

hyperclap shibboieth queor tool



Fg. 0
Untitled (To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar: Ending Scene) Blender v 2.91.2, Tannon Reckling, 2021

Terminal Project Report
Tannon Reckling
2021

University of Oregon
College of Design
School of Art + Design

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Statement:

Tannon Reckling is an aggregator, organizer, and educator living and working between the coasts and rural Nebraska. Reckling uses their creative practice to write, curate, and construct transdisciplinary formal work for an esoteric queer audience to develop kinship later through the internet. Recent work includes digital collages, video work ft. an older gay relative, and 3d software explorations of semiotics, renderings, and materialisms located in viral, queer, metaphorical ontologies. Reckling is currently thinking about: queer death drives, rendering systems, slime, pink capital, genetics & agriculture, moiré, dyslexia, and enby farmer raves in future agrarian-scapes, among other things in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which will enter the realm of other historical health care emergencies before it: mostly affecting lower classes and othered bodies.

This document aims not only to be a functional text for completion of an academic thesis, but a document that pulls together pedagogy for others who might have value in falling down some of its rabbit holes. There is a - giving up of - much of any 'queer' related epistemology, as it's stolen, linked, and aggregated during a graduate education: no artist is a genius and all have an agency in their material circumstances. This esoteric methodology hopefully makes sense for aims of finding such related identity in academia and community. It presupposes and refuses an introductory element to queer theory, and assumes many, non-quotable, lived experiences. This functionally failed document might be useful as a massive hyperlink, rabbit holes, of references only, a tool for DIY pedagogy use for others who find it, or not.



Fig. 1
Stock Image
'Oregon Solar Farming'
Sunbridge Solar
2021

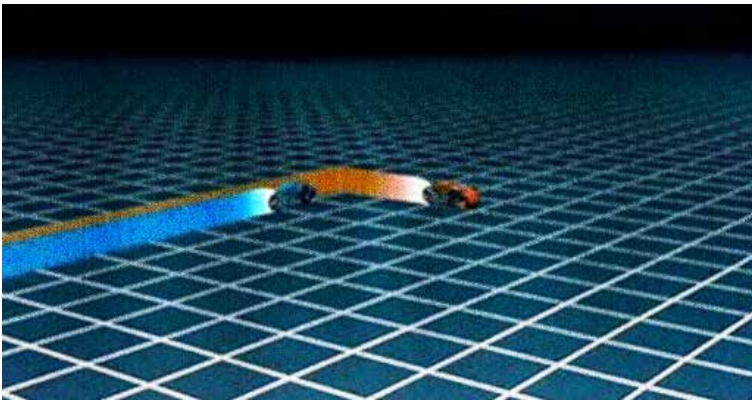


Fig. 2
Tron
'The Grid'
Steven Lisberger, Bonnie MacBird
1982



Fig. 3
AIDS Memorial Quilt
National Mall Lawn
Photo by Jeffrey Markowitz
1992

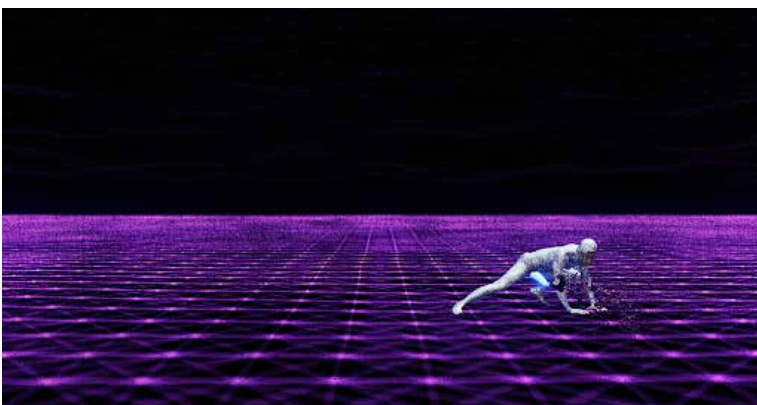


Fig. 4
Contra-Internet
Jubilee 2033, ft. Cassils
Zach Blas
2014-2018

“In 1981, there was a tempest on the horizon, and anyone with eyes could see it coming. In spite of its fiercely swirling vortex, the outlines of the cultural meanings of HIV/AIDS were immediately discernible, playing out as they did in the public sphere. So, our assumptions about the HIV/AIDS formed quickly in our shared spaces, from policy to pop culture, and almost as quickly they began to crystalize into a canon, one that has enveloped us ever since...

...However after decades of shell-shocked reflection, those who survived this moment appear ready to speak about it again, and new canons are springing up, canons that have become the subject of contemplation for a new generation of historians, archivists, artists, and activists, who were born in the midst of HIV/AIDS and are struggling to make sense of the worlds they both inherited and missed...

...We are in a second vortex, something I call AIDS 2.0, and it is only just beginning.”

Avram Finkelstein, “AIDS, Coca-Cola, and the Tompkins Square Park Riot.” What You Don’t Know Abouts AIDS Could Fill A Museum, On Curating: Issue 42, September 2019

“And yet, popular interest in theory had never been stronger! Facilitated by VPN-protected p2p filesharing, the Internet was overflowing with Foucauldian takes on the creep of surveillance culture...

...And yet, even while many artists were reading all of this too, my experience as someone who has been editing art magazines since 2008 has been that the primary discussion was taking place outside of art-world art. From the rise of whistle-blower culture and info-leaks, to questions of gender and performance, from conceptronica in music, to fashion’s memetic turn, not to mention the growth of podcasting culture and the endless, bizarre and at times disturbing digital channels from which the likes of the Virgin/Chad meme emerged, theory seemed to be happening foremost at the club, in music, online, through fashion, and via pop culture.”

Caroline Busta, “Influencing the Void: How the 2010s Art World Lost the Thread,” Kaleidoscope, Spring 2020

Queers have been playing around the GRID forever.¹ They are increasingly scaling, intentionally or not, into various vectors akin to computer CPU patterns, digital ephemerality, hyper-architectural semantics, and agricultural fieldings. In all these connective formalisms, environmental modalities shift queer types of presence. GRID, or gay-related immunodeficiency as an early problematic etiology of HIV/AIDS, is used here to metaphorically question what larger materialisms quantify a queer related engagement with one's material circumstances, local but hooked up. The grid: as both lived structure and messy metaphor. This presence is at stake in contemporary art practices to develop care and construct catharsis in post-urban, gridded, 'digital surveillance as infrastructure' contexts.² A resulting queer salvage aesthetic, its sensorial, potential grifter-ness, and sentiments to nature(s), is present in increasingly networked phenomenon as a wide-reaching new media art feeling. These sensibilities might merge and connect squishy boundaries: akin to a Roland Barthes quilt metaphor for myths, or to a whole-person being flattened within a patch of the AIDS Memorial Quilt.

In her essay *Grids*, from larger text *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*, art historian Rosalind E. Krauss explores the formal elements in twentieth century painting and sculptural form (i.e. Agnes Martin, Jasper Johns) and various implications within an occupancy of modernist ideals. Krauss does this through various organic affective metaphors of chemical reactions, light through windows, and liquidity. There's an interpretation of 'power' around grids as formations themselves, as opposed to what they are composing or constructing. There is a slight optimism in Krauss' reconciling with the modernist monolithic grid as infrastructure that might be used in contemporaneous modes of living with extractive networked digital gridded infrastructures, and allow for new, non-monolithic, queer becomings.³ Exploring possible routes of accessibility through grids, and even finding something akin to a call-to-action in the face of the grid, Krauss says:

"I do not think it is an exaggeration to say that behind every (twentieth century) grid there lies- like a trauma that must be repressed- a symbolist window parading in the guise of a treatise on optics. Once we realize this, we can also understand that in (twentieth century) art there are 'grids' where we do not expect to find them... By virtue of the grid, the given work of art is presented as a mere fragment, a tiny piece arbitrarily cropped from an infinitely larger fabric."

This 'permission' to engage grids allows for a queer construction methodology. One that finds valance in a #newnormal time period of increasingly privatized, and personalized, foucaultian panopticons, in increasingly inarticulate, yet lived, material structures. Krauss' formation of the grid is one that allows for a political praxis as starting point for interrogation of any architectural or enlightened 'development', if it does not sit idly in a mode of zombie viewing, or pure aestheticism.

¹ Referencing the past etiology of HIV/AIDS; evoking queer material uses similar to Zach Blas' *Gay Bombs*.

² See Bratton's *The Stack: On Software and Sovereignty*; creation of accidental 'megastructures.'

³ See Krauss' *Grids*, 64; grid formalisms with organic affect.

Especially from Krauss' organic metaphors within the text, the redefinition or recontextualization of prostheticness could be way of living within, and living as, objects of biopolitical power. What zombie, Donna Haraway cyborg adjacent-like form, could be made specifically useful in this space? I use the word 'zombie' in relation to contemporary viral ontologies such as 'plagues of rogue twitter bots' as agitprop online, but also in relation to intersectional class consciousness ideas of a 'covid zombie army' demanding health care from a ruling class subjugating a failing working, gig economy.¹ (Already a failed idea in 2021). Adjectives of forms being 'dead' and/or 'artificial' align bodies in spaces of a subaltern, in the ground. The lines of grids might also be roots: alive, but under every ground.²

This suggestion of queer form, in ways of tangible political identity, can also be viewed by how gay scholar John D'Emilio describes it as a formation by capital. In *Capitalism and Gay Identity*, D'Emilio states, "Gay men and lesbians have not always existed. Instead, they are a product of history, and have come into existence in a specific historical era." D'Emilio proves his own point as the the word 'queer' was still having it's academic slime epistemology forming on the grid when his text came out in 1993. In popular work *Manifiesto Contrasexual*, by queer scholar Paul B. Preciado, formings of any queer philoshopy can be applied as metaphor for traversing said grid, as to "travel with no guide but an invisible cartography, and, in the end, with no fixed program or aim in sight, inventing the archive." This queered, data processing archive uses a fake binary shibboleth, a salvaged feminine care-taking, familial othered emotion, and a masculine analytical, Silicon Valley material-mastery feeling. In reconciling the grid form as a bodily form, Preciado writes:

"We don't have a body that we come later to reflect on. We make ourselves a body, we earn our own body - we pay a high (political and affective) price for it. Our bodies and sexualities are collective institutions that we simultaneously inhabit and perform. The social technologies that produce and legitimize these living institutions are shifting radically. - We know how to use a 3d bioprinter, but we don't know how to use it freely."

In the 1990's, the internet was meant to bring about utopia.³ Inheriters of a white supremacist destiny, instead of dealing with material history, decided to make a new world instead. In questioning whose utopia solidified, it's clear in 2021 that an extractive, white, financially elite utopia did emerge into a contemporary global north still. In a world, there is no ending point, but a rendered big flat 'present.' However, there's fun to be had. To quote MARINA's 2021 song *Ancient Dreams in a Modern Land*, "You may be lost, but you belong to the world." You can be red-pilled or black-pilled. You can be a zoomer.⁴ You can be a zombie.⁵ You can be a furry or a fake capitalist. Sorting through modern day LGBTQIA+ slimes of identity and technology can be complicated through time (i.e. gay vs queer epistemologies). One contemporary form of play in this that links technology and identity is: tourism.

¹ Referencing Haraway's classic cyborg onotology; as well as materialisms in body and nature, the digital is physical..

² Thinking of Spivak's post-colonial world-building; failures of Deleuze and Guattari; in *Can the Subaltern Speak?*

³ See James Bridle's *New Dark Age*; an extractive technological present has created a materially insecure future.

⁴ See Citeralla's *Irony Politics & Gen Z*; identity extremism located on, and influenced by, internet infastructure

⁵ Referring to contemporary pop culture zombie trends, viruses, and identity play online (avatars, cosplay, performance).

In her text *Circuits of Queer Mobility: Tourism, Travel, and Globalization* seminal scholar Jasbir Puar explores implications of gender, sexuality, race, and class in ongoing globalist colonialism-as-pleasure-tourism. Puar explores fun in an antecode from 1998 by which ‘gay cruises’ were not being allowed to board at locations in the Caribbean. In this happening, American gay-branded cruises were not allowed to dock at the Caymen Islands, a British Territory, due to suspicion that “appropriate behavior would not be upheld.” Queer identity, or in this instance the form of international LGBTQIA+ rights, was used as a tool to uphold imperialist influence in a geo-political game of liberal, pink-washed, commerce on colonized land.¹

As Puar reminds readers in this situation: “Ironically, the United States and British states advocate protection for cruise ships in the Caribbean while granting no such rights when the cruise-goers return home.” Jasbir Puar says about this situation, and other schisms on the grid, that “the creation of a queer cosmopolitan elite that spans many geopolitical locales through such solidarity tours reanimates artificial distinctions between modern sexual identity and indigenous sexual acts. ... The dichotomy between humanitarian and pleasure travel obscures the investments of both in tourism, liberal discourses of travel, capitalist interests, consumption practices, and neocolonial gestures.”

In this international nautical situation, I think about the child pictured in the piece *Untitled (One Day This Kid) (Portfolio)* from the work of artist David Wojnarowicz.² This piece explores the impacts of the HIV/AIDS epidemic particularly from a New York-centric artistic community perspective. This particular iteration has the original English text listed as well as 9 other languages. The work in most forms, signals attention to the systemic violence from various governmental entities on bodies. In the case of this work, the semiotic is that of a young white male child. I wonder what the youth was expected to do with their future body and what they would actually be doing in 2021. What is implied with a white body next to non-english text. It was the 90’s, so presumably they would be a current day millennial. Maybe they would be on PrEP? Maybe frequenting a local Starbucks, and having Rupaul’s Drag Race as their entire annoying insta-twink, AAVE, vernacular?³ or maybe they would be dead? Regardless of their intended future, the child constructed in the work, that child now exists in another, even larger, world-becoming, global pandemic in 2021. One that is ghettoizing minority bodies on an even larger scale, a manner that HIV/AIDS continues to do today in non-white spaces. Think of horrible body burning images circulating from India, as western bodies have to even “debate” the releasing of vaccine patents in 2021. If the child in Wojnarowicz’s updated piece did indeed to grow up to be the ideation of a suburban, cis-white male young man, he is surely playing on the grid currently.⁴ Maybe he was even on board one of the famous ‘gay cruises’ that visited Puerto Vallarta, and ironically sunk, during New Year’s Eve festivities in 2020, which faced backlash from queer digital citizens.⁵

¹ See Puar’s texts on homonationalisms and biopolitics; globalist, international LGBT+ rights as neo-colonization.

² Reconfiguration of the Wojnarowicz’s original *Untitled (One Day This Kid...)* from 1990; poster child affect.

³ See Dean’s *Closing the Loop*, and *Poor Meme, Rich Meme*, for current internet tropes and language problematics.

⁴ See Cheng, Juhász, and Shahani’s *AIDS and the Distribution of Crises* and neoliberal ‘crisis’ structures.

⁵ Past discourse around HIV/AIDS and gay male sex; <https://www.vox.com/22245094/gaysovercovid-pandemic-shaming>

“The queens dress in those parts of the devastated city which the men have abandoned. In the spaces created by ruined buildings the queens have made a dazzling new world. It is all trickery, of course...

...Fabrics and dim lights and soft pillows and tinkly sounds and sweet smells and laughter everywhere as the queens dress for the streets. The queens live in the streets; they have their love affairs on the streets. They make the men on the streets very uncomfortable, sometimes even violent. It amuses the queens to see the men in such a state.”

“Institutions struggle to find solid ground on which they might argue for the necessity of art that not only is about hard feelings but produces them. ‘More and more,’ writes Wendy Steiner, ‘people do not wish art, criticism, and education to present reality as problematic.’ ...

...She also suggests that the Left has not helped itself by presenting art criticism as deadening of feeling: An education in contemporary art seems like an arduous training in alienation. Aesthetic maturity is the ability to take contemporary art on the chin.”

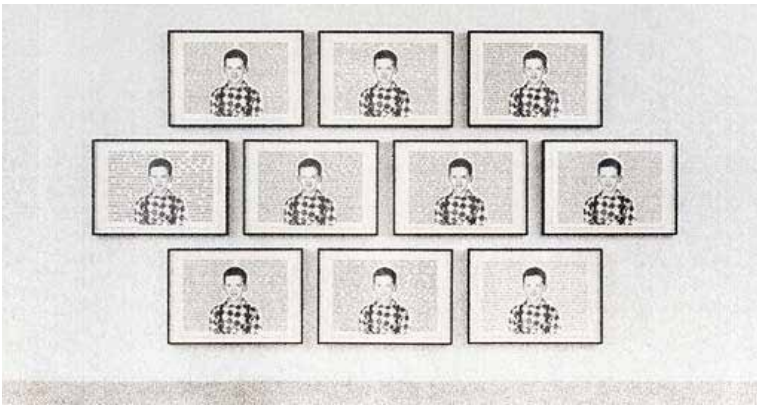


Fig. 5
Untitled (One Day This Kid) (Portfolio)
 Text Printed in 10 Languages
 David Wojnarowicz
 1990-91, 2018



Fig. 6
Brandon
 Net Art
 Shu Lea Cheang, w/ Guggenheim
 1998-99, 2016

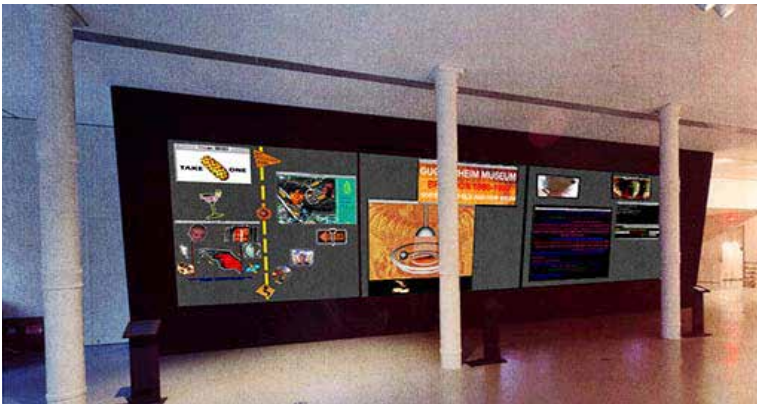


Fig. 7
Brandon
 Installation
 Far Left: *Roadtrip* Interface
 Guggenheim Soho Video Wall
 1998



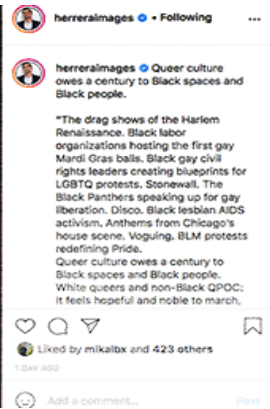
Fig. 8
To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything!
 'Cross-Country Roadtrip Scene'
 Beeban Kidron
 1995

The drag shows of the Harlem Renaissance. Black labor organizations hosting the first gay Mardi Gras balls. Black gay civil rights leaders creating blueprints for LGBTQ protests, Stonewall. The Black Panthers speaking up for Gay Liberation. Disco. Black lesbian AIDS activism. Anthems from Chicago's house scene. Voguing. BLM protests reclaiming Pride.

Queer culture owes a century to Black spaces and Black people.

White and non-Black QPOC: It feels hopeful and noble to march, donate and vote for Black Lives. But don't ever forget that first and foremost you are *paying a debt.*

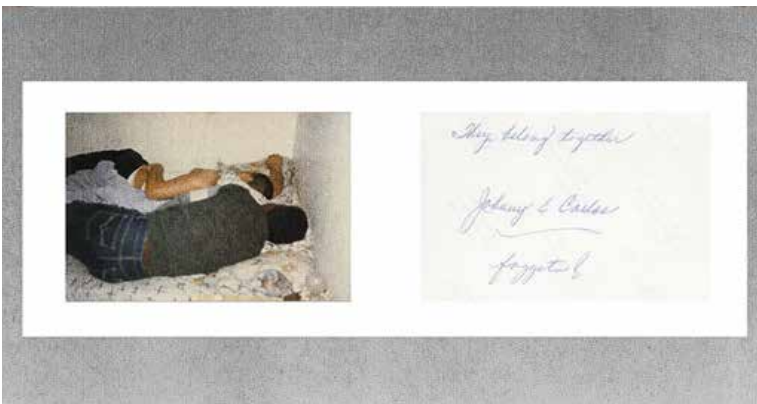
Leo Herrera 7.30.20 @herreraimages



Fg. 9
7.30.20 @herreraimages
Ongoing Social Media Posts
Leo Herrera
See also: 'The FATHERS Projects'
2020



Fg. 10
WE ARE HERE BECAUSE OF THOSE THAT ARE NOT
Danielle Brathwaite-Shirley
See Also: Black Trans Archive
2020



Fg. 11
Papi Project
Craiglist Ad: "I am looking for men who had sex with my dad"
Oli Rodriguez
2011- Ongoing



Fg. 12
I Wanna Be Well
Gregg Bordowitz
The Art Institute of Chicago
2019

Recurring in contemporary art tropes is an easy-to-package ideal of a ‘relative who died from HIV/AIDS.’¹ I don’t intend to criticize the work itself, because I believe esoteric formal art practices, queer formal messes, are valuable to constructing and legitimizing pedagogy and community: at the same time as being tokenized. Today, such work representing a western, American HIV/AIDs (problematically synonymized with LGBT+ art) might be presupposed for a totality of queer art history, or its distanced image for palatable suburban, white consumerism. Work from the likes of David Wojnarowicz, like *Untitled (One Day This Kid Will)*, intentionally or unintentionally, used the semiotic of a white male to activate audiences that have already normalized this body as standard, as foundational, and because of the threat to such a body, Wojnarowicz’s work struck a stronger cord in its impact, a hyperclap, with emphasis on a threat to a body of ‘power.’²

I posit for queer care from constructions by contemporary artists that exist in extractive networks that circulate similar bodies: like photographer Pacifico Silano, whose work features pastel grid formations of retro, fitnessed male bodies, and work from artist Eric Lotzer, whose sexy graphite drawings recycle a gay male body akin to artist Tom of Finland whose is contextualized in historical facism, and even small sculptures from artist Colin Radcliffe, whose work animates Grindr messages into wonderful small clay toys.³ I enjoy all this work, especially when considering sex labor in biopolitics, but I want to ask for the works’ capacity for queerness: not maintaining repetition in social algorithms which already make viral white cis gay male bodies, but call these practices into forming new linages of queer rendering cycles by proxy. Within any queer salvage aesthetic, rendering atomized ‘queerness’ is not a useful objective in whole, but useful in complication as a end, and not a means. I wish to introduce polemic to institutions and platforms, and pink-washed artistic endeavors, that allow the work to be tokenized for moments of neoliberal self-flaguation or institutional clout through ‘diversity’ optics, or “slack-tivism.” This tokenization, or ‘aestheticization of politics,’ happens in various other identity-based practices with necessary intersections of race, gender, and class endeavors. It is easier to produce an image of activism compared to engaging with the material circumstances that arise for the need of said large intervention, especially if the images produced work well in rewarding media algorithms.⁴ This in turn produces its own queer, zombie image-currency through repetition: I do not wish to be normalized or accessed without my consent.

This repetition produces the ‘queer as capital’ historically, akin to a process that Walter Benjamin warns about in the intrinsic political natures of media(s) use, and respective ‘auras’ (i’m using this as a queer locality), within the seminal text *Work of Art the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. This reconciling with political constructions as potentially monolithic relates the Krauss’ *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*, as well as ‘political bodies’ from

1 Conversations with other contemporary queer artists; Cheng, Juhasz, and Shahani’s *AIDS and the Distribution of Crises*.

2 ‘hyperclap’ is a colloquial expression via popular live-streaming platform Twitch; broke live-viewer records during 2020.

3 These types of art practices are readily circulated via social media algorithms; concerns of ‘audience vs. community.’

4 See Steyerl’s *Duty Free Art*; See Benjamin’s ‘aestheticization of politics’; contemporary ‘surveillance economies.’

D'Emilio's *Gay Identity and Capitalism*, and the potentiality for free movement in such bodily fluidity from Preciado's *Contrasexual Manifesto*. These through-lines, queer philosophical content sew decades of value and make up the metaphorical and material queer tools of such a GRID tool.¹ I am interested in pursuing this queer grid sensibility especially through a recent moment in my creative practice.

I have followed a gay uncle, whom I did not not exist until the past few years, to the American Pacific Northwest from the rural Midwest to explore a lineage of queer gridded connection. A partial telos of my graduate studies was to follow a grid of 'genetic' queer history. A normalized western history of 'queer' mythology revolves around kinship and chosen family vs a genetic family.² I'm curious about queerness on a genetic, patterned through structures, level and how it fits into this larger grid schema, like fractal reflections, or Instagram posts. - What happens if queer ancestors didn't have to die in order to be helpful? What if this queer body was already rendered? A sort of hyperclap? A hyperclap is an upcycling of coded emoticons used on the streaming platform Twitch. I am using it for queer digital crafting here. When considering queer materialism, in this specific case the crafted sex toys of Dorothy Allison and her lover from the 1970's, art historian Julia Bryan-Wilson in *Fray: Art and Textile Politics*, locates the following toolism:

"The stuffed phallus and sewn-together harness arose from a combination of need and resourcefulness - truly crafty, to invoke several senses of that word, both cunning (and possibly devious or deceitful) in design and crafted by hand. These objects are also crafty, to use the suffix in its diminutive, in that they are craftlike, or craftish, not always hewing to classic traditions of skilled manual effort but rather approaching the category of craft elliptically, or at an angle - that is, queerly. One says something is "arty" when it is not quite art and may or may not aspire to be considered such; similarly, these crafty textile-based creations take direction, but also definitively stand at some remove, from conventions of craft."

"Crafting," Wilson goes on to say, "was a resource to physically bring objects, and new forms of representation and self-expression, into the world in a time when the marketing of queerness and its accoutrements, and the molding of gay and lesbian subjects as a demographic of consumers worth targeting, had not yet taken hold." This craft sensibility can be used and applied easily to digital materialisms such as website-building, various rendering, and software/hardware navigation.³ An example of this, that is specifically attached to art funding, is Shu Lea Cheang's net art project titled *Brandon* from 1998. This project was partially a commission and funded as one of the Guggenheim's first engagements with 'internet art.' Its construction becomes important in this moment, as an institutional funded craft project. It is also strangely esoteric, as even the online components were not easily accessible, and somehow more relevant to queer becomings decades after when viewing them in the present day, as the work is archived and updated and continues to be shared. Within *Brandon*, there were both online and offline components during its

¹ Referencing queer theory aggregating, such as Getty's *Queer* or Goldberg's *The Estrangement Principle*.

² See Edelman's *No Future*; Referencing against a globalised kinships system; See Gomez-Barris' *Beyond the Pink Tide*.

³ See Rhizome's *Net Art Anthology*; Carlos Motta's *We Who Feel Differently*; Labor of Visual AIDS project.

Guggenheim-located activation, happening across continents.¹ In the end, it was sort of big lovely formal queer mess. Within the website component of the project, there were pages or multiple ‘interfaces’: *bigdoll*, *roadtrip*, *mooplay*, *theatrum anatomicum*, and *panopticon*.² A throughline of the whole project was dealing with an equally uneasy and loose material: feeling, systemic violence, and the non-cis body. This “mess” is important to a sort of queer salvage aesthetic methodology of the work. It’s also important to note that even, wonderfully, Cheang says, “no one, including myself, can claim to have viewed the entirety of this work.”

The components of *Brandon* represent a queer grid, especially any horizon on said grid. This invocation of a landscape in the work draws connections to the place of its non-protagonist’s locality. *Brandon* draws inspiration, or renders a presence, from the murder and violence against trans man Brandon Teena located in Nebraska, USA.³ This agrarian landscape is one of the best historical environments to reference a grid as it is known for its “flatness”, as well as its lasting geo-political standing in colonial, white-supremacist land ownership as a larger part of the United States of America in the global north.⁴ This employment of power continues today, as it is the only state within the country with a unicameral state legislature, marking its monolithic and solidified, seemingly, views and political desires into material governing bodies. In the late 1800’s the Oto, Pawnee, and Omaha people were systemically displaced, as homesteading occurred by such system.⁵ This type of grid can be held as monolithic in terms similar to Krauss’ reconciling with modernism, as the grid was seemingly ubiquitous, stretching to the horizontal. Literally a “fly-over state,” this locality might more clearly render queerness in solidarity against such forms. In the *Roadtrip* interface, the feeling of driving and ‘traversing the Nebraska prairie’ was intentionally ‘evoked.’ The *Roadtrip* interface is described as:

“The roadtrip interface is conceived to upload Nebraska’s Brandon onto the cyberzone where he would surf across Nebraska’s route 75, the nation border patrol, the linear timezone and the gender markings to encounter fictional persona play along the ever-extended, ever-expandable yellow dividers.”

The semiotic of a nostalgic pastoral image, a dream, was meant to be invoked. A semiotic is not a specific material reference, but a potentially, a connotation, or gesture. This nostalgic horizon perspective fits perfectly into what queer theorist José Esteban Muñoz now famously describes in *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* for ‘queerness’ as a sort of glitter in the text, which functions in digital sparks and screen moire, but also as:

“Queerness is not yet here. Queerness is an ideality. Put another way, we are not yet queer. We may never touch queerness, but we can feel it as the warm illumination of a horizon imbued with potentiality. We have never been queer, yet queerness exists for us as an ideality that can be distilled from the past and used to imagine a future.”

¹ In conjunction with the Society for Old and New Media in the Netherlands, notably ‘*Digi Gender Social Body*.’

² See *Reconstructing Brandon (1998-1999)* in *Digital Humanities Quarterly*, Volume 12, 2018.

³ See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brandon_Teena

⁴ See Cassano’s *Southern Thought*; global north as geo-political imperialist, modern presence.

⁵ Referencing *Bureau of American Ethnologies* from Smithsonian Libraries; Access Point: <https://native-land.ca>.

Materiality did come back into the metaphorical project, as the project was recently updated to “restore” *Brandon*. In 2016, the older net art had to be slightly adapted through digital conservation practices, because after almost two decades, “some of these technologies are no longer supported by contemporary browsers, and parts of *Brandon* had become corrupted.”¹ Many implications in the queer formal mess that *Brandon*, including glitches, are seemingly important for the process that allowed *Brandon* on the GRID in the first place. *Brandon* then became unsafe in the future, not because they were deadly, but because surveillance economy infrastructures evolved, and now justify its change for circulation. If not even the artist and her collaborators have seen the entirety of the work, what missionary savior complex is needed to save a piece from being corrupted; so it can be seen by everyone when this was not its intention originally? This complication is a means to a specific, unrealistic, ending point of accessibility for all users, when the queer work was made entirely out of complication.² As Legacy Russell reminds us in *Glitch Feminism* about concepts of corruption and use:

“What can we learn from a computer virus? A computer virus corrupts data. A computer virus costs capitalism. It degrades productivity within the machine. A computer virus is a threat to the function of the machine and its economy. A machine transforms into one that cannot perform, that quite literally cannot work, forgets how to work, works against its function. It challenges the endemic correlation between value and labor, dangerous in its uselessness.”

This ‘uselessness’ has been present in my own practice the past few years as I work with potentialities surrounding my elder gay uncle, who I did not know existed due to his ‘uselessness’ to my family growing up in Nebraska, near where Brandon Teena lived.³ I am interested in this literal queer future-horizontal as a larger queer gridded connection, which made itself available to me in the direction of the sunset on the west coast where he currently lives. Metaphor became material due to its own rendering of queer form; the math landed right; there was a glitch. My own uncle’s social gay ‘uselessness’ coming in and out of scale as mentor, art practice collaborator, uncle, father, brother, and unusually genetic kin. We are very similar in our construction due to our genetic material: height, posture, interests. Almost a genetic drag, gooey, of each other, including the competition of pageantry capital in process. As gridded repetitions would have it, as a youth visiting the Oregon coast I even nearly accidentally walked past his residence at that time, not knowing his own residence. Gooey, disgusting to me, messy, and also beautiful, gay as hell, and mathematic. - I would guess, our genetics are not that special: if we can do math on a scaled computer, our body can do similar math to other similar bodies.

¹ See *Reconstructing Brandon (1998-1999)* in *Digital Humanities Quarterly*, Volume 12, 2018.

² I reinterpret ‘spirituality’ and ‘noise’ to a contemporary queer hardware presences from Sontag’s *Aesthetic of Silence*.

³ See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humboldt,_Nebraska

When continuing to explore queer materialisms, Julia Bryan-Wilson says, “Indeed, queer drag and textile craft could be considered closely aligned, parallel practices - historically, non-gender-conforming folks like drag queens, drag kings, butch lesbians, and femmy fags, as well as transgendered folks who aim to pass “seamlessly,” to invoke a sewing metaphor, have had to make their own clothes, significantly tailor garments, and invent body-altering modifications like breast binders and packing cocks.”

This concept of various ‘drag’ ontologies in my recent practice not only is applied in the genetic repetition of my genetics onto another queer individual, but also repetition and imitation within human-made or human-born constructions as well.¹ I think of this when considering the film *To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar*, its title itself a bit of a mess, and its filming location in Nebraska, where I locate mine and Brandon Teena’s queerness in ossification on the GRID. The film, released in 1995, was about drag queens winning a competition in Hollywood, California, USA, but within that horizon, the queens get stuck in a unspecific rural location, a monolith that the characters failed to traverse and get glitched, failed via a engine failure, also because the actors playing these roles were cis-straight men, enacting humor as systemic power.² The film was released two years after Teena’s murder in 1993. The film narrative did not note the specific rural location where the queens end up stranded, or “off the grid,” but the film’s construction credits, or code, allow inference. The film was mostly shot in Loma, Nebraska, population: 54, and a few miles from where I grew up in the area.³ What is interesting about this filming location however, is that this “ruralness” had to be produced. “Fake,” non functional architecture was set up to produce, to ‘dragify,’ the semiotic of the monolithic idea of the rural: barns, wooden facades, tumbleweeds. Many of these structures still exist and function as part of the town today, changed through organic time, the material adapted from a semiotic to material infrastructure of the locality. A type of ‘geo-forming’ applies to this area as well, as most trees were planted decades ago to act as a wind-break. The American holiday of Arbor Day was coined in the state as it’s estimated that “more than 1 million trees were planted in Nebraska on the first Arbor Day.” This geoforming for Arbor Day festivities happened around 1874, as the native peoples were also be displaced by the same state legislature celebrating. In the summer of 2020, due the COVID-19 pandemic virus⁴, I was drawn to the rural architecture like a morbid pandemic tourist, this historically, fake “dragged out” area. I took pictures with a Kodak to be developed at the local Walmart later. A lot of the photos taken, later rendered into grass simulation in 3d software, were also composed by my grandmother for fun as a few of her close friends in town had died from COVID-19 complications. While I drove through the Nebraska prairie, I attempted to induce Cheang’s *Roadtrip* interface in *Brandon* from a different GRID landscape.⁵

¹ Referencing Wark’s *Capital is Dead: Is This Something Worse?*; See also Wark’s *Hacker Manifesto*.

² Access Point: Sam Feder’s *Disclosure: Trans Lives on Screen*; Access Point: Abi-Karam’s *We Want It All*.

³ See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Loma,_Nebraska

⁴ See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/COVID-19_pandemic

⁵ Referencing Ahmed’s *Queer Phenomenology*; implied orientation when ‘queer horizon’ is in every direction on flat plane.



Fg. 13
Loma, NE, USA
KODAK Funsaver One Time Use Film
2020



Fg. 14
Loma, NE, USA
KODAK Funsaver One Time Use Film
2020



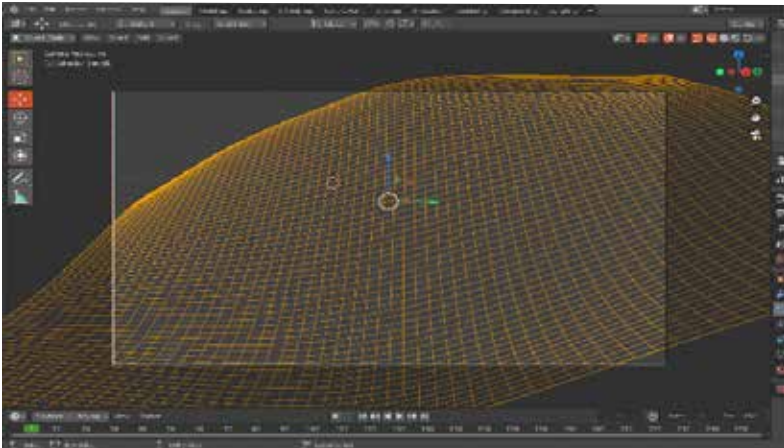
Fg. 15
Loma, NE, USA
KODAK Funsaver One Time Use Film
2020



Fg. 16
Loma, NE, USA
KODAK Funsaver One Time Use Film
2020



Fg. 17
Loma, NE, USA
KODAK Funsaver One Time Use Film
2020



Fg. 18
Workspace, Blender v 2.91.2
2021



Fg. 19
Workspace, Blender v 2.91.2
2021



Fg. 20
Untitled Render (26 Rd., West Rd., Summer)
Blender v 2.91.2
2021

“How could a hyper-elite possibly abuse its ‘mind-reading’ technological potential, we joked with some nervous resignation, in the breaks. I was vaguely aware of being witness to a shift, in which no one was trying to pretend that technology is not being galvanized to widen the gap between rich and poor along the vector of hidden information and knowledge. It wasn’t something to be ashamed of. The elite was describing its own intentions, its aspirations to shamanic priest status.

...Most distressingly common, we are typed, and the type is used to make predictive models about who we will be through time. That our qualities might change, that our preference for a song one day does not stretch out to define us over time, is not accounted for. Digital shadowing captures our preferences and then takes this to be a statement on who we are, everlastingly.”

“The loss of the table would be the loss of a tangible connection. Arendt would clearly mourn the loss of the table, as such a loss would make social gatherings impossible. And yet we must ask: What is the point of such gathering? The table in its very function as a kinship object might enable forms of gathering that direct us in specific ways that make some things possible and others not...

...Gatherings, in other words, are not neutral but directive.”



Fig. 21
Untitled (Queer Picnic), Blender v 2.91.2, Tannon Reckling, 2021

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