

**From Transgender Rage to Trans Joy:
Trans Studies through Affective Lens
The 8th Nordic Trans Studies Conference, 2023**

Descriptions of artistic contributions

Whatever (you need) (2023)

Performance

Malin Arnell and Mar Fjell

The performance Whatever (you need) is a medley, a potpourri, a polyphonic investigation into our earlier entanglements and engagements.

We will look back through our singular and collective actions and at the same time take a step forward. It's a healing journey and a hymn for our queer becomings. You are invited to follow our desire path and join our sticky shivers.

When Malin Arnell and Mar Fjell come together they become an interdisciplinary art worker, collaborator, organizer, researcher, educator and musician. Since 2017 they have shared breaths through Los Angeles, New York, Amsterdam, Stockholm, Berlin, Treignac, Skomvær, Bolzano, Bergen, Turku among others. Now they will inhale Tampere. They explicitly do affectivity within a queer eco-erotic ethics of polymorphous perversity and care making. They explore conditions for participatory practices in territorial environments by emphasizing the sticky shivers of (self-) touching through vibrating togetherness. Masturbatory cooperation, and a dis-location of those frictions, opens up for an unending dynamism of entanglements aka everything in the name of all things queer.

TRANDESCOLONIALIDADE DYSPHORIC SEAS DIASPORIC SEAS

Performance

Sall Lam Toro

When we choose to grieve actively, we find love and joy in such intention, wrote our beloved bell hooks in "all about love". In grief, I found space for play, pleasure and knowledge. TRANDESCOLONIALIDADE: DYSPHORIC SEAS, DIASPORIC SEAS is a live performance series investigating intersections between gender nonconformity, transness, and dissidence in black African Western pre-colonial and postcolonial societies touching upon my genealogical ancestral locations. Through ritual, linguistic evocation and minimal movement, we witness a journey of poetic resonance through erotic engagement with grief. My living and ancestral experiences with migration, displacement and lost historical linkages moves me into producing decolonial acts through intentional evocations of remembrance as an attempt to suture back a sense of defragmentation and repair that propose new imagined futures.

My Dick Clit has many forms

Body prints

Watercolor on paper, 2022

Marie Andersen

Drawing on the techniques of vulva prints used by feminist movements, the project gives focus to the visuality of dick clits, clit dicks, mini cocks, testo dicks, manginas. I am working with analogue transfer techniques to produce a starting point for unpredictability and failures as a path and approach to new possibilities.

On the conceptual level the project is inspired by queer and trans theories and epistemologies in an attempt at producing alternative imageries for new bodily experiences. Curious about what arousal physically looks like, I have tried to visually map my own stages of desire. I explore the fissures of imperfection and queerness of my body to trace identity and desire as organic and changing.

All gender is drag

Aimé Dabbadie

"All gender is drag" is a project that uses black and white analog photography as a medium to capture the bodies of Aimé's friends and acquaintances.

This project is not an open casting, but a choice justifying the reality of the bodies present in their entourage as a queer person. "These bodies are not extraordinary, they are part of my day-to-day life, they are beautiful, real and touching." adds Aimé Dabbadie. The pictures provide the viewer with different body identities - gender is not a binary concept anymore, it is multitudes of intersecting identities, superimposed, altered, reclaimed, performed and deconstructed. The goal being to question the relevance of assigning a gender to anyone. The project also questions notions of censorship and pre-established standards of beauty. While traveling, Aimé wheatpastes their photos in the street, and in this reclaims the public space usually erasing or policing queer, transgender and non-conforming bodies. Passers-by are confronted with raw body images, in their most striking intimacy and vulnerability.

Selected works from the series has been shown in Malmö (Sweden), Kivik (Sweden), Berlin (Germany), Brussels (Belgium) and Bordeaux (France).

FERA - trans feral experimentation

Ruby Nilsson, Ba Bladh, Andria Nyberg Forshage, Maja Lindström, Em Silén and Ville Vidø

FERA draws upon trans affects, terror, dissociation, transfeminine brokenness, sexual surveillance, dysphoria and spectacular fragmentation to contest and renegotiate the traditions of performing

arts, theatre, realism, and the black box. The title draws on the Latin *fera*, meaning wild animal, beast; and the Italian *feriō*, to injure.

FERÅ, in other words, is what the Devil is to god: necessary and omnipresent in the form of threat, terror and darkness. Fenced in, picked out, condemned – it is a caged animal, an experiment, a lab rat. It is the aesthetic schism and alienation that erupts between caricature and the innermost part of the dysphoric subject-object. It is a classic drama, like *Antigone*, turning everyday truths into deadly, ethical dilemmas.

This conference contribution is an artistic, performative and theoretical in-process presentation relating to the project FERÅ. The project, premiering at Inkost in Malmö spring 2023, is a work by Ruby Nilsson, Ba Bladh, Andria Nyberg Forshage, Maja Lindström, Em Silén and Ville Vidø.

The desire to hungrily emphasize non-binary genitalia

Ester Martin Bergsmark

In this presentation and films screening, I want to examine how you can find different *voice unders* in the film photography of the film *Instinct*, and, more precisely, in different forms of close-ups. There are two different techniques for creating close-ups. One way is to be physically close with the camera. The other way is to shoot at a distance with a telephoto lens, which, like binoculars, magnifies the motive.

The film *Instinct* is a queer, metaphysical love story that is woven together with and in different environments. A field, a darkroom, and a forest by a highway. There, real and imagined sexual encounters take place. In these fantastic playgrounds, bodies are free to take on different forms as they meet other bodies. With *Instinct*, we wanted to ask ourselves the question: what does it mean to actively (un)learn what we can assume about another body's sex and lust?

When I filmed *Instinct*, I played both with telephoto photography and extreme close-ups.

In this presentation, I will first reflect on telephoto photography, in which the telephoto lens becomes a kind of dildo. I wonder how we can play with and challenge something that is associated with nature film and sports (and a white toxic masculinity). I will then examine what I call affirmative cuts in extreme macro close-ups.

By going a little closer with the camera, the images become abstract and on another plane a new clarity emerges: the extreme close-up emphasizes texture, humidity and other dimensions. We leave the binary way of reading genitalia and can rediscover re-form through listening to a voice under - a non-binary trans gaze.

The abstract close-up is clear and multifaceted in that it activates a larger sensory register. Feeling, smell and hearing can help inform the sense of sight. In this way, the visual becomes less dominant. The image no longer carries alone, but the image becomes a voice.

Submission of "I long for Karin Lindgren longs for me" – an essay/love letter/tending to trans elders

Frej Haar

The artwork is based on an essay/love letter published in Astra 4/2021 on the theme "Care". Karin Lindgren, farmer and subject of Rebecka Rasmusson's 2010 documentary short film [*En bondes längtan \(A Farmer's Desire\)*](#), came out as trans late in life. Lindgren passed away shortly after the premiere of the film and was buried under her birthname. This letter/grave visit combines sorrow, rage and joy and discusses the treatment of Lindgren (as well as the portrayal of her in the film itself) 10+ years later, comparing with the artist's experiences of Swedish trans health care. Mainly, the artwork attempts to provide care and connect to an elder after death, in an act of care and (be)longing.

This is *care* as in health care, as in undergoing treatment, as in treating/tending a memory and kinship, as *self-soothing*. *Self-care* as in handling the care of health care, as in taking care of oneself by taking care of others, as in healing each other by remembering, by taking care of what, those who have been.

The work is adaptable depending on how you wish to display it: as video art (screen + headphones for audio + text pages), text + image (+ optional sound) or even only a QR-code for people to scan to access the artwork on their phone.

The work will be accessible in both English and Swedish.

THE OCEAN IN YOUR MOUTH

Luka Holmegaard

This presentation will take the form of a poetry reading and a short contextualization of the work.

The Ocean in your Mouth (Havet i munden, Gutkind, August 2023) is a collection of poems about pleasure, pain, swimming and testosterone. About trans people transitioning together, and about how it feels to have a body, when it is not something you are used to.

The poems use the act of swimming, repeatedly throughout a summer, as a point of departure to explore physical change, embodiment, and trans relations and caregiving. The scene is first and foremost the coast, a place of tourists, gazes, changing weathers and homes for the rich.

Letting the reader into the intimate physical processes of swimming and transition brings themes of boundaries into the text. A language of consent and negotiation is deployed, leading to explorations of joy, systemic violence, sex and the nature of bad jokes. The question of boundaries is also one of literary form – the poem, sparse and spacious, becomes a productive form in which to explore giving up on ideas of explanation and pedagogy.

I am in awe

Kaarna Tuomenvirta

We need to be talking. ¹ We need to be able to hate without them turning us into caricatures of angry trans people ²

That is where we need their help
Not in deciding if we are sane
enough if we are trans enough.
I am in awe of angry trans people.

We are trans enough.
We have always been and will always
be in relation to one another We do
not need their help
Not in deciding if we deserve what we
need if this time is ready for us.
I am in awe of dreaming trans people.

We queer time. ³
We hate our utopias into being
we sleep too much and too little
eat too much and too little.
We kick in TV screens. ⁴
I am in awe of trans people.

¹Hsu, V. Jo. 2022. "T4t Love-Politics: Monica Roberts's *TransGriot* and Love as a Theory of Justice". *TSQ*:

Transgender Studies Quarterly. 9 (1): 101–118. doi: <https://doi-org.libproxy.helsinki.fi/10.1215/232892529475551>

²Covan, T. L. 2014. "Transfeminist Kill/Joys: Rage, Love and, Reparative Performance". *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*, 1 (4), 501-516.

³ e.g. Halberstam, Jack. (2005). *In a queer time and place: Transgender bodies, subcultural lives*. New York: NYU Press.

⁴ Auer, Camille. 2016. "A Monument for the Excluded". A multimedia art piece.
<https://camilleauer.com/monument-for-the-excluded/>