and what's out?

JS: The project itself has some very defined boundaries: It's just the city of New York. It's just the five boroughs. To be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, there's a 50-year timeline rule. So Stonewall had to reach way beyond that because it was only 30 when Stonewall was listed. We had to prove extraordinary importance. So we picked 2000 as our cut-off date into the future.

In terms of the naming of the project, the audience is LGBT and Q, but from a historical perspective we didn't want to include the Q, since the sites are pre-2000. We've anticipated somebody questioning us not using the "Q" in the project name. We did it for a whole variety of reasons. You have to be aware that the use of "Q" was still very controversial and not standardized when the project began. Terminology about sexuality and gender has continually evolved. Heterosexual and homosexual is late 19th century. Bisexual and transgender only started developing in the 20th century and have been used in different contexts for different things. Some people have said: "How can you call someone living in the mid-19th century a lesbian? That term didn't exist then." Terminology about gender and sexuality, as everything to do with the LGBT community's history, is fraught. The more famous the person being labeled, the more controversial.

JM: Are there any sites for which the inclusion has given you pause, due to the possible controversy?

JS: If you look carefully at some of the things online on our website, we've purposely pushed a few buttons. We included Alexander Hamilton, for example. But we're not some sort of gossip site, casually mentioning things just because we want to. It's all sourced and it's all cited. People like Abraham Lincoln, Eleanor Roosevelt, Walt Whitman, Alexander Hamilton, we've not steered away from that at all. We've purposely included lots of sex sites and things that are sex-related. We're not trying to steer out of any controversy at all. We want this to come across as relevant to the reality of the today's America as we believe it is, controversy and all ●

GENDER WARRIORS IN SUPPORT OF CHELSEA MANNING

by Malic White
AUGUST 2013

GO

MW: If you support Chelsea Manning in her release of restricted government documents, could you please come on stage?

Malic instructs participating audience members to assume a plank position. All NEOS (except for IC and BD) and audience members assume a plank position.

BD: The plank is an isometric core strength exercise that involves maintaining a difficult position for extended periods of time. If you practice--

ALL: It's not that hard.

IC: Chelsea Manning was sentenced to 35 years in a military prison after releasing the largest set of restricted documewnts ever leaked to the public.

BD: The current world record for the plank position is 3 hours, 7 minutes and 15 seconds. The record was set by George Hood, who is a former Marine. People call him a hero.

IC: People call Chelsea Manning a traitor.

BD: People call Chelsea Manning the wrong name and "he," even after she released a statement specifically asking to be called "Chelsea" and "she."

ALL: It's not that hard.

MW: Two minutes is not enough time to address the bigger issues. We could talk about government secrecy or how the U.S. prison system is basically government-funded housing for marginalized people. We could about all the American political prisoners who remain behind bars.

BD: But let's start with something basic.

IC: Let's start with the name Chelsea.

BD: Let's start with the pronoun "she."

IC: Let's practice: Chelsea. She.

ALL: Chelsea. She.

BD: The plank provides a base for all forms of exercise.

IC: Referring to a transgender person by the right name and pronoun is the most basic sign of respect.

MW: It's not that hard. And people who still won't use her name because they're scared. They're scared that the greatest threat to government secrecy and control is one of our people-- a gender warrior whose very identity threatens political and social organization.

BD: But really, who would be better for the job?

IC watches the stop watch until it hits 2 minutes.

IC: Time!

ALL NEOS DROP OUT OF THEIR PLANK POSITION

NEXT

MAGAZINE REVIEW LOG 41 FALL 2017

by Ray Wu

The millennial pink of *Log 41* registers immediately (the past several issues were rose-colored). Apart from the usual interview, another take at Eisenman and Rowe, and talks of shape and fiction (all worthwhile reads), the issue dedicates 100+ pages to a special section titled Working Queer, guest-edited by architect Jaffer Kolb. The sixteen articles and one drawing fold upon each other to critically engage the meaning of queer, not only as a label, but as an action (queering), and a method or a process (queerness):

● Kolb outlines the queer's tendency to react against and transgress the cultural construct of heteronormativity. (Read if you think you know queer.)

● Ellie Abrons of T+E+A+M looks to Susan Sontag's "Camp" to blur the distinction between digital and physical in her Postdigital Materiality manifesto. (Less about queer, more about rocks.)

● Andrés Jaque reports on Grindr, as a cause for displacing queer spaces and as a politicized, spatial utility for LGBTQ refugees. (If you like Liwei's piece, here's more.)

● Kolb skypes Aaron Betsky to discuss queer spaces such as clubs – their disappearance and virtualization. (Check out Betsky's lecture from 1995 on youtube.)

● Stratton Coffman surveys the squeeze: from squeeze machine to tenement housing to silver pods of BIG's proposal for a zoo. (Named *Zootopia* but à la *Jurassic World*.)

● Andreas Angelidakis describes his project of endlessly reconfigurable, concrete (Demos) and camouflage textured, soft, lightweight blocks (*Polemos*). (Politicized toy blocks for adults.)

● Ivan L. Munuera recounts queers' embrace of Arata Isozaki designed high-tech New York dance club in the 80-90s. (Japanese postmodern, amphetamines, cocktails, video array and Andy Warhol.)

● Nicholas Gamso unravels homo-fascist representations and Philip Johnson's Nazi past. ("I am a whore," Johnson.)

● Ang Li plays with alchemy, demystifies ornaments, and conjures material metamorphosis. (She likes rocks too, especially MOS's Rock No. 5.)

● Caitlin Blanchfield & Farzin Lotfi-Jam instagram domestic interiors to foreground phantasmagoric background objects. (@isthiscaitlin is private but there's @farzinfarzin.)

● Michael Wang queers the system with stem cells, species, and merchandised knit athletic shoes. (One millionth of one percent of total shares per pair sold.)

● Annie Barrett de-categorizes architecture through queer t-shirts and nonconforming forms. (Someone please explain *noncon forms*.)

● Our very own Joel Sanders details inclusive designs of gender nonconforming restrooms and the shift from queer to trans theory. (More in *Exhibitionism: Politics of Display*, Monday mornings at 9.)

● Andrew Holder recovers principles from Andy Warhol's short film *Mario Banana No. 1*, 1964, and declares five points to queer architecture. (Indulge yourself with four minutes of Mario Montez eating a banana.)

● Rosalyne Shieh, our studio critic, teaches the practice of fine, and tells us: "It's fine."[1] (I now practice *the fine*.)

● "Michael Meredith produces 2,497 words on the provincial,"[2] of which 427 words are in parentheses.

* Available from Hull's or the Anyone Corporation, $15

1. Rosalyne, Shieh, "It's fine." *Log 41*, (Anyone Corporation, Fall 2017), 161.

2. Backcover, *Log 41*, (Anyone Corporation, Fall 2017)

GENDER WARRIORS IN SUPPORT OF CHELSEA MANNING RUNNING FOR SENATE

by Malic White
JANUARY 2018

GO

ALL NEOS HOLD A PLANK POSITION FOR THE ENTIRE PLAY

LU: In 2013 we performed a play-

MW: "Gender Warriors in Support of Chelsea Manning."

IC: We called her a hero.

DKH: We called her by her name.

JJ: And when the media challenged her womanhood

NH: And the prison refused her healthcare

TC: And her solitary confinement went on and on,

MW: I was sure she wouldn't live. In 2013 I wrote a play.

ALL: Chelsea Manning was in prison for nearly four years and I never wrote her a letter.

MW: I couldn't fit this feeling on an 8 X 10 page.

ALL: You make me proud to be myself if that means a piece of me is somehow cut from the queer place you came from.

LU: In 2013 we performed a play.

IC: We asked the audience to hold a two minute plank--

DKH: To do a small thing that feels hard.

JJ: And it's hard,

NH: But most people have never practiced.

TC: Most people have never tried.

MW: Most people are too scared to do hard things when they're right things,

LU: Like writing a letter,

IC: Like breaking the law,

MW: Like staying alive.

DKH: Chelsea Manning was released from prison last year

JJ: And this year, she's running for Senate.

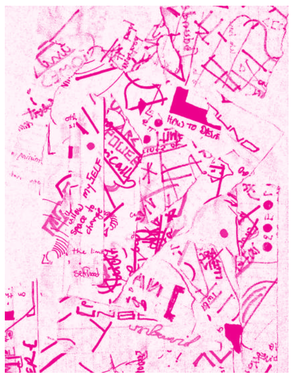
NH: It would have been enough for her to survive.

MW: It would have been enough to know that

ALL: A piece of me is somehow cut from the queer place she came from.

MW: And this play is the letter I'll write her when she wins.

NEXT



When we made this, we were exploring ideas of boundedness and legibility of self. The physical recombination of images and phrases represents selfhood as a constellation of disparate selfhoods.

By G + Emily

PUSSYPEDIA

@pwordpedia

We wanted Pussypedia to change the conversation about vaginas and the people that have them. And in order to change the conversation, sometimes you need to change the words you use to have it. We are reappropriating "pussy" because we love that word. The word "vagina" anatomically only refers to the vaginal canal. But usually when we use it, we're trying to refer to a whole bunch of parts. The word falls short. Plus, the word "vagina" comes from the word "sheath" --that thing you keep a sword in. Why should we call our pussies "that thing you put a penis in?" We're not into the idea that the pussy exists as an object of service to the penis. "People with pussies" refers to people with many combinations of anatomical features. We know not everyone shares all the same features. So we're giving "pussy" an expanded definition that makes room for the diversity of human sexual and anatomical expression. We don't use "women" or "females" because there are lots of people that not do not consider themselves "women" or "females" but do have pussies. There are also women who were not born with or do not have pussies. Hence: "people with pussies!" – Zoe Mendelson, Jackie Jahn, María Conejo, creators, *Pussypedia*

SISSY: AN INTERVIEW WITH JACOB TOBIA

Jacob Tobia is a writer, producer, and author of the forthcoming memoir Sissy. Jacob speaks publicly across the country on themes relating to gender and sexuality, writes for television and hopes to soon create their own show. Currently, they are producing the reading of a play about a trans German woman who survived Nazi rule in Berlin and Stasi rule in East Berlin.

P!: What is a label to you? How do you define it, and how does it differ from identity?

JT: To me, on a sort of 3000-foot intellectual level, a label is something that is placed on you, and identity is something that you put on yourself. A label is something that someone printed up for you, like when you go to an event, and there are those pre-made name tags. And identity is like, "we bought a bunch of blank name tags and doodle on it how you want, write what's important to you or a fun fact or something."

P!: Do you ever think of label as something you have agency over ... that allows you to control narrative?

JT: Yes. Labeling is something that I respond to, and strategize around. It's most interesting and important to me when I'm not presenting in as femme of a way. When I'm wearing lipstick and heels and a skirt, it's very easy for people to label me as trans or gender nonconforming. But because I have not physically transitioned and my body is still labeled as male, I'm not labeled a member of the trans community. I am labeled as a member of the queer community, because even when I'm wearing something very butch, the way I hang my wrists and talk is very queer. But often I won't get labeled as gender nonconforming unless I'm presenting as gender nonconforming. I can profess identity as much as I want, but if that doesn't correspond to the way someone's already labeled me, I can't control that. It's about emancipating yourself from the idea that it is your responsibility to ensure that how others label you is correct.

P!: Can the same term be both label and identity?

JT: Oh, totally! That's the process of reclamation, of realizing that something's been placed on you, and finding a way to subvert it. The whole title of my book is that kind of inversion. The label "sissy" was placed on me as a child and then I grabbed it and transformed it into my identity and internalized it and said, "No, no, fuck you, I'm going to take this nametag, I'm going to take this little scarlet letter, and embroider it into a fucking gown and wear it all the time."

You're also allowed to use other people's labels to your advantage when it helps you. In a dream world, I would wear dresses a lot of the time. But that's not possible if I want to live a basic, happy life. Because I can't casually walk around my neighborhood anymore if I'm wearing a dress. I'll get catcalled, I'll get stared at, it might be violent. So I've made a strategic decision. There are moments when I fly under the radar and under the label. I'll wear pants and a t-shirt and I can go get some writing done about my trans identity. That's a dance that so many people do.

P!: Do you see room for humor and liberation in labels?

JT: Oh my god, humor is the only way I get through all of it. One of my favorite labels placed on me is trans-woman-who's-really-bad-at-this-woman-thing. When I'm presenting as femme, people are like, "She's great!" They think of me as a woman, they'll write female pronouns. "But I guess ... she didn't feel like shaving today. Did she forget to pad her dress?" I have to laugh, I think it's hilarious, and it's a way of making light of something that could be too scary to think about all the time.

P!: I noticed in your Playboy article that your voice has evolved from a more didactic role to a role of unpacking complicated ideas for yourself. Would you agree with that?

JT: Well that's super fucking perceptive of you. Because that's a very real change in how I understand myself, and how I approached my work in the last year and a half of my life. I think I got crushed at the beginning of my career [with] this pressure to educate as representative. Claiming to represent a group generally ends up erasing a possibility of intersectionality in your own analysis. I can only speak for myself. Also, I realized I have no creative freedom anymore because I'm always trying to speak for this entire community. I don't want to be a gender nonconforming writer any more than David Sedaris is a gay writer. Yeah, he is a gay writer, but it's not like he claims his writing to be the gay American experience.

P!: The discourse around identity actually gains a lot from that more introspective look that you take.

JT: And the reality is that it also makes more space. For example, the fetishization of "the first trans blank": "the first trans person on the cover of Life," "the first trans person to be in the army." People are so into that kind of coverage that they don't realize that it's tokenizing and it creates the idea of scarcity. I am clear nowadays that I am not the trans writer or the gender queer anything. I am a queer chick who lives in Los Angeles right now and grew up in a half Arab, half southern, white family in North Carolina in a mostly white suburb, with pretty chill access to class privilege, and this sort of cute, kitschy, Methodist queer upbringing. If you want to say I'm the first that, go ahead. I don't want the world to be able to reduce me or people like me because that limits our ability to actually proliferate.

P!: How do you negotiate your uneasiness about tokenizing labels with the reality of working in an industry that expects you to have a sound-bite, one-sentence summary of who you are?

JT: I am definitely okay with mobilizing the identity of writer, producer, performer, because those are things that I do and things that I'm good at. Over the past year, I have come to embrace softer or messier identity terms when I can. There's a reason why I'm titling my book Sissy. Because sissy is a really messy, complicated, confusing, disorienting word that still holds a ton of meaning. It's not an identity label that anyone has used per se, except in spaces where people use it for kink based things. It makes people think deeper because they are not sure what it's about.

P!: So now that you've been living in Los Angeles a year – LA or New York?

JT: Right now, LA. I love New York, but New York is more ruled by office culture and full-time culture. Being a freelancer in New York is fucking miserable. Being a freelancer in LA is kind of cute ●

Art work by María Conejo