



# FAO

PHOTO

2020 annual #2

**DANILO LIMA**

**SHAFFER**

**GUSTAVO MARCASSE**

**ROD SPARK**

**RYAN STANFORD**

**AND MUCH MORE!**



*Eugenio* by Rubaudanadeu, ECCE HOMO I series, digital collage in Hahnemühle photo Rag by Ramón Tormes, 2017.



*Guillermo Weickert*, ECCE HOMO II series, digital collage in Hahnemühle photo Rag by Ramón Tormes, 2020.

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cover: photo by Ryan Stanford. (model: Sebastian,  
2020)

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# Summary

## Editorial

**Y**ou have a very important  
magazine in your hands.  
This horrible past year  
came with an agenda to  
reconnect humankind, to  
make us more solidary and empathic, to  
make us leave our bubble of standards  
and really understand what diversity is.

Since 2019 I have understood that this Faló  
Magazine is not only about Art and Male  
Nudity: it is about people. Then I slightly  
turned it into a safe space for some hidden/  
invisible people. Last year I chose abused  
men, bisexuals, people with disability and  
even a partial eunuch to give me their  
testimonials about their lives. I could only  
make a didactic article with numbers  
and facts but no. I united the sections  
Phallocampsis and Phalloorrhagia because  
their voices should be heard... their voices  
MUST be heard. We need to see life through

others words, to understand our privileges,  
our differences and similarities. We are not  
alone.

To have their testimonials on a magazine  
about photography was also very relevant.  
The five artists here work exactly with the  
diversity of the male body. More raw or  
more artistic, colorful or monochromatic,  
digital or analogical... Danilo, Shaffer,  
Gustavo, Rod and Ryan embody the idea  
Faló Magazine wants to spread: we are all  
beautiful, we are all Art.

You also have more artworks from Ramón  
Tormes in the endpapers and two stunning  
*moNUments* to appreciate while you wait for  
some espetacular Art History classes on the  
last 2020 anual.

Sit quietly and let this magazine go deep on  
you. I guarantee that you won't be the same  
after the reading. You will be better.

Filipe Chagas, editor

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Anonymous, 2019.

# Danilo Lima

by Filipe Chagas

**T**he excellent phrase “Art exists because life is not enough” is from the poet Ferreira Gullar. And Danilo Lima understood this when, in his years of medical training, he decided on oncology and approached death. He saw the urgency to find himself in the things he liked and was interested in, without seeking outside approval. That was how the photograph returned to his life.

With conservative parents, Danilo had photography as an escape. He stayed in the photography sections of bookstores, admiring the work of Herb Ritts, Bruce Weber, Mario Testino, Terry Richardson and David LaChapelle. At 17, he entered medical school and over-study distanced him from that universe that excited him. However, as soon as he graduated, he bought his first camera and started shooting. From colleagues to strangers on the street, he eagerly consumed photographs of male advertisements and on blogs, creating a personal archive. In 2013, he created an anonymous profile on Instagram to post the photos from this archive, but after a year and almost 10,000 followers censorship arrived and deleted the account.

His gaze was refined and he walked on the street wondering how he would photograph the men. He tested his skills with an ex-boyfriend and decided to finally invest in a course and a professional camera.

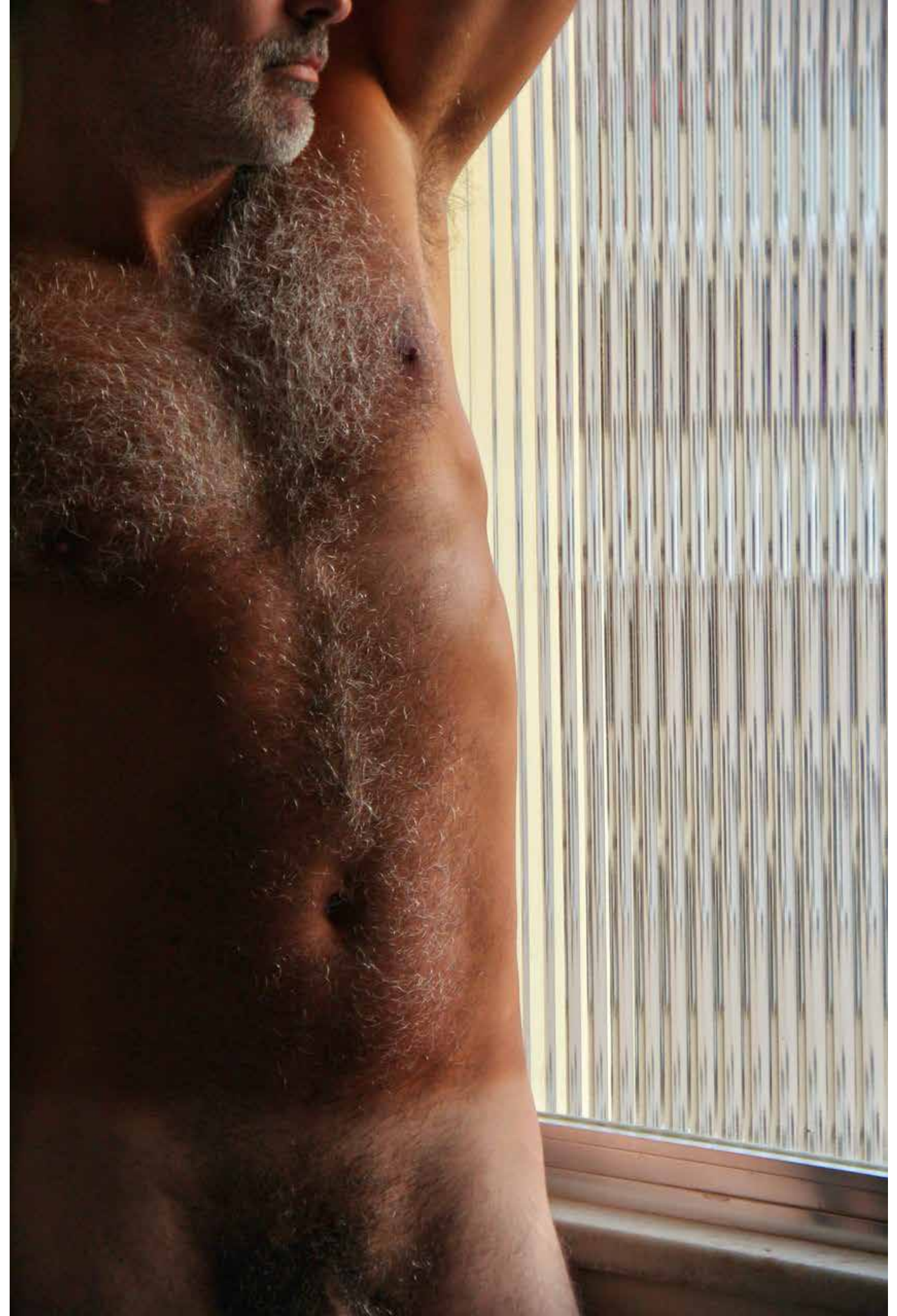
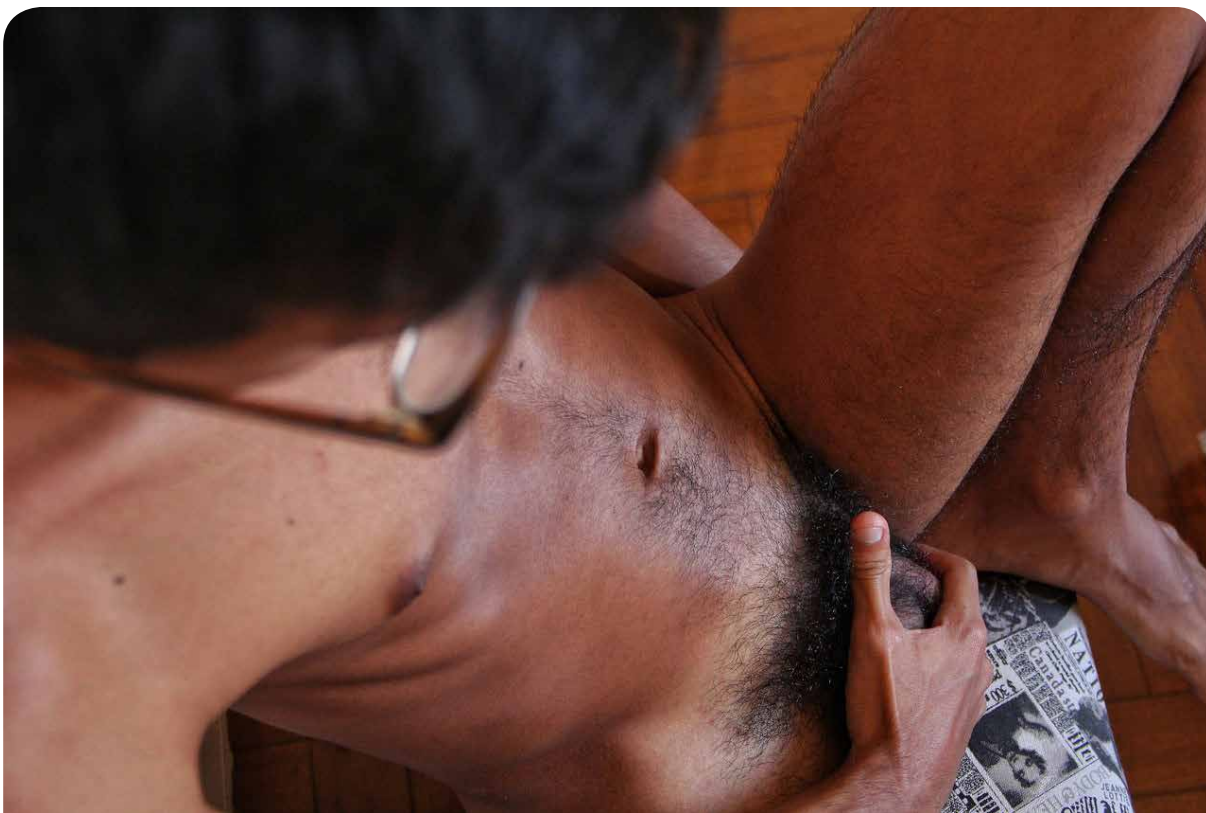
*I can get an idea on the subway; I write on my phone, other times watching a movie... But usually when I do a photo session, I study the photos that the boy has on Instagram and I already think about the details that catch my attention and I intend to highlight.*



Above: Daniel, 2019.

Next page: Anonymous, 2018.

Below: Anonymous, 2019.



Leonardo, Duda and João, 2019.



When he started to notice that people were thrilled to see his photos, he decided to go back to the internet. He first created a profile on Grindr where he would find volunteer models. Then he created a new profile on Instagram, but it was deleted again. In 2018, he came up with the idea of the *Clanndestinos* project where he faces the prejudice of his formal profession:

*People always say: "But this is just for sex, right? Does a doctor like you have the courage to photograph a naked man?" My answer is: "Do you want to give your opinion? Pay my bills. The more expensive, the more opinion you can give."*

Although photographers such as Rick Day, Paul Freeman and Janssem Cardoso, as well as Caetano Veloso, Madonna, Zé Celso, Foucault, Rita Von Hunty, Martha Medeiros, Greta Thunberg are part of Danilo's diverse melting pot of inspiration, his work is in direct contact with the Brazilian photographer Alair Gomes (1921-1992, read the third edition). It is as if Alair's voyeuristic gaze has finally achieved what the photographer has always tried to do: get really close to the models. While Alair photographed in the distance with desires, apprehensions and fears, Danilo seems to enter the intimacy of the models when he shows himself without defenses:

*Whenever I take a picture, I see a piece of me.  
My look is one of identity.*

Sequence: Renan, 2019.





He makes it clear that his creative process involves trust and empathy, since both the model and himself are people with vulnerabilities and experiences, and they can be on a bad day. Regardless of sexual orientation, the idea is to create a great relationship that confessions are made and the concept created originally ends up changing.

The fact that the Arts in general exploit the female body to exhaustion while hiding male frontal nudity has always intrigued Danilo who has the man's body as an object of admiration. These social taboos make it difficult for him to work, since some models do not accept full nudity.

*Usually I ask before if there are any restrictions. The main thing for me is not to attack the other. I shoot naturally, even if the model is excited. For technical reasons, I prefer to photograph the relaxed cock because the erection requires urgent capture. So, I see all of this as a therapy process: one step at a time.*

*Where I find masculinity, I'm interested.*

Previous page: Vinícius, 2019.

Above: Daniel, 2019.

Beside: Marcelo, 2018.





Rafael, 2019.



Ítalo, 2018.



Danilo maintains a persevering speech of continuing to face prejudices through his photography. He sees some evolution in the way male nudity has been perceived from the large number of projects on the topic that have emerged in recent years. So he intends to release a book of his project uncensored to continue showing the endless beauty of men, feminine or masculine. **8=D**



Danilo in action.

Previous page: Anonymous, 2019.

Below: Anonymous, 2019.



# Shaffer

by Filipe Chagas

Ascension, 2019.  
Model: Laurence.



**T**here's a saying that there are three sides to every story: yours, mine and the truth. The same goes for a photograph, which comprises the image itself, the story behind the photo and the interpretations of the viewer. Shaffer's creative process takes that into account, as he says:

*I love to rummage through people's heads, and materialize in a picture a series of conversations that led to the creation of that image.*

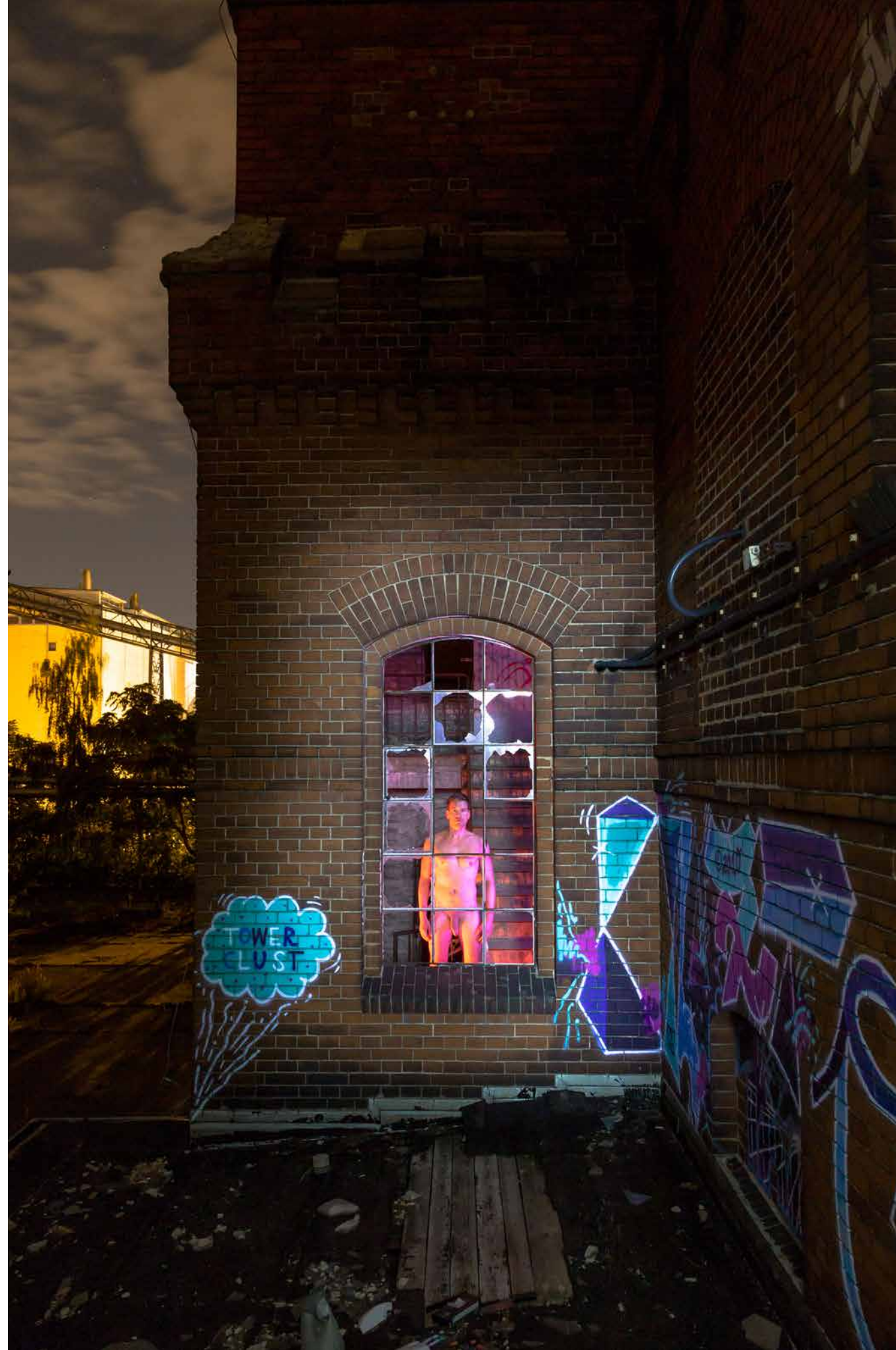
Take, for instance, his *Read the Profile* project. Here the artist, born in the northeastern state of Pernambuco, gets in touch with strangers through geosocial dating apps and starts a series of conversations - that may last for weeks or months - in which intimate aspects of all sorts are shared. The content of those conversations sparks the creation of images that relate to the person depicted.

The male figure arose naturally in the works, not only due to a matter of personal taste, but also to the closeness and availability of friends and acquaintances willing to be photographed. However easy the chats between men may seem, they can also be challenging when dealing with revelations and questionings.

Nudity wasn't the first step. At first, Shaffer was attracted by night photography and the taming of light in uncontrolled environments. Lance Keimig and Cássio Vasconcello's works played an important role in understanding that colour could be an alien element, fit to be unexpectedly inserted in the pictorial environment via the human shape. By then, during the exploration of abandoned places with a friend, the nude element surfaced.

*In the images, the body stands as part of the representation of the inner universe of an individual. Thus, more than of details, I think of the silhouette, the whole, as an anchor for the themes the photographer has introduced me in our conversations.*

*B-Sides: Bathroom, 2019, at an exhibition from João GG. Models: Luis Gustavo and Shaffer.*



*The long and darkening road, 2018. Model: Luis.*





*Cream Guava, 2014. Model: Milton.*

*Fields of gold, 2017. Model: Charles.*





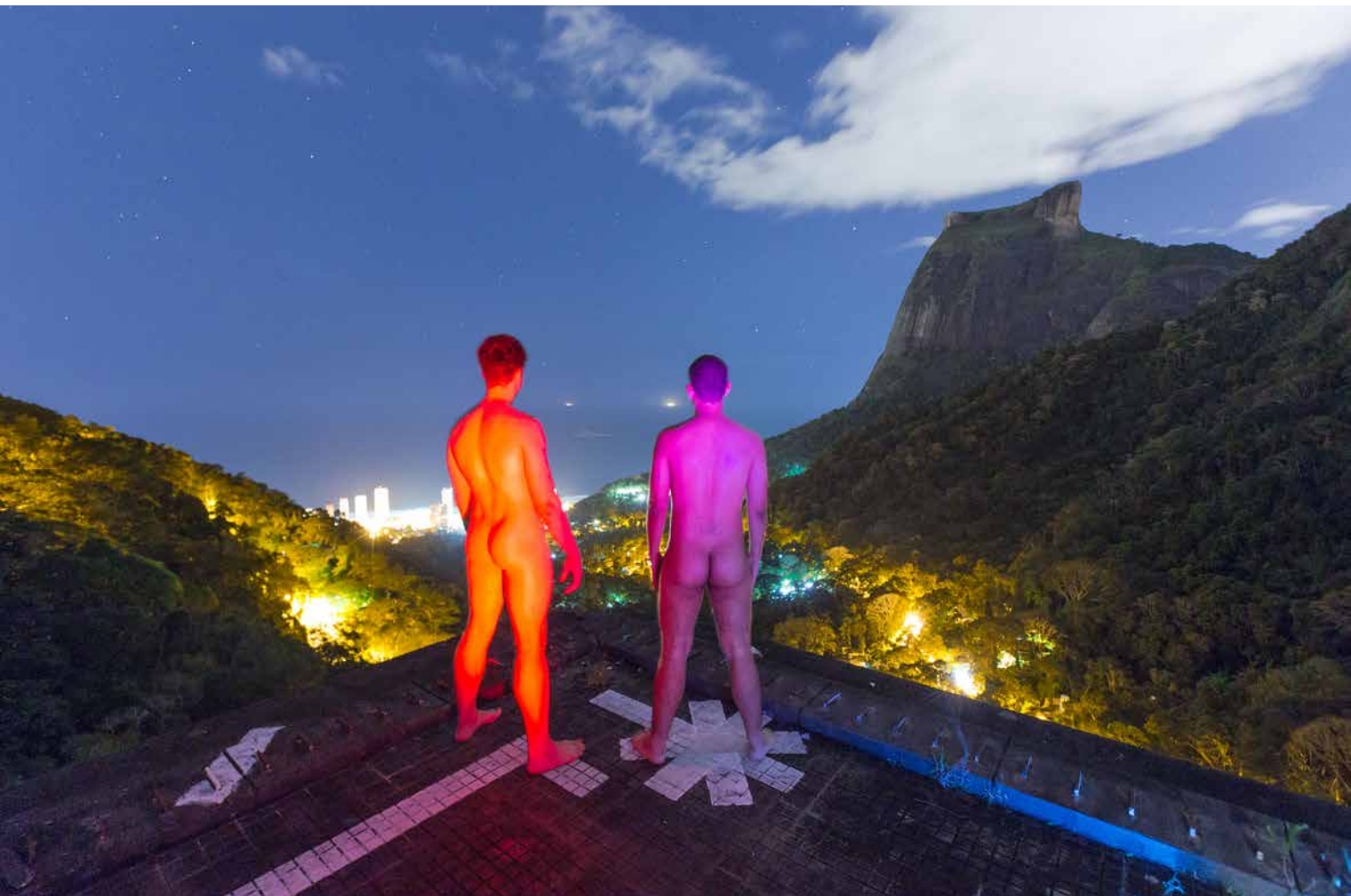
*Dreaming up The visit of oneself* series, 2014. Model: Anonymous.



*Light Zentai*, 2016. Models: Matheus and Nathan.

As the works went on, and the production increased, it was possible for Shaffer to show their results and convince strangers to take part in the project. Some people ask for anonymity, and frontal nudity ends up conditioned to the will of each person. Penises are shown, if part of the desired narrative. Erections, however, are rare. Shaffer doesn't think of them as focal points of the images, unless they are a fundamental part of the idea depicted.

*Space Invaders*, 2012. Models: Anonymous and Shaffer.





*Venus as a boy, 2017. Model: Henrique.*





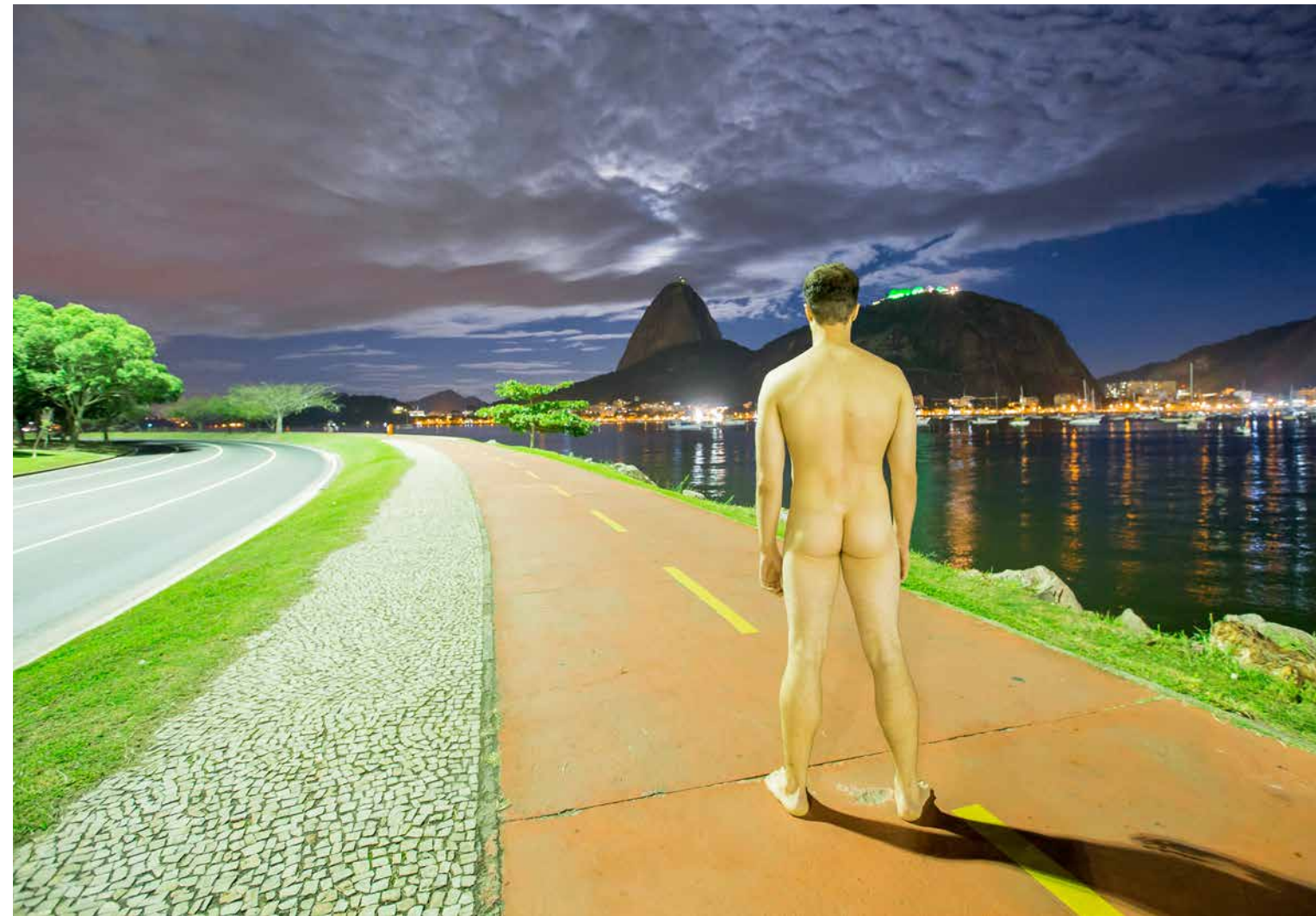


The call, 2011. Model: Anonymous.

He thinks the widespread use of the internet and the easy access to digital recording technologies in the past decades changed our references of the male image, which became increasingly more consumed. However, he tries not to fall into the trap of what he calls “institutional nude”:

*Into that huge river flow and mix up the tributary streams of mere expressions of vanity, self-affirmation, the rescuing of one’s self-esteem, attempts of artistic creations etc. It’s not hard to notice the profusion of male body exposure in places, settings, poses and repetitive scenes, that, although exhaustively seen, keep on having a popular appeal. We live in times in which many want to be the work of art, be the object of artistic representation.*

World Cup, 2014. Model: Matheus.

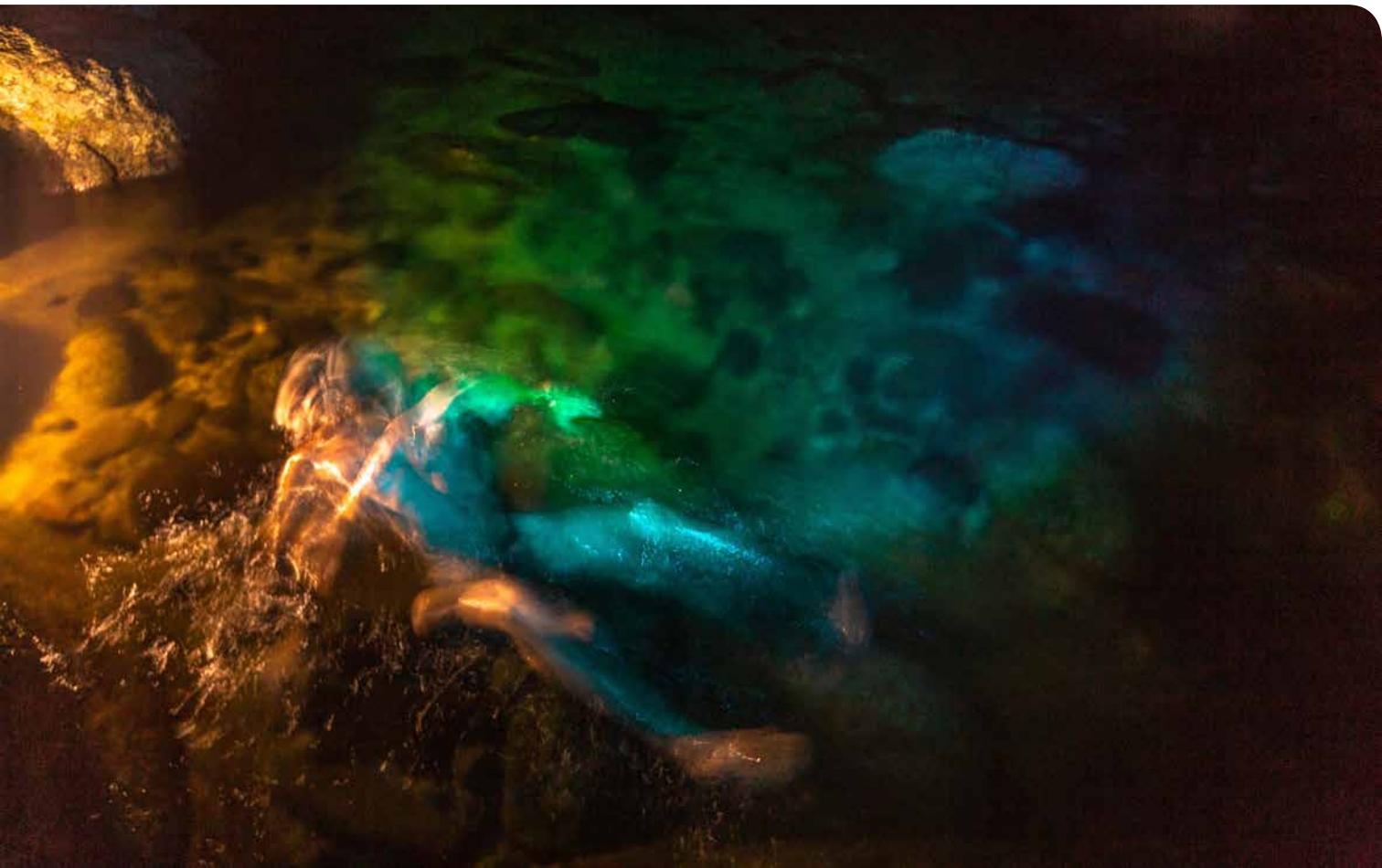


Twisted, 2014. Model: Matheus.



*Not a gated community*, 2015. Model: Anonymous.

*Bapitsm*, 2019. Model: Henrique.



*Comfort, Absence, Confinement and Protection*, 2020. Model: Shaffer.

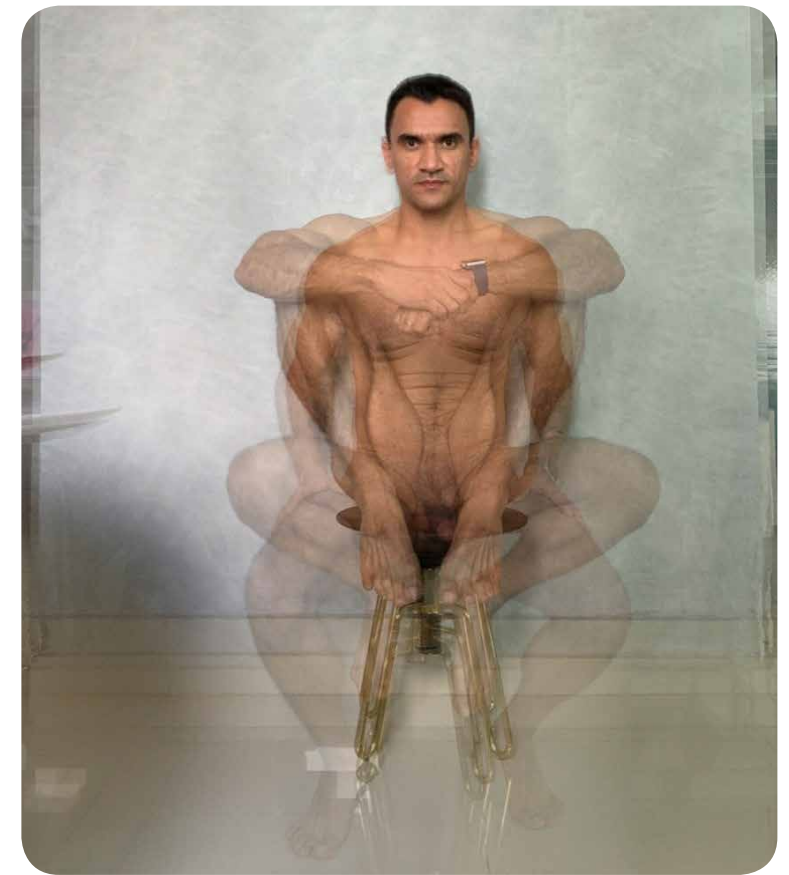




After some positive feedback and mainstream media exposure, there was more room to develop his works, whether in the *Read the Profile* project, or, lately, by remotely directing photo sessions during the pandemic, that end up in superimposed collages. His other works include the creation of “imagined species”, by colouring trees and bushes in the Brazilian Atlantic Forest, and exploring the phenomenon of light pollution in the creation of images (“where the lights of human settlements are used as lighting, that relates to the sites’ topography.”).

*Eyes that can't behold*, 2016.  
Model: David.

*Viaduct*, 2016. Model: Dann.



Roberto, Hélder and Leandro in *Long Distance Project* (2019-2020).



Shaffer is always looking for artistic references that lead to new questionings, ideas and relationships that beget surprising images, like in our dreams:


*Try to remember your dreams when you wake up. They may solve a good half of your life's concerns.*

8=D



# Gustavo Marcasse

by Filipe Chagas



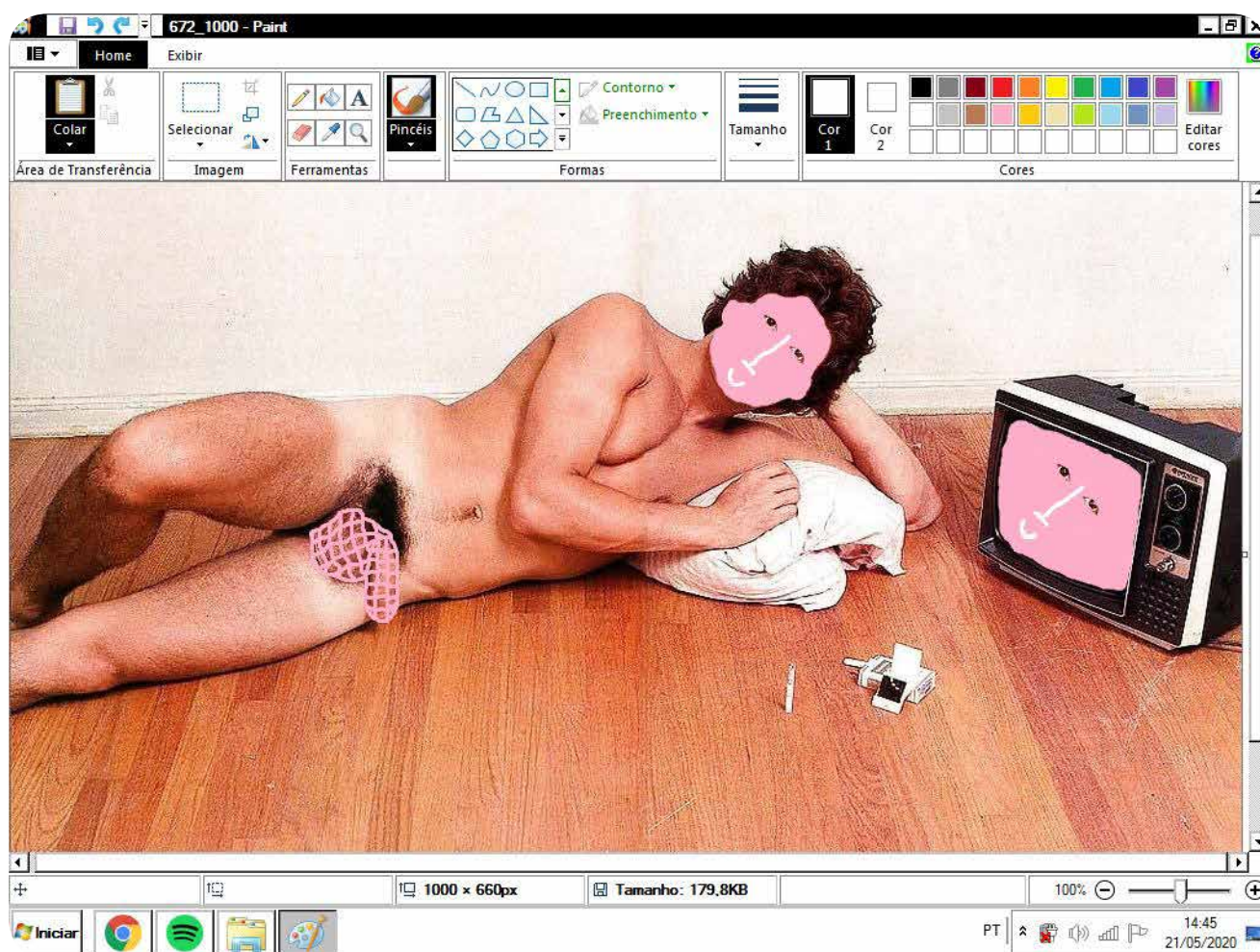
**G**ustavo Marcasse says that being born in the 1990s has great importance in his work as he grew up with the internet. Hyperactive, but controlled – as he likes to say – he remembers the world without it, but sees the past almost as impossible, since conventional human existence is now partly virtual:

*Ignoring the virtual portion of our life would be like ignoring a continent on our planet, a fertile resource, but highly dangerous when misused.*

The “religious revelation” he had in his childhood in his first contact with *Paintbrush* (today *Paint*, simple drawing software and image editing) is etched in his memory: nine years old Gustavo drew a square so easily that he was fascinated by the world of possibilities that technology would bring. Innocent, but real.

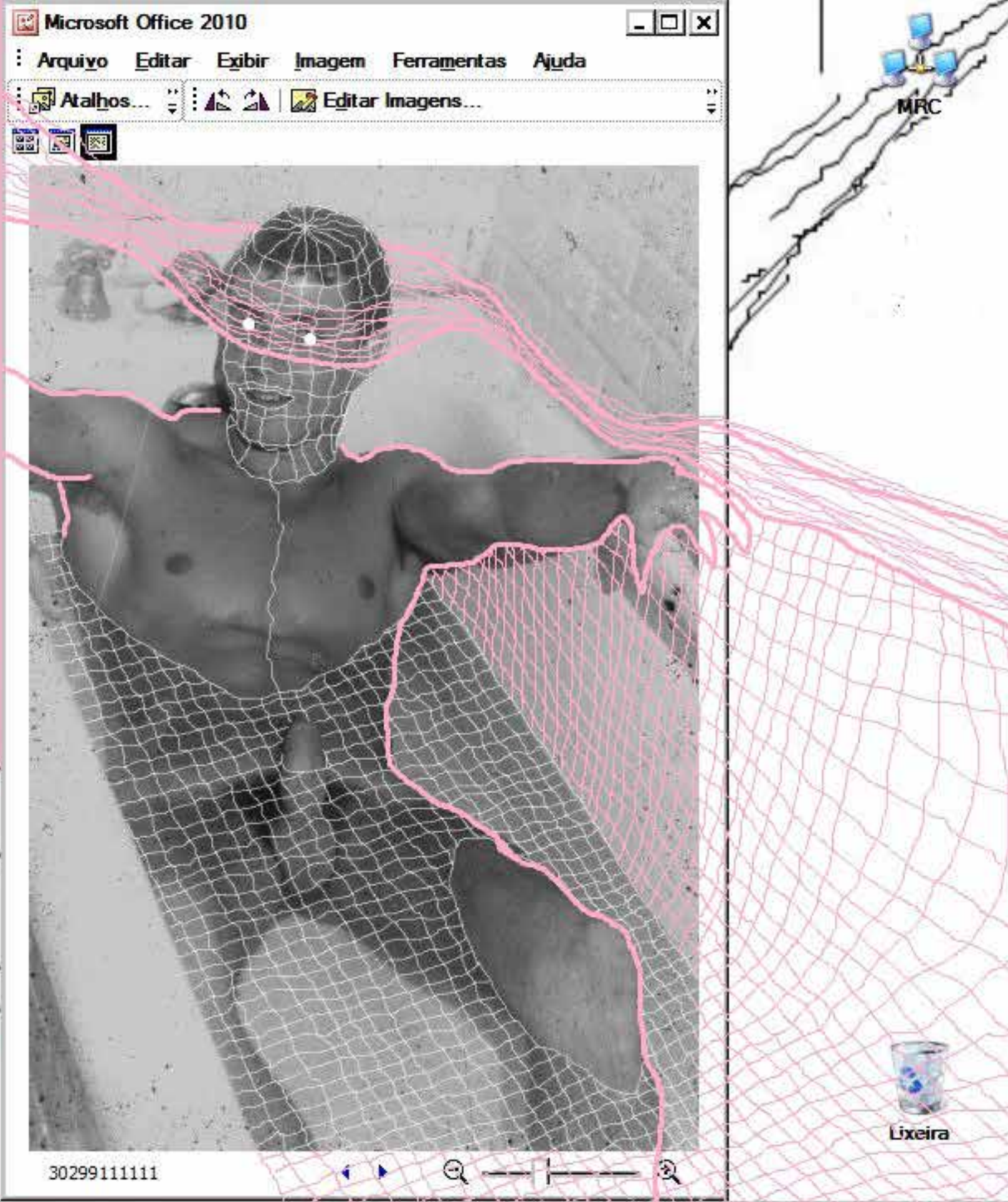
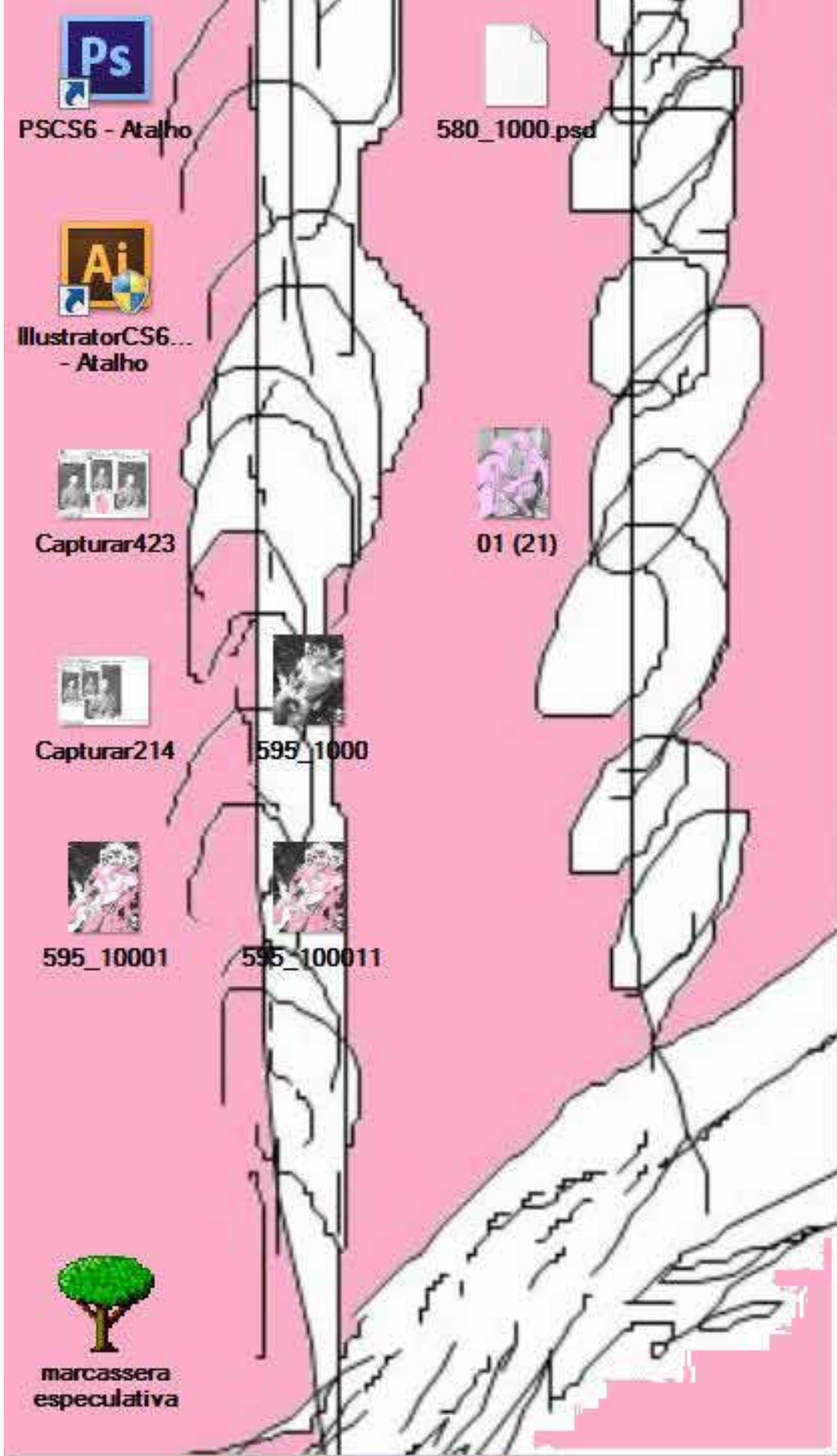
Marcasse studied photography and approached more sophisticated image editing and creation softwares, using social networks as a laboratory where he constantly experiences his art with immediate response from several interlocutors. Despite performing a digital intervention on his photographs, he prefers not to summarize what he does to that:

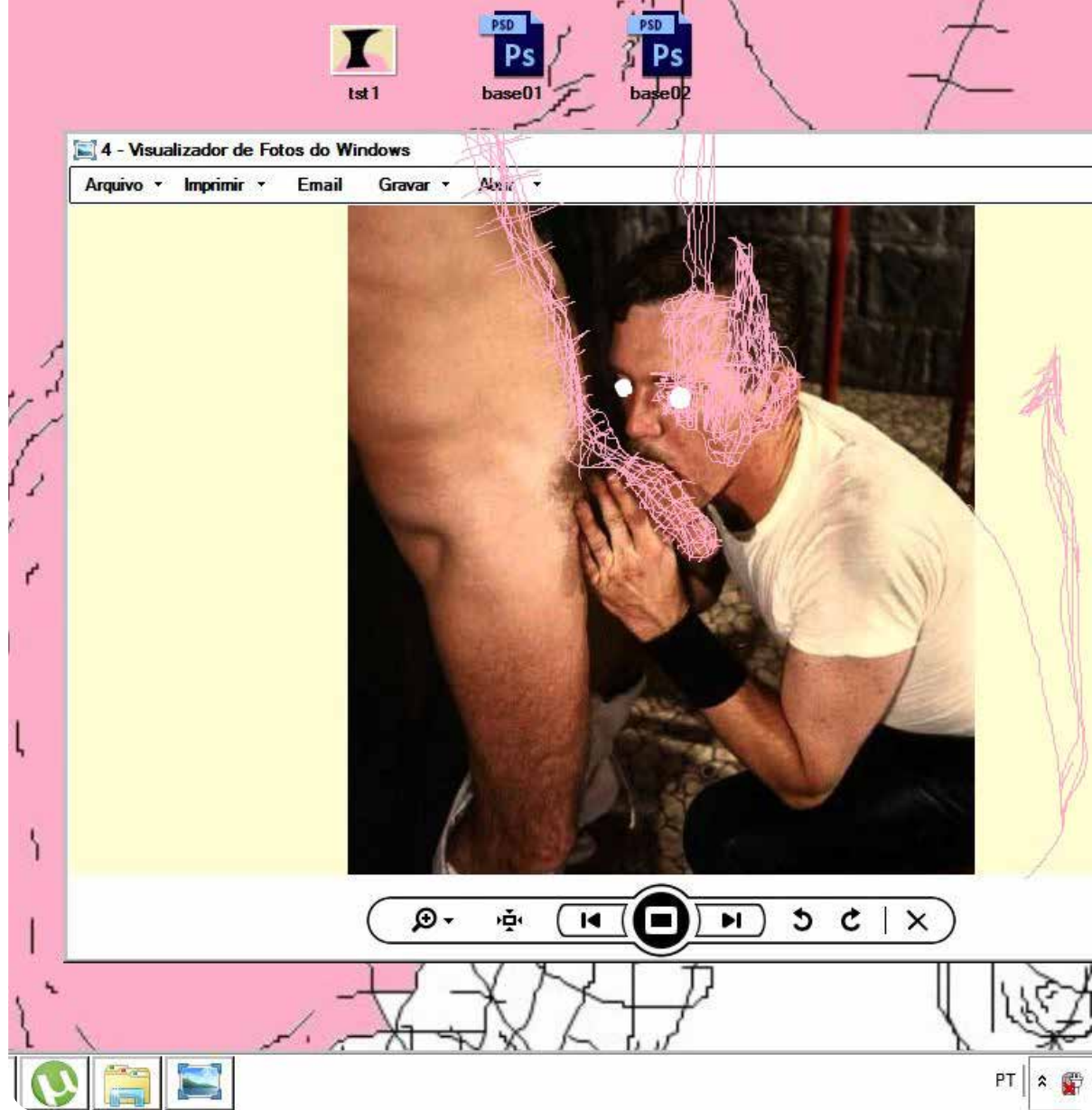
*Naming things is deterministic. I don't want to just intervene in photography. I want to speculate with the available materials. I believe that what I am trying to create is “speculative digital spaces”.*



Then Marcasse has photography based on collages and digital drawings that it considers a collective production: the photographer of the original image, the model (in some cases, the author of the image), the tools and exhibition platforms they had. He unites all of these materials and concepts that are not always close to become active agents in his creation / interaction process.

Freely editing and re-editing without a fixed goal or a lot of work, he thinks of nature within technology to imagine the natural forces of the virtual world. He searches for what is made of the space in which the images are built and how things are related in the composition. The power of interpretations comes from the pleasure of creation, from training the imagination based on Art:





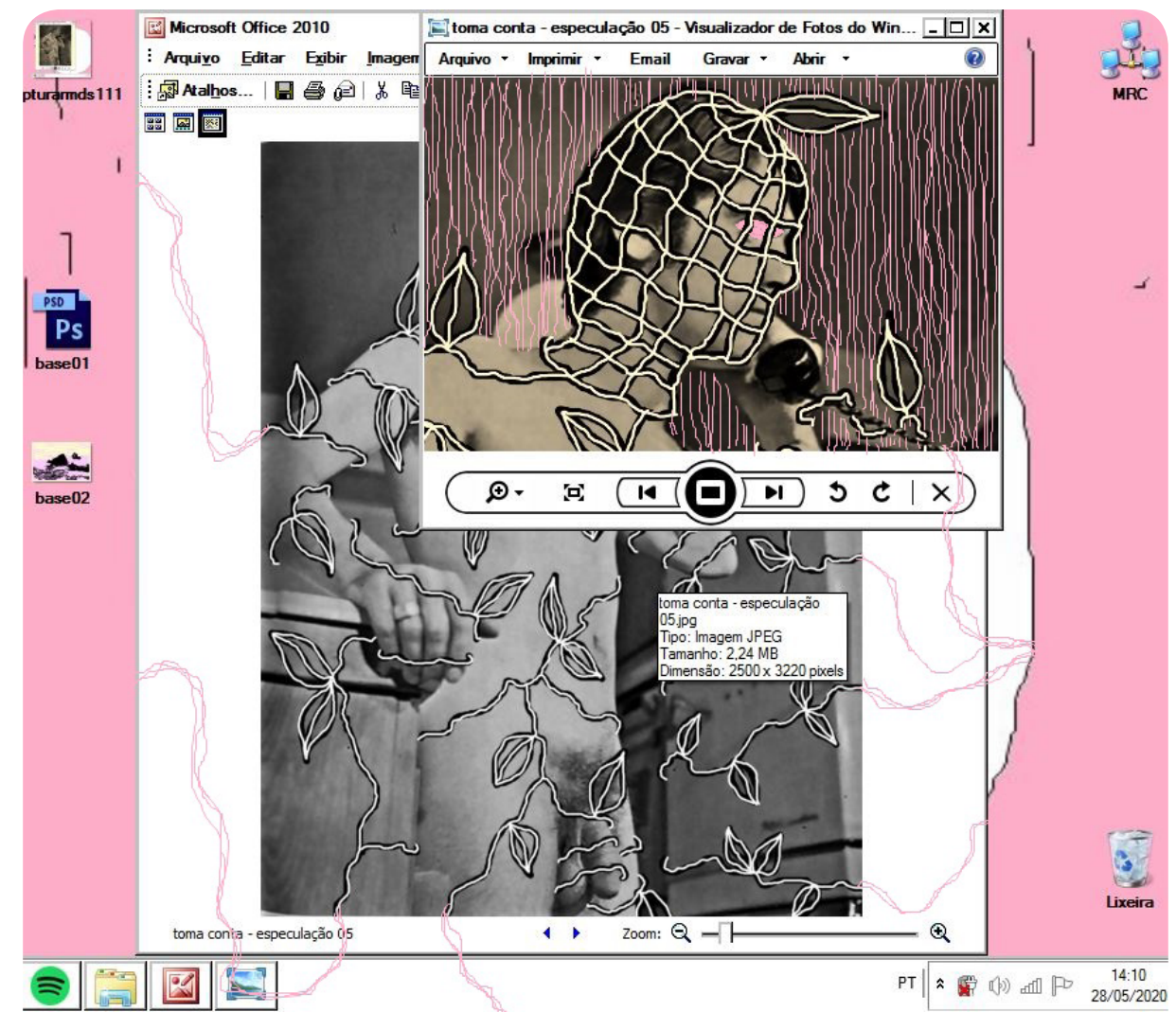
*My creation process is a bit like a wank, or rather, virtual sex, thinking about the collective and distant factor of creation. It is not about fertilizing or generating. It is about finding yourself, even if virtually, without needing any reason other than pleasure and will. It is, first of all, the pursuit of the pleasure of imagination, and, as the wonderful Ursula K. Le Guin used to say: imagination is our greatest defense.*

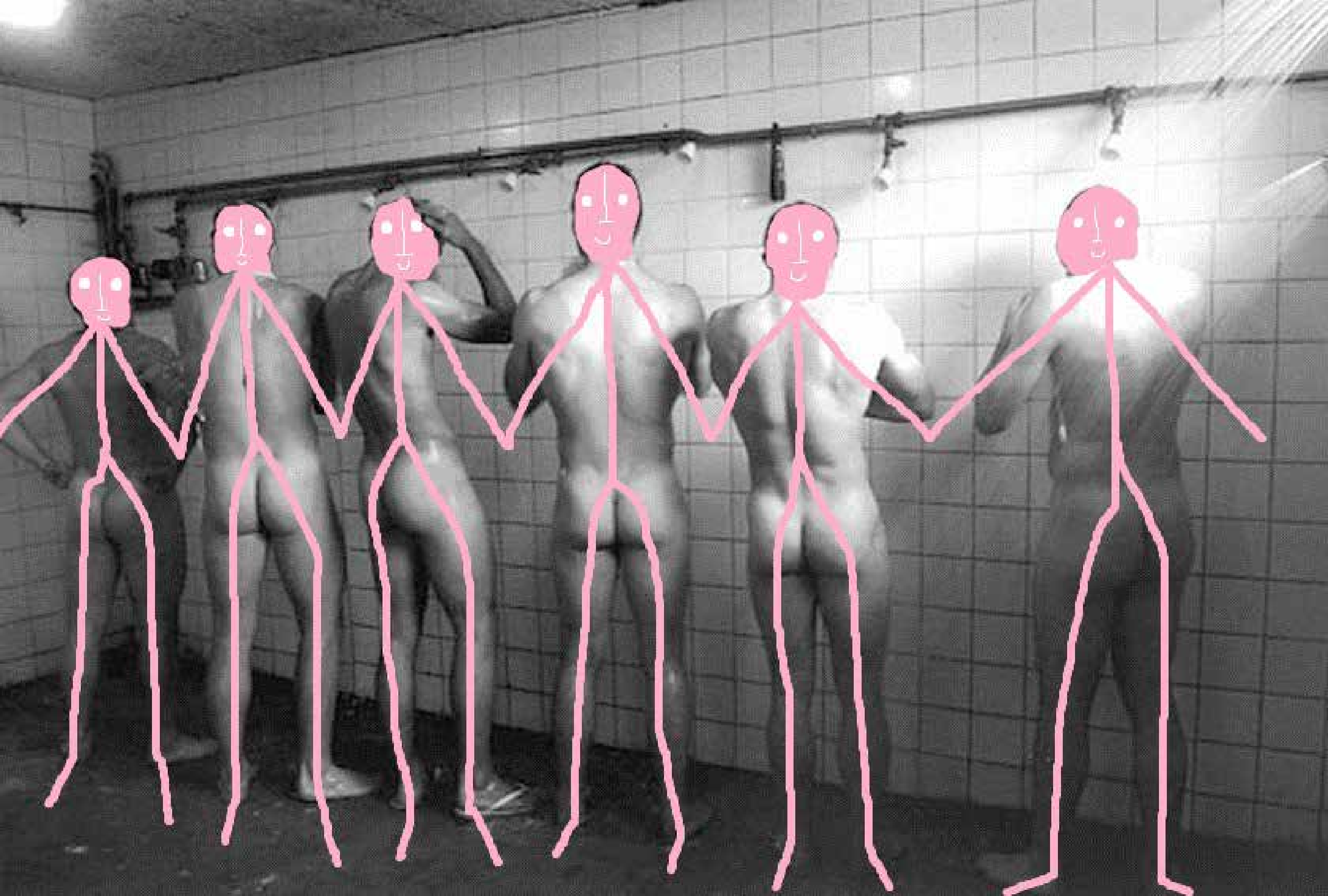
Marcasse believes that his relationship with experimental artistic practice comes from theater, where the work is never finished, as each reenactment results in something new. It was also his first theater play that gave him identification as an artist (“talking about what you did with other people helps make the world a reality”). His references go through other places and media, such as Laurie Anderson, Aleksandra Waliszewska, Katia Maciel, Tom of Finland, Jim French, Bob Mizer, George Platt Lynes and Robert Mapplethorpe.

The virtual gay world was the first community where Marcasse felt free to be accepted (“gay pornography and virtual sex takes a saving shape”). The male figure began as a central

object of inspiration, affirmation of identity and resistance, aiming to show that the man’s body is sexual, susceptible and sensitive and to think about how to do it in a non-aggressive, colonizing or competitive way. Over time, it became color, shape, space and place.

*I use the whole body in my works, but not only him. I like to twist it, overlay it, paint it so that it becomes something more, sometimes space, sometimes entity. Often body information is almost completely lost, but it is still present, it is just not the protagonist of the narrative. What is happening to the body in relation to that space is what interests me most.*







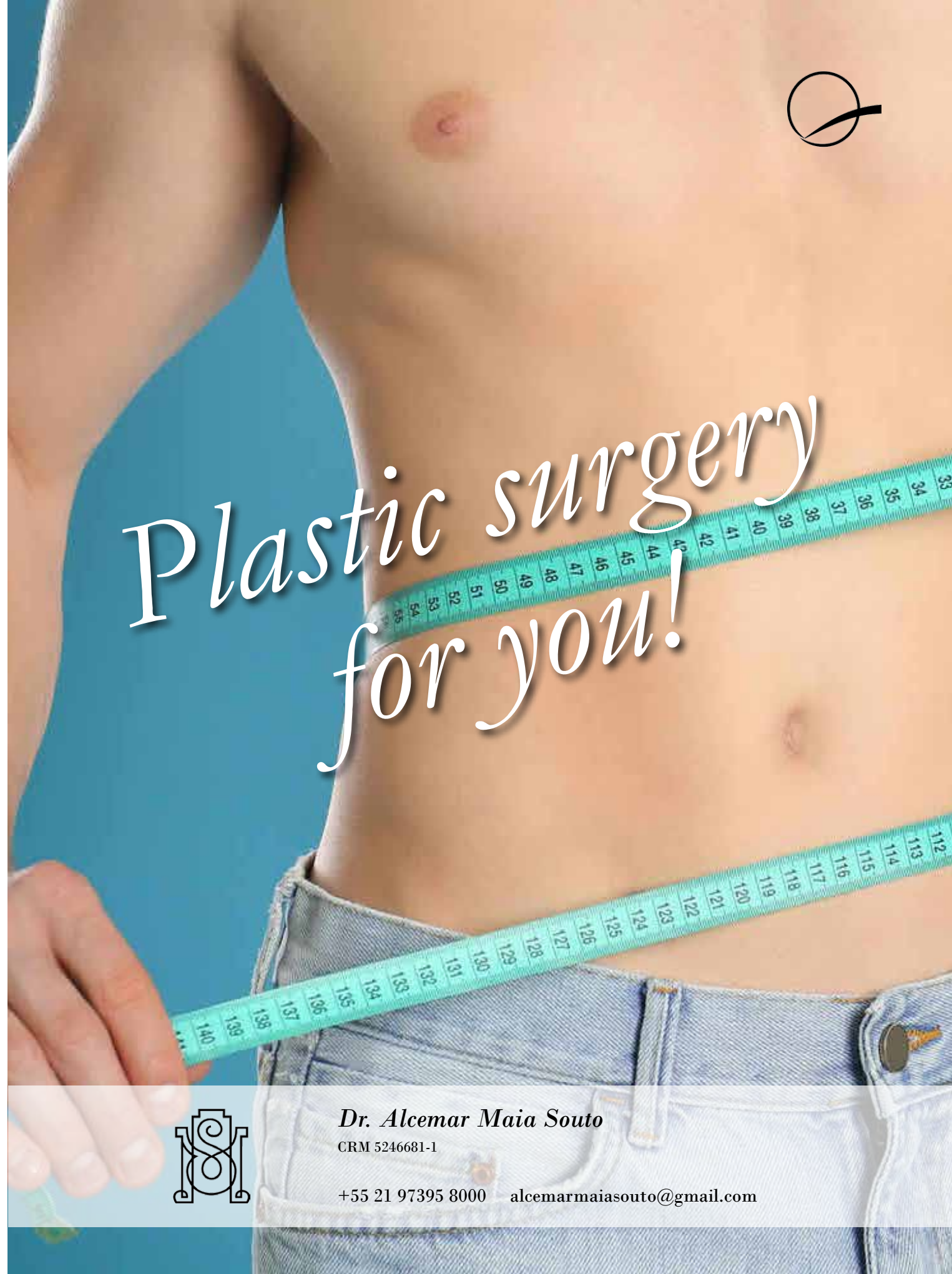
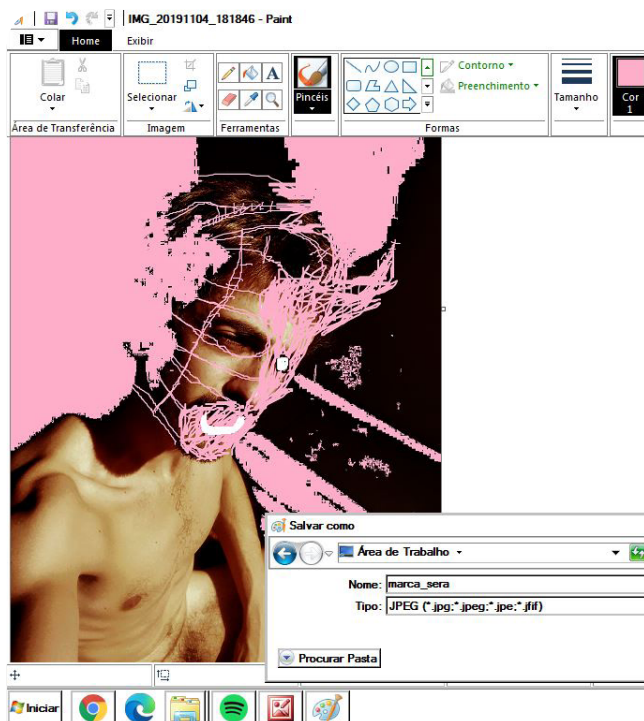
His first job was for an electronic music party in Curitiba, where he filled the bathroom walls with collages that mixed gay porn from the 70s and photos of the space taken by NASA already in our century.

So the artist began to face censorship from social networks, which blocked or deleted his works due to the erotic content. The struggle is constant and often frustrating, however, it also offers the right degree of creativity (and rebellion) that interferes with his creative process to circumvent the fragile censorship system and post the male frontal nude. He has even realized that other artists are taking this stance to reinvent the masculine and present not only the plurality of existing bodies but also the multiple desires of the audience.

Marcasse intends to continue speculating for the sheer pleasure of finding something worthwhile. He sees his research with the male body as a thanks to the gay community that received it and inspires it and leaves a message for the new times:

*Every artist who preaches for freedom is a positive power in our time, it is a movement towards a better place.*

8=B



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# Rod Spark

by Filipe Chagas

*Mud puppies, 2019.*  
Models: St. John e Matt.

**B**eing almost literally the only gay in his small conservative Tasmanian village in the 60/70's was no particular joy, so at the first opportunity, Rod Spark escaped to Adelaide, South Australia. His desire to explore other cultures eventually took him on a five-year journey around 50 countries to find incredible landscapes and cultural experiences.

With a background in Biological Sciences and Technology – and after many jobs ranging from lifeguards to masseur, from labourer to scientist – he decided to pursue his passion for photography. After completing a Masters in Arts in Sydney, Australia, he has come to better understand his own artistic practice.

His Art usually involves a natural landscape or abstract scenario, but especially how the male form sits within a landscape. Both the strength and the vulnerability that a man can offer in a single image attract Rod:

*I like to merge the masculine form into an expansive landscape or use it as an abstract canvas for paint. I use the strong curves of the body to create unique landscapes.*



Reaching for the sky, 2019. Model: Jacopo.



Fagner in his element, 2018. Model: Fagner.



I'll get you, my pretty!, 2019. Model: Aiden.



Lucas on the rocks, shaken not stirred #1, 2019. Model: Lucas.



Lucas on the rocks, shaken not stirred #3, 2019. Model: Lucas.

Lucas on the rocks, shaken not stirred #2, 2019. Model: Lucas.



Varuna washed ashore, 2019. Model: Mikey.



Knowing that “art is so very subjective and an image can mean radically different things to each viewer”, he usually works in an organic way based on a broad concept idea he wants to achieve. He has a preference for dancers and fellow creatives with whom he can share experiences and exchange ideas throughout the photo-shoots to shape the environment and the light.

In fact, light is very important to him. Inspired by the density of Caravaggio’s chiaroscuro, he always tries to bring some creative lighting to his artistic or commissioned projects, in the studio or outdoors.

*I love it when I’m doing moody lighting on the back and butt. So much expression and variation that can be achieved by a simple change in flexing a different muscle! It feeds in to my love of landscapes.*

Shadow play #1 e #2, 2018.  
Model: Russell.





Glench and relax, 2017. Model: Paul.

Bashful but trusting, 2017. Model: Tomas.





Rod maintains an honest, open and respectful relationship with the models. He requires a signed release in advance, which details image ownership and expectations of the likely outcomes from the shoot and also talks about nudity and values. He reports that the inclusion of the penis in an image is sometimes tricky, thus he gets more models without frontal nude shots. So, when he finds a model that accepts doing a frontal nude, he gets excited about the visual possibilities. However, he is concerned that the penis becomes the focus of attention in an image detracting from the artistry of the image. However, he believes an erection can be classified as Art – as in Robert Mapplethorpe’s photographs – and not as pornography.

*Can I play now, sir?*, 2019. Model: Todd.

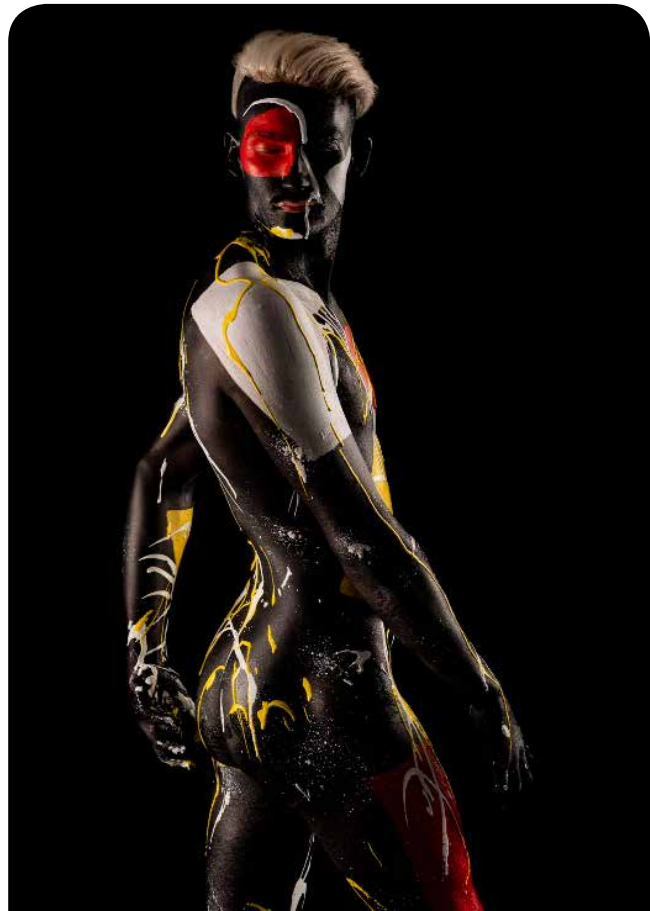


*Nothing to see here, 2019. Model: Travis.*

*Get me outta here, 2019. Model: Nate.*



*Meet my autobot cousin, 2018. Model: Jake Shy.*



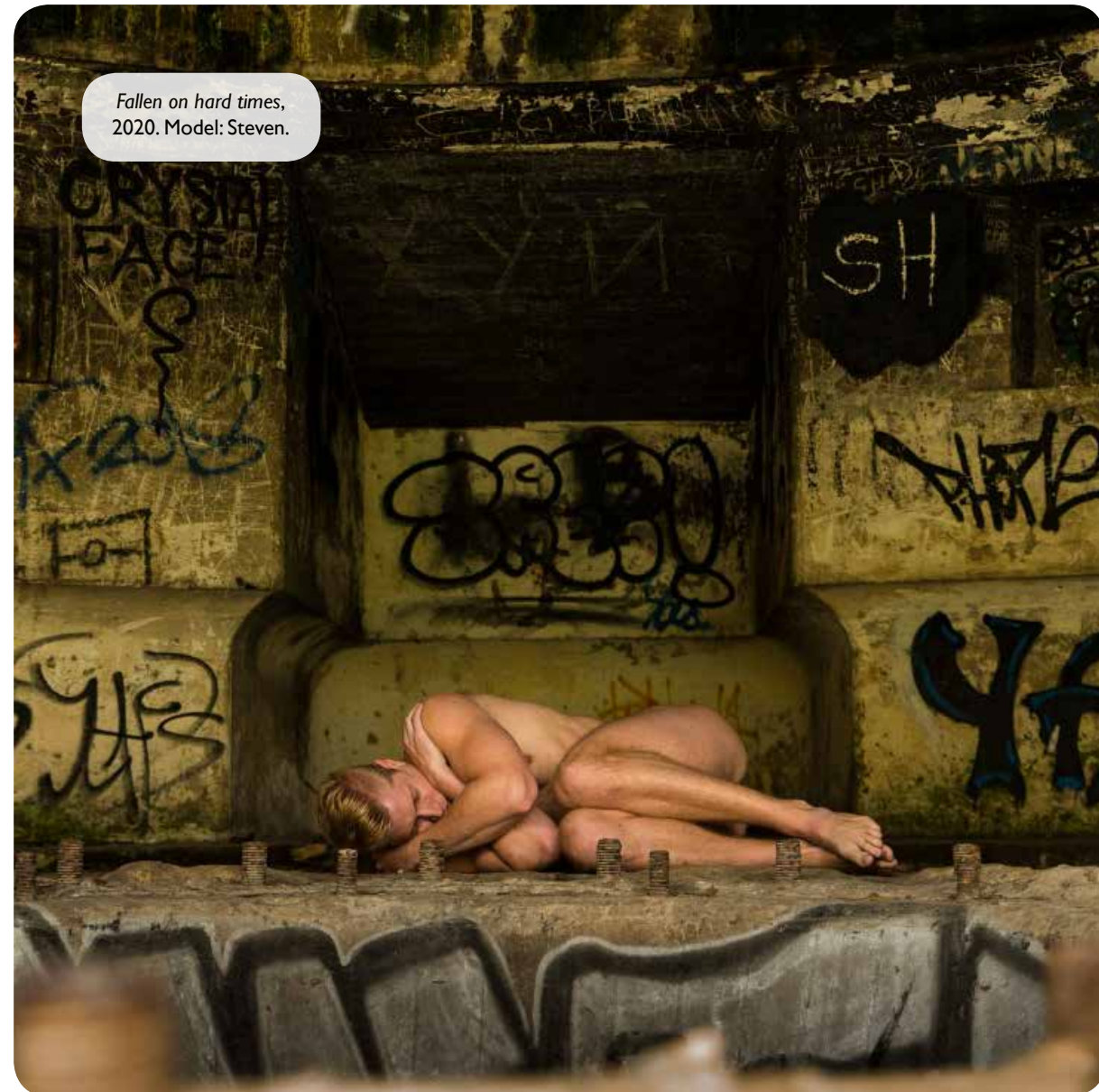
*Body painting with my favourite Brazilian, 2019. Model: Santiago.*



He has perceived a gradual change in the acceptance of the masculine form in art in the last decades and credits this to empowered women and gay men who want to see the object they desire. Now back in his home state of Tasmania, Rod hopes to expand the popularity of this artistic genre and perhaps show much of his initial material, from a pre-Internet era, which is still sitting in archive boxes waiting to be revealed to the world. **8=D**

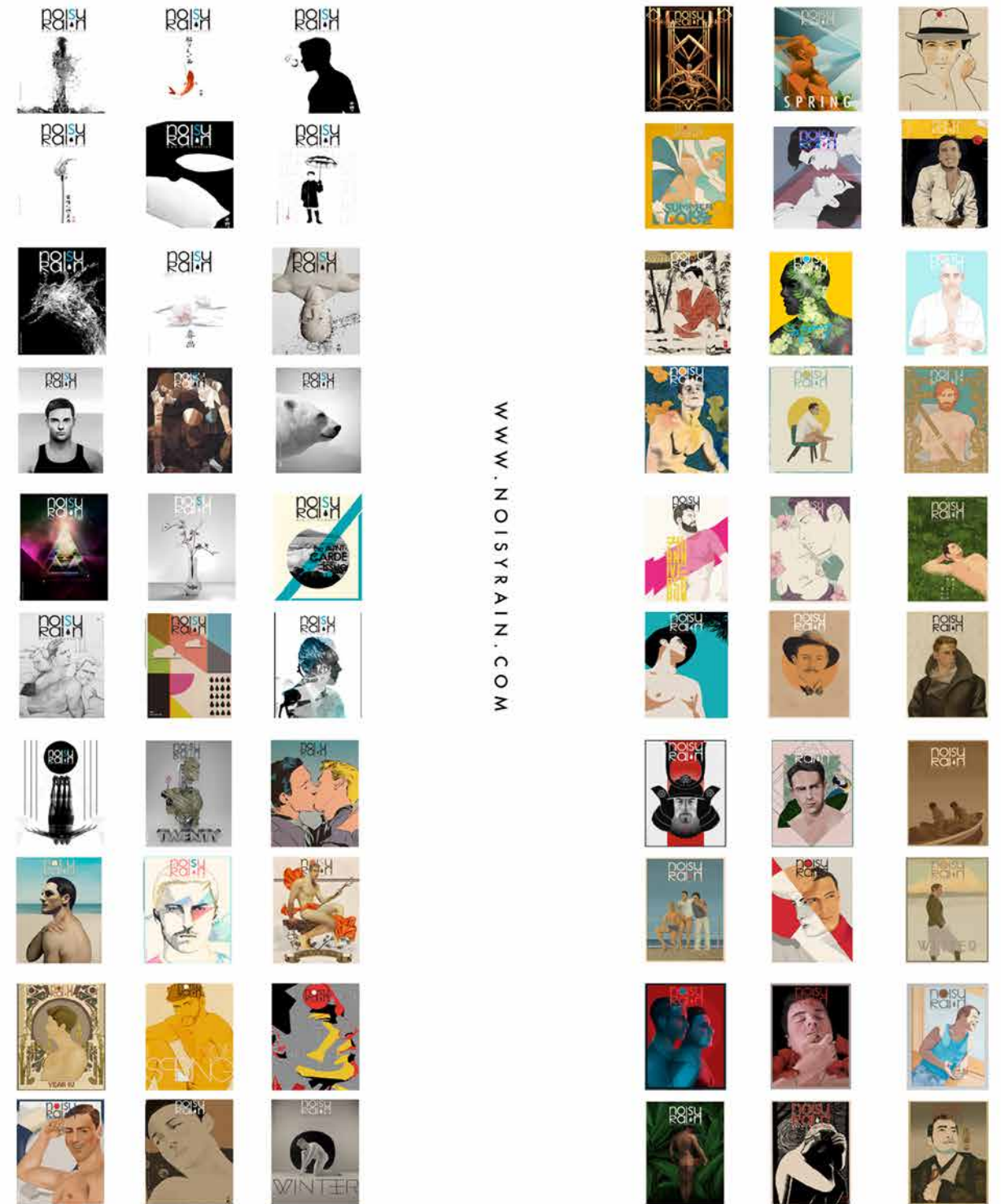


Self-portrait.



# noisy rain

gay art magazine  
TEN-YEAR ANNIVERSARY



# Ryan Stanford

by Filipe Chagas



**R**yan Stanford is a romantic. In an immediate world with ephemeral images in profusion, his way of seeing Art, photography and the male body seems to be in extinction. He claims that this art is akin to the medieval ideal of Courtly love in many ways, like the admiration and the entrancement from afar.

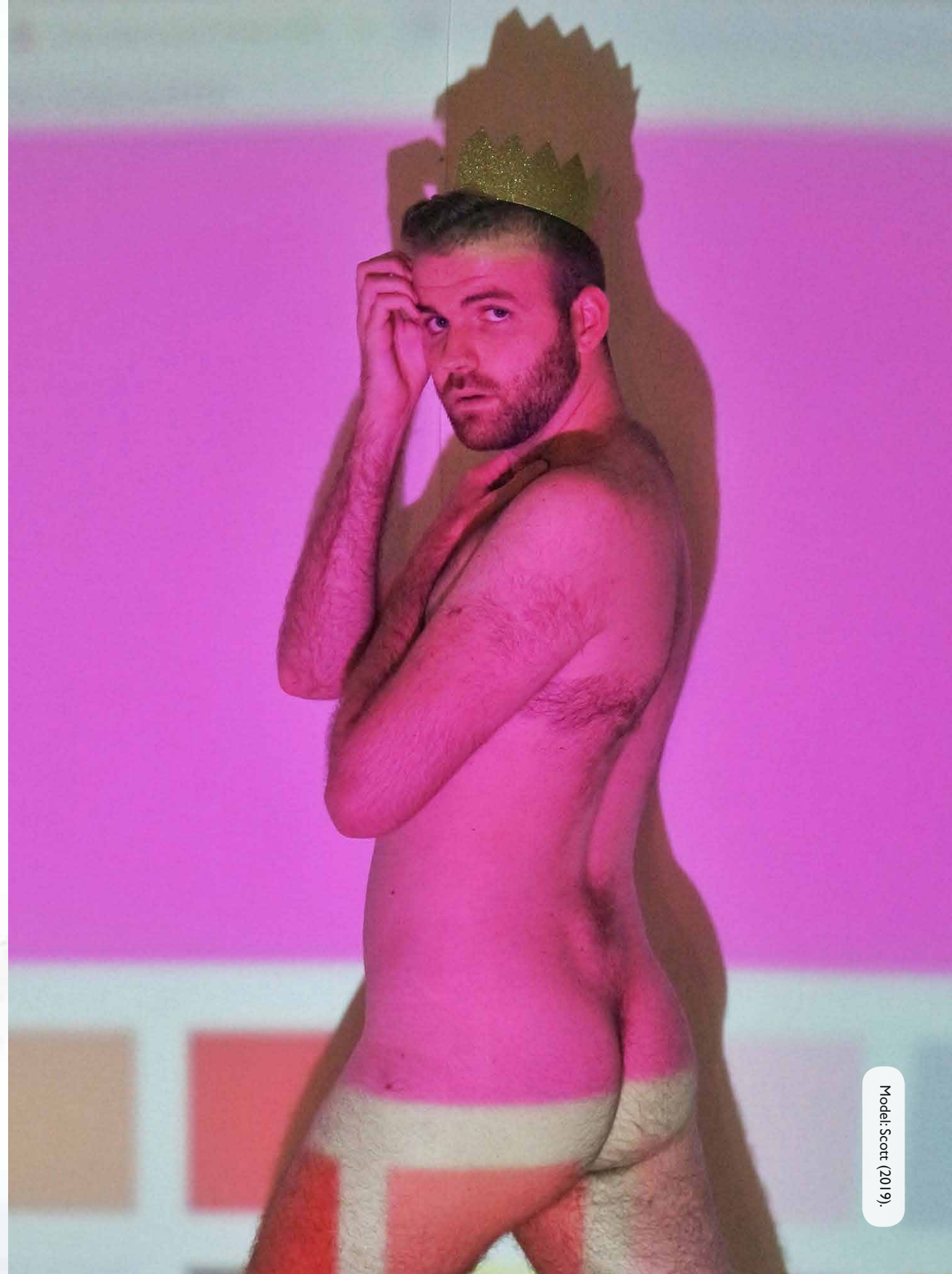
*My photographs are like the love letters knights would write to the ladies of the Court, with whom they could never be together but the ladies served as inspiration, fantasy and aspirational talisman as the men went to combat. Although I love to dream about beautiful boys that I can't have, I also enjoy the collaboration, the whirlwind of ideas and the encounter to create together.*

*I feel like the page boy invited into the castle for only a few hours to meet a Prince, but I have these photos and the art to tell me it wasn't a fairy tale. That this romance was indeed real even for just two hours. I am always the knight writing poetry alone by candlelight, except my quill and paper is a camera and a photograph.*

*The photograph accurately portrays the connections and intimacies that we have for two or three hours. Then, the affair ends and editing begins.*



Model: Andrew (2020).



Model: Scott (2019).



Model: Zachary (2019).



Model: Adam (2019).





Model: Dustin (2019).



Model: Cesar (2019).

The nudity in the photograph appeared in Ryan's life at random. He studied Art History, French and German in North Carolina. He was an architecture and urbanism photographer in Los Angeles when he was asked by a desperate friend to replace a sudden withdrawal at a queer cabaret. His photos of the performances received much praise and his friend hired him. As his friend was always able to take his clothes off at the first opportunity, Ryan ended up photographing his first nudes.

Even with his beginnings in architecture, Ryan has always felt like a documentary filmmaker of life in the changing cities. Then, he began to understand his photography as a legacy ("I feel that the art I create will live on after me"), a true connection with male beauty and intimacy.

*I try to capture the moments, the looks, the fleeting connections. My focus is much more on the face and interior of the man to bring out meaning to the nudity than total focus on male nudes. To portray the psychological depth of a male, I show his body. Each male body is so similar in its differences that an alchemy arises between something totally new, but so familiar at exactly the same time. My photograph celebrates the masculine form as much as it celebrates the humanity and personality of each man. It is vital for my art to describe both the exterior and the interior so that it lasts and hopefully inspires.*



Below: Samuel (2020). Next page: Sebastian (2019).





Model: Boy Topsy (2020).



Above: Esteban (2019).

Below: Joel e Ali (2020).

The preference for the flaccid penis in his photograph comes from the inherent feeling of equivalence between erection and sex, but, as he rightly remembers, every man knows that this is not true, because “we get hard all day long and it is just our bodies”. An erection only appears in his work if it’s to challenge the observer, to make him think since “the largest and most important sexual organ is the brain”. This also leads him to seek the diversity of bodies in their sizes, colors, origins and genres.





Model: Gunner Saint James (2020).

Model: Daved (2020).







Ryan loves humor, irony, ambiguity, but he believes that the respect for nuances and thinking for oneself has become increasingly rare. He points out the historical cycles as a reference for the present day, remembering that after Classical Antiquity came the Dark Ages and during the Renaissance the Inquisition still existed. For him, things are much more conservative and corporate, which makes acceptance of nudity more difficult and even generates a puritanical streak in those who call themselves liberals. Having to deal with the reaction of people who should be allies is something that deeply bothers him and even disconnects him from the LGBTQ+ community.

In this way, he usually gives three important advices to anyone who wants to work with male nudity in an artistic way:

1. Remember that there is an artistic tradition that goes back to the time when humans drew in caves through the superior art of Greco-Roman nudity. Respect tradition and educate yourself.
2. Think for yourself without worrying about the so-called “justice warriors” on social media. It’s a fanatical crowd and not always a religious one. For centuries, the Catholic Church has financed the best and most important artists in History who were gay. So, educate yourself about that too.
3. Finally, ask yourself why you are really doing this. Your answer will perhaps be different than mine but don’t lose sight of what inspires you and always strive to go farther. Nudity by itself is basic; showing humanity through the nude is art. Find your vision.



Above: Brody (2020).  
Below: Marco (2019), Trip (2020) e Brad (2019).

Below: Brad (and Ryan reflected).  
Below, the photographer in action (2020).





Above: Joel (2020).

Below: Nacho (2019).



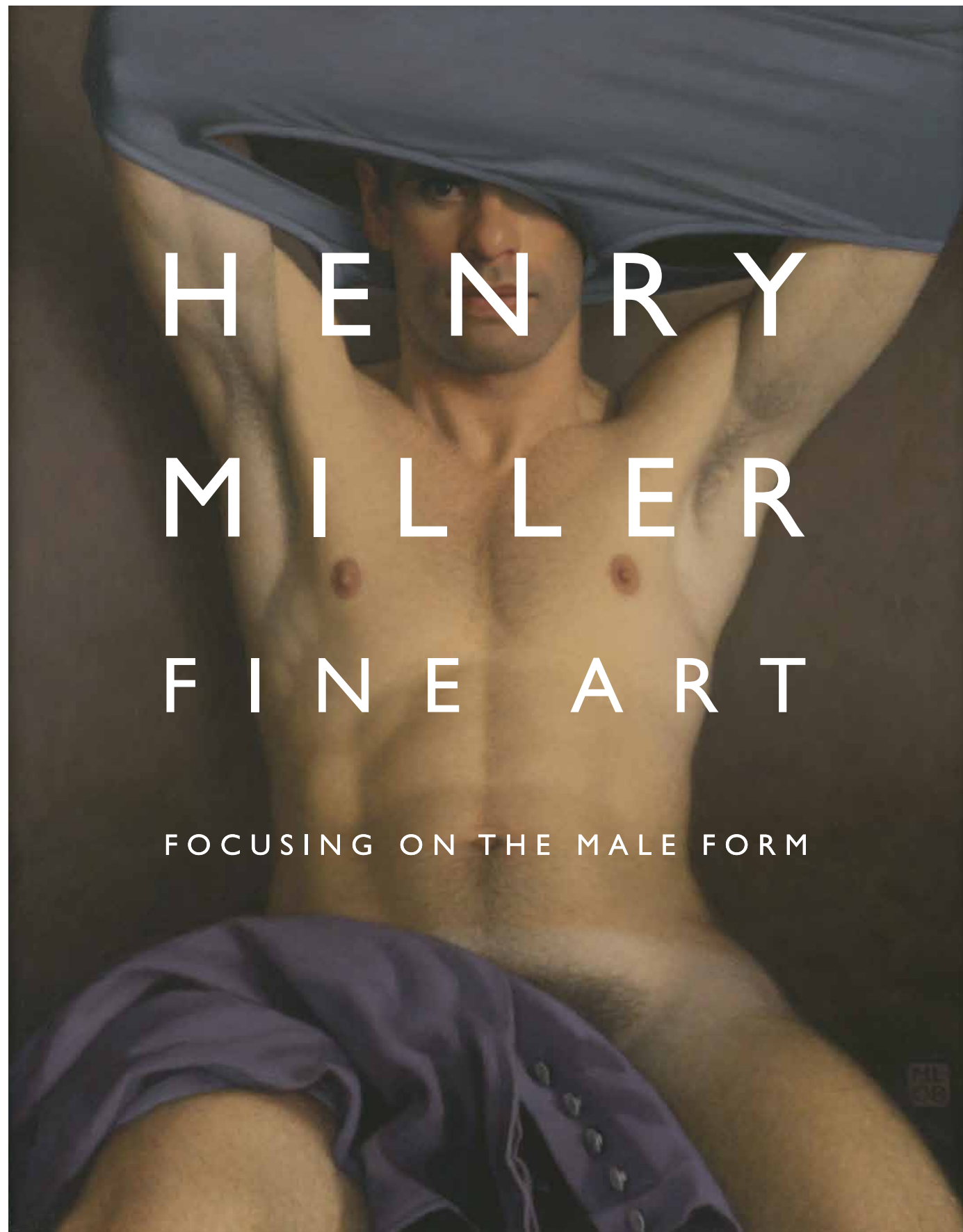
Although inspired by powerful women – like Madonna, Cindy Sherman, Frida Kahlo and Tina Modotti – Ryan still needs the other’s certification to feel like a true artist. A compliment from someone who really admires or a confirmation of a job with a truly special man become moments of absolute joy. He says that he will always be enraptured by male beauty but most likely from afar:

There is a sadness to this but it is mostly held inside. The photographs are paeans to an intangible ideal, and so it will remain a steadfast companion as I venture forth along my quest.

Those are facts that guarantee: Ryan is really a romantic and – maybe – the last one. **8=D**



Model: Sebastian (2020).



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# NO MEANS NO!

by Filipe Chagas

**J**borrow the feminist slogan “No means no” to say that ALL abuse, regardless of gender or sexual orientation, should be restrained. Daily men are obliged to accept crimes against themselves silently, with the permission of a society that monopolizes the concept of victim and selects those who may or may not suffer the consequences of abuse. This ends up fueling the toxic masculinity and rape culture that women try so hard to combat.

Men – whether heterosexual, gay, bi or trans – need to talk about it. As this magazine was created to be a safe space for sharing, it was necessary to give a voice to those who were silent. Therefore, after reading this article in a didactic, clarifying tone, you will find some real and authorized testimonials.

I chose to write with a few paragraphs, many sentences and highlights, so that each piece of information has its prominence and time for reflection. Please read. Think about. Hold out your hand.

# “Be a man.”

Until the 15th century, the word “rape” referred to kidnapping and theft without any connotation of sexual assault, since violations were considered looting of property.

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When understood as a crime, it was related only to women as victims.

In Brazil, the law changed in **2009** for both genders: the article that previously used the term “woman” now says “to embarrass **SOMEONE**, through violence or serious threat, to have carnal conjunction or to practice or allow someone else to practice a libidinous act [...]”, **also enabling a man to be the victim and the woman to be the aggressor.**

**Only 1 in 10 male rapes are reported,** and usually only because there has been some serious physical injury. (Brazilian Health System information in 2017)

The Portuguese association *Quebrar o Silêncio* (Break the Silence) records that a man usually takes between **20 years to never to tell someone** who has suffered abuse.

Research on male rape only appeared in the late 1970s, focused on child abuse, while studies of sexual assault in prisons emerged in the early 1980s.

In the USA today, the estimate is almost **one million incidents of sexual violence per year.**

To clarify: according to the World Health Organization (WHO) sexual violence is any sexual act or attempt to obtain a sexual act through the use of violence or coercion.

This includes unwanted sexual comments or advances, enticement, activities such as human trafficking and attacks on a person’s sexual freedom, regardless of the relationship with the victim, creed, race, age, sexual orientation or social status.

*Unfortunately it is considered one of the most traumatic and common human rights violations.*

“Be a good girl and keep quiet.”



“Men can’t be raped.”

The **toxic masculinity** that plagues our society makes the word “rape” automatically put the aggressor as a man, since this type of violence is still thought of as a crime against women only.

This makes the rape of men a taboo loaded with negative heteronormative connotations: the sexual orientation of the victims and the biological sex of the aggressor bring **preconceptions and prejudices**.

*I think that every man, regardless of being straight, gay, or bi, the first curse he hears at school, as a child, is “fag”. You don’t even know what “fag” is, but you LEARN that it is bad. When you discover yourself a fagot, you see that you are gay, you want to hide that, you want to deny that to yourself, because you LEARN that it is wrong and you LEARN at a stage when all your values are being formed. (Pedro HMC, LGBTQ+ activist and journalist, in the documentary O Silêncio dos Homens. My highlights)*

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“Don’t worry, cause boys are supposed to like that.”



If the man is raped by another man, the victim is automatically labeled a homosexual or as a “woman”, a “weaker” position in the situation of violence.

By themselves, these categorizations are erroneous and demonstrate profound ignorance. First, sexual orientation is not directly linked to violence; and second, to judge a gender by its physical capacity is to forget the fact that a woman can also be the sexual aggressor. In such cases, rape becomes even more complicated.

The idea of a man being “forced to penetrate” or “forced to have / receive oral sex” on a woman is unacceptable in a sexist society, since, from the moment the man has an erection, it is assumed that is with desire and, therefore, consenting to the sexual act that will end with orgasm.

**Only in 2010** was the possibility of a man being forced into sexual intercourse.

So men who are sexually abused by women face the judgment of social cowardice and are again referred to as homosexuals, using (real) justifications for being under threat or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

It must be understood that it has been proven that slight genital stimulation or even stress can result in an erection and climax, so that they do not only mean consent to sexual practice, meaning, men can have erections, even in traumatic or painful sexual situations.

Men who have been abused by women as children tend to justify themselves as if they were in a position of privilege and not a victim.

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“You are a man.  
You can’t say no  
to a girl like me.”

This **DENIAL** makes them more prone to later psychiatric problems and reduces the likelihood of seeking help.

Studies in different areas have understood these abuses as an **ACT OF POWER**, going beyond mere sexual satisfaction.

A society that says that “men do not cry”, that “men can handle”, that men should treat women in a certain way, also offers arguments for the abuse of minors and the disabled.

*These stereotypes, that “I don’t need help”, “man doesn’t cry”, which are apparently expressions of strength, of power, in fact, are great expressions of cowardice, fear, scared of being explicitly and publicly weak and vulnerable. Breaking the silence of your own weakness and vulnerability is a way to humanize yourself. (Ed René Kivitz, pastor of Água Branca Baptist Church, in the documentary O Silêncio dos Homens)*

Exposure to such violence without any prior **SEX EDUCATION** can cause serious traumatic consequences, ranging from social confinement and intense anger to the reproduction of violence as normal and **suicide**.

The damage basically depends on three factors: duration of the abuse, degree of bond with the abuser and use or not of violence.

*Studies indicate that children who know their own body, who receive explanations about how it works, within the age limits, are able to protect themselves more. Even to identify the difference between affection and abusive contact. Despite the advances, there is still a taboo in families and a conservative wave in society, which hinders the fight against machismo. We clearly see a retraction in the sex education debate. (Perla Ribeiro, Undersecretary of the Secretariat of Children of the Federal District in 2017, for the Brazilian newspaper O Globo)*

Because of the **rape culture**, a context in which abuse would be allowed due to social attitudes about gender and sexuality, the victim is blamed.

The most well-known example is the type of woman’s clothing being used as a reason for rape. With men, this is more common with transsexuals and gay men of female traits, often as corrective rape.

www

Photoshoot by Images Male  
Photography and Joshua Kelly  
(The Survivor Project).

BW Photos: Internet.



“Gay sex is like that anyway.”

## TYPES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Sexual violence can be categorized in different ways: for example, with reference to the situation in which it occurs, the number of people involved, the relationship between those involved or the identity and characteristics of both the victim and the aggressor. The types described here are not mutually exclusive, meaning that a particular act can fall into several categories, for example, a rape in prison being a corrective rape.

### FAMILY SECRET

*Rape by an acquaintance is the most common and can occur between two people who only know each other in social situations or who have some degree of intimate relationship. Therefore, they include rapes from coworkers, schoolmates, family members (also called incest), friends, teachers, tutors and other acquaintances. They are also called “hidden rape” because of these links that generate conflicting social situations that require forced secrecy.*

*Marital rape, on the other hand, raises other issues. Despite being considered domestic violence, it is a type of abuse stigmatized within a society with macho roots, where the woman must always be available for sex with her husband. However, this type of act also fits for homosexual relationships, since sex without consent is an act of abuse. This differs from acts of fetish and BDSM (Bondage, Discipline and SadoMasochism), as they are actions consented between peers. However, there is much debate as to whether consenting violent sex is not feeding the culture of rape.*



### CHILD ABUSE

*Child sexual abuse includes engaging in sexual activities with a child (whether by asking, forcing or other means, including digital), indecent exposure (of the genitals), sexual exploitation and child pornography. It is more common to comment on abuse by an adult with a minor, however, the most common is between two children, one of whom is older.*

*According to the WHO, it is estimated that 27% of boys up to the age of 12 have suffered or will suffer some form of sexual abuse. Most aggressors know their victims: approximately 30% are relatives of the child; about 60% are other acquaintances, such as “friends” of the family, nannies or neighbors; unknown strangers are the other 10% of cases (UNICEF statistics). The American Psychological Association states that “children cannot consent to participate in sexual activities with adults” and condemns any such action: “An adult who engages in sexual activities with a child is performing a criminal and immoral act that can never be considered normal or behavior socially acceptable”.*

*Like “rape”, the term “pedophilia” is linked to a male aggressor, regardless of the victim’s gender. When a boy is sexually abused by a woman, they are often congratulated by the parents themselves, who instead of worrying about the child’s well-being, prefer to “emphasize the boy’s masculinity”. This omission has serious and, at times, irreversible consequences. Heloísa Ribeiro, executive director of the NGO Childhood Brasil, recalls that it is generally not just a sign, but a set of indicators, such as cognitive development problems, phobias and nightmares, excessive bathing, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, drop in school grades, regressive behaviors (bed wetting and thumb sucking), inappropriate sexual behaviors for the age, insistence on staying away from home / school (or the place where the violence occurred), in addition to the possibility of sexually infected transmissible diseases (STIs).*





### GOOD NIGHT CINDERELLA

Drug-facilitated sexual assault (DFSA) is a known and still common scam. Usually, the victim is doped when ingesting one or more alkaloid substances mixed with alcohol, which potentiates and disguises the effects of drugs. The victim has his attention and memory affected, which makes him subject to the criminal. This means that consent is therefore questioned.



### IMPRISONMENT

Prison rape refers to the abuse of prisoners by prison officers or between prisoners. History tells that until the 1st century, Roman gladiators were prisoners and slaves who underwent sexual abuse (mainly collective rape) to gain resistance to pain. Humiliating and torturing political and religious prisoners with sexual abuse is a historic practice of war around the world and still happens in some countries in the Middle East and Eastern Europe.

According to the prison's "code of ethics", the rapist is considered the worst kind of offender (alongside pedophiles and whistleblowers) and is constantly threatened with rape and death, being placed in separate cells. Prisoners justify their disgust by arguing that they could rape their family members, however, they often use their own sexual violence as punishment.



### WAR WEAPON

During armed conflicts, rape is often used as a means of psychological warfare in order to humiliate the enemy and undermine his morale. War violations – recognized since 1949 by the Geneva Convention as War Crime and Crime against Humanity – can occur in a variety of situations, including institutionalized sexual slavery, collective rapes and individual or isolated acts, such as genital torture and castration. Testimonies from victims of the Syrian Civil War tell about sitting in broken glass bottles, having their penis tied to water bags and watching or forcibly participating in rapes by colleagues.

They went into the cell to rape us, but it was dark. We couldn't see them. All we could hear was people saying "Stop! No!". I thought we were going to die. (Tarek, testimony from a Syrian refugee for the UN Refugee Agency's 2017 UNHCR report)

The current refugee crisis also brings reports of opportunistic abusers. Child refugees in host countries experience sexual violence at the hands of other refugees and men from the local community. UNHCR was also informed about episodes of sexual exploitation and blackmail:

My friend works with a 60-year-old man who refuses to pay his wages until he does sexual favors. He cannot leave his job because he has to pay rent and help his family. He's 30, married, but he can't reveal it. (Ibrahim, testimony of a Syrian refugee in Lebanon to UNHCR)



## BEHAVIORAL CORRECTION

Corrective rape – also called curative rape – is considered a hate crime in which abuse occurs because of sexual orientation or gender identity in order to (re)force compliance with heteronormative stereotypes. Believing that homosexuality is a behavioral deviation or a sexual option contributes to the maintenance of this practice in several countries. The term “corrective rape” was coined in South Africa in 2001 after cases of rape by lesbian women that became public. In 2011, the UN began to record cases of rapes of gay and transsexuals within this nomenclature.

## IN WHO'S NAME?

Cases of sexual abuse within the Catholic Church fall into numerous classifications: from child abuse and family rape to harassment, seduction and so on. The cover-up is what makes it even worse, as it seems to offer an authorization to the violence given by the largest religious institution that exists. The statistic predicts more than 3 billion possible cases so far!

Abuses were reported as early as the 11th century, when the reforming monk Pedro Damião wrote *Liber Gomorrhianus*, a treatise describing clerical vices. In 1531, Martin Luther claimed that Pope Leo X had vetoed a measure in which cardinals should restrict the number of boys they kept for pleasure to prevent the world from realizing how openly and blatantly the Pope and cardinals in Rome were abusing. In 2010, Pope Benedict XVI maintained the public denial, however, three years later, already in the papacy of Francis, the Vatican created a special commission to protect minors who are victims of sexual abuse and to fight cases of pedophilia in the clergy.

Despite the fact that the Catholic Church is the great target, it is undeniable that every religious institution has a human hierarchy of power and, therefore, is apt to experience sexual abuse. Pastors, babalorixás, rabbis, monks... harassment of the needy believer is possible in all religions and unfortunately receives the same silent treatment in the name of god(s).

## HARASSMENT

Harassment is generally practiced by a person in a higher hierarchical position in relation to the subordinate victim in the form of threat, hostility, intimidation or loss of professional performance in exchange for sexual favors. Even in a sexist society that reduces the chances of women in positions of power, sexual harassment of men occurs. In the 1994 film *Disclosure*, an executive's life (Michael Douglas) is ruined when an attractive woman (Demi Moore) takes her place in the company and tries to seduce him. After rejecting her, he is accused of sexual harassment and the plot begins. On the other hand, cases of sexual harassment among men, despite retaining all the stigmas related to the sexual orientation of those involved, have in their professional loss a justification considered plausible for the complaint.

## ABORTION

Since a man is neglected when he is the victim of sexual abuse, it would never be thought that an abusive woman could become pregnant with her victim, forcing the man to live with a child as a result of an unauthorized sexual relationship (and perhaps not even remembered for having performed under the influence of drugs). In this way, the law benefits the aggressor, who may even demand a pension from the victim and force him to live together in order not to be characterized as emotional and material abandonment with the risk of imprisonment! The emotional and psychological damage is unimaginable and reverberates in all families involved in the abuse.

## AMONG OTHERS

There are other forms of sexual abuse that seem different from those already mentioned, but are similar in several aspects, such as, ceremonial rape (involving the removal of virginity in a ritualistic way), rape of the incapacitated (not only babies, but also of the elderly, sick and physically and mentally people with disabilities), kidnapping (when the kidnapped is raped while in captivity), custody violation (related to the power of guardians and orphans or between parole officers and freed criminals) and sexual exchange (a bargain using sex as a currency).

“Nobody needs to know”, “I want to show you how much I care about you” and “It's so good that it's not bad” are speeches by the aggressors that resemble each other regardless of the gender or sexual orientation of the victims.

However, some are specific when **the victim is male** and you have read them in highlights throughout this article.

As men, we must be attentive to our attitudes towards our close friends. Instead of mocking

and social judgment, **LISTENING** can be the true proof of **FRIENDSHIP**.

The cursing of “fag” or “pussy” **is no longer appropriate**.

This article does not exhaust the subject. In fact, it opens up a space for discussion, a space that will allow you to **end silence**.

For that reason, take a breath and learn some stories. **8=D**

# Court



**W**hen I was in college, a famous man took advantage of me. Now I know that the famous man has a reputation of inappropriate behavior towards his male assistants. He's a genius, but he's also a predator.

I could name him, that would give him power in this story, the power that he took from his first accuser, and me, and likely many others. If you are reading this, and somehow know American theater, you already know who I am speaking. This is my story, not his.

When the #metoo movement burst wide open, I thought that multiple stories of this famous man would come to light, but only one did. The story (published by BuzzFeed) drew a lot of attention, but quickly disappeared (like others). Perhaps the timing was off: the famous man had recently been the head of a very important organization in our business, was awarded and has no fewer than one Broadway show running for the last 25 years.

Having read the BuzzFeed article, I learned that the famous man had his wrist slapped for his previous behavior in the workplace. In my case, he never laid a finger on me at work, only used innuendo and suggestion to communicate that he saw something in me.

I wrote to BuzzFeed, told my story and gave several witnesses. The journalist put me in touch with an editor of American Theater Magazine, who were going to partner with the New York Times for a story about patterns of abuse in the theater industry. I repeated my whole story... but after a year the editors decided not to move forward. They said "there's not enough to go on". However, none of my witnesses were contacted to verify my claims.

When I decided to come forward, I wrestle with whether or not to use my own name, as I do still work in this industry, and the famous man may be one of the most powerful men in my business. Using my name could seriously impact my professional

reputation, and that is a risk that I have to be willing to take. I also wonder if without my name the famous man was coming forward, or he'd have no clue because he likely did this to numerous other men. That gives me chills!

I am a theatrical designer, one of the last businesses with a codified system of apprentices and masters. I did indeed learn a lot from the famous man: how to create a character onstage with scenery and costume design, details, style, fashion history, garment making, and how to use color to direct the eye onstage. I also learned how to be gracious and charming when needed, and a shark when required. One of the hardest lessons I learned is how to avoid allowing myself to be put in risky situations, but I did not learn that until I was already in one.

As we are finding is often the case, powerful people play by a different set of rules. Other powerful people cover for them, making excuses for them. The same thing is true of creative people. People allow geniuses to get away with bad behavior that would otherwise not be tolerated. They are forgiven for treating people inhumanely and having bad tempers.

Mentors have great power. When they reward us with their praise, we feel special as if our talent and abilities were why they want us around. I considered him an icon of Broadway design. I saw his work as a child at the summer theater where we would eventually meet.

My first summer, there were swirling allegations of sexual harassment that actually involved the famous man's associate. When he heard of this, he called my entire department into the executive director's office and screamed at us that "in the American theater, there is no such thing as sexual harassment. No jury in America would find someone guilty of sexual harassment in our business. We're all pimps and whores!" Those words are seared into my memory as if he said them yesterday. The executive director

remained silent, however, she resigned at the end of the season. I gave her name to the journalists to corroborate my recollection, but I don't know if she was contacted.

That summer, it was the first time that the famous man spoke to me directly: he asked my age. He was impressed when I said I was 19. He shook his head, saying, "No, you not! You are a 15 year old boy!" And he flitted away. At the time I was flattered and charmed by his eccentric flamboyance. I even called my mother to tell this story. Now I know that's where it all started. I gave my mother's contact information to the journalists, but she was never contacted.

The next summer, I was rewarded with a promotion and a pay raise. It was made clear to me that the famous man had been consulted and was responsible for my increased responsibility and compensation. I thanked him as graciously as I could. I was invited to weekends at one of his vacation homes, where I was given too much to drink. One of his New York assistants, easily twenty years older than me, took me to an upstairs bedroom and we had sex, which I did think was consensual at the time. I was mortified the next day when the famous man licked his lips as he recounted what his assistant had told him about our encounter, in grotesque details. It was as if the assistant had given me a test run. That has since assistant committed suicide.

My direct supervisor was also at the vacation home and saw my distress. She warned me to take better care of myself. She knew the rumors of the famous man's behavior and was concerned for my welfare. I'm sure she remembers it even though we are not in close contact. I provided the journalists her contact information, but as far as I know she was never contacted.

In the third summer, I was regularly invited to his home to set up for and attend lavish parties with posh guests. The famous man had recently won

additional major awards. He was on top of the world. I was dazzled that he deigned to include me in his glittering universe of celebrities and fame.

Shortly thereafter, I was at a small party a block away from the famous man's house. He showed up and gave me special attention. I was deeply flattered. After several drinks, he invited me back for a chat about my future and to give me an expensive signed copy from Bruce Webber's book, a photographer who has since been accused of sexually harassing multiple male models. I was not in any way sober, and someone at the party suggested I call it a night. They were trying to look out for me. Instead, the famous man helped me to his porch and poured more drinks.

From here on, my memory of the night is spotty. I remember him exposing his genitals to me on the porch. I remember being helped up the steep stairs to his bedroom, and being told to keep quiet as the famous man's mentally disabled sister and her elderly nurse were in the house and asleep. I remember him telling me that he had a rubber, but I don't recall if we did. I remember his pasty fleshy body under me. I do not remember if either or both of us reached any kind of climax. I know I got dressed and left as quickly as possible. I'm sure I was disheveled, and too drunk to drive. I ambled back to the other house, and multiple people there saw what shape I was in. Someone was kind enough to drive me back to my apartment.

Did I think at the time that what happened was consensual? I am not sure. Was I flattered by the famous man's attention? Absolutely. Was I disgusted at what had happened? Definitely.

The following spring was my senior year of college. A master designer was brought down from New York to lead a masterclass. I was given a private interview with him where he encouraged me to consider graduate school in New York. I proudly told him about

my years of work with the famous man and he asked me: "are the rumors true? About the boys?" I was mortified. Not only did I realize that there were rumors in the big city about the famous man, I was not special, and our community quietly whispered about stories that were similar to mine. Of course, I didn't tell him my story.

That fateful night was the last time we were ever together alone. The final summer we worked together, I received very little attention from him.

After graduating from college and graduate school, I never sought work from the famous man, and I did not tell many people what had happened between us. The journalists at BuzzFeed and the American Theater Magazine asked me if I had filed a complaint against him, but I didn't. That earlier scream in the executive director's office made it clear to me that it would fall on deaf ears. There is however, clear record of my four years of employment there. But to my knowledge, no journalist has checked this.

Years later, I was assistant designing a Broadway show. Costumes for Broadway shows are handmade in one of several shops in New York City's Garment District. It is not uncommon for the biggest names in design to be in shops at the same time as the shops work on multiple productions preparing new Broadway shows. In 2008, I was in one of these stores when I heard that the famous man would show up there. I basically hid in a back office so as not to encounter him. At one point, I needed to go to the bathroom, and the famous man nearly ran into me in the hallway. He grabbed both of my shoulders and said, "My! Don't you look great? You've finally gone through puberty!" He winked and continued on his way.

I was deeply shaken and went back to the office to try to collect myself. I'm not sure he even remembered my name or where he knew me from.

This was the first time I had seen the famous man in person in four years. My supervisor had seen what had happened and checked to be sure I was okay. I was not okay. I didn't go into much details, but enough for my supervisor to be disgusted with the famous man's inappropriate behavior. He made sure I didn't cross the famous man's path again. My supervisor was never contacted by the journalists.

I was invited to the unveiling of the famous man's portrait at Sardi's, the famous theater restaurant in the heart of the theater district. Perhaps I was trying to convince myself that I was okay with what had happened so long ago, and I went to the unveiling. I did not encounter the famous man personally and I do not know if he saw me there. I was proud of myself for not being too rattled to attend. However, months later, when I saw him at a Broadway memorial, my heart raced. Once again, it rattled me how much it bothered me to be in his proximity.



The #metoo movement was my limit. I felt responsible for anyone he took advantage of after not saying anything to management at the time. When I heard that the New York Times and American Theatre Magazine would not be moving forward, I was devastated. I spiraled into a depression that lasted several days. It was like a visceral punch to my stomach. Not having space to tell my story pained me nearly as much as coming to terms with what happened to me.

In a post with no names but an open heart on Instagram, several people, including friends and strangers, reached out to offer support. I am grateful for that and for getting this space to be taken seriously and heard.

Do I want an apology from the famous man? No. Do I want to sue him for what he did to me? No. Do I want attention? No, not for something that is so personal and so painful. I need to be honest with myself and my colleagues in my industry. I don't want the guy who had his story published on BuzzFeed to feel alone. I cannot allow myself to be silent any longer. Talking is the right thing to do.

It has taken years to process what was done to me. It has been a journey to know that it is indeed not my fault. Thanks to everyone who read this, and a special thanks to those who speak up and speak out with their own stories.



Photos provided by the artist.

# Bruno

**W**e met in these virtual chat rooms. We agreed to meet at the end of a bus line in my neighborhood, north of the city. Then he would follow me to my building, waiting for me to enter. The intercom would ring and I would answer by releasing the entry. My door was already open, it was on the side of the building's entrance, I lived on the ground floor. We talked in silence. We sat on the couch. We went to the bedroom and he kissed me.

It was incredible until that moment. We had already agreed how we would do it in the beginning, because I talked about my inexperience at the age of 14 and he, at 24, would know how to handle everything in the best way. After all, these kids from the south are good people. It was my first time and I was overwhelmed by the dogmas of the Lutheran church that clothed my body. But something was screaming in there and I knew it was somehow in conflict.

We take off our clothes. I started to suck his dick, but I was ashamed, I didn't want to make any mistakes. Sometimes, I thought about the issues of sin of the flesh, but at that moment, the church and its speech no longer made sense to me, they did not attract me anymore, nor many of the people who belonged to it. So, he sucked me for a long time, I even got a little soft. Something was starting to bother. I didn't really know what I wanted.

In our agreement, I would fuck him, but during sex he turned me around and said that he should fuck me too. His cock was not very big - in fact, this question is irrelevant to me -, even so I was scared. I said I didn't want to. I was nervous.

My eyes blinked, the vision gave a slight blur...

He got dirty. He went to the bathroom and then left. The sheets were slightly soiled with red and brown. I just thought it wasn't good, that I was in pain.

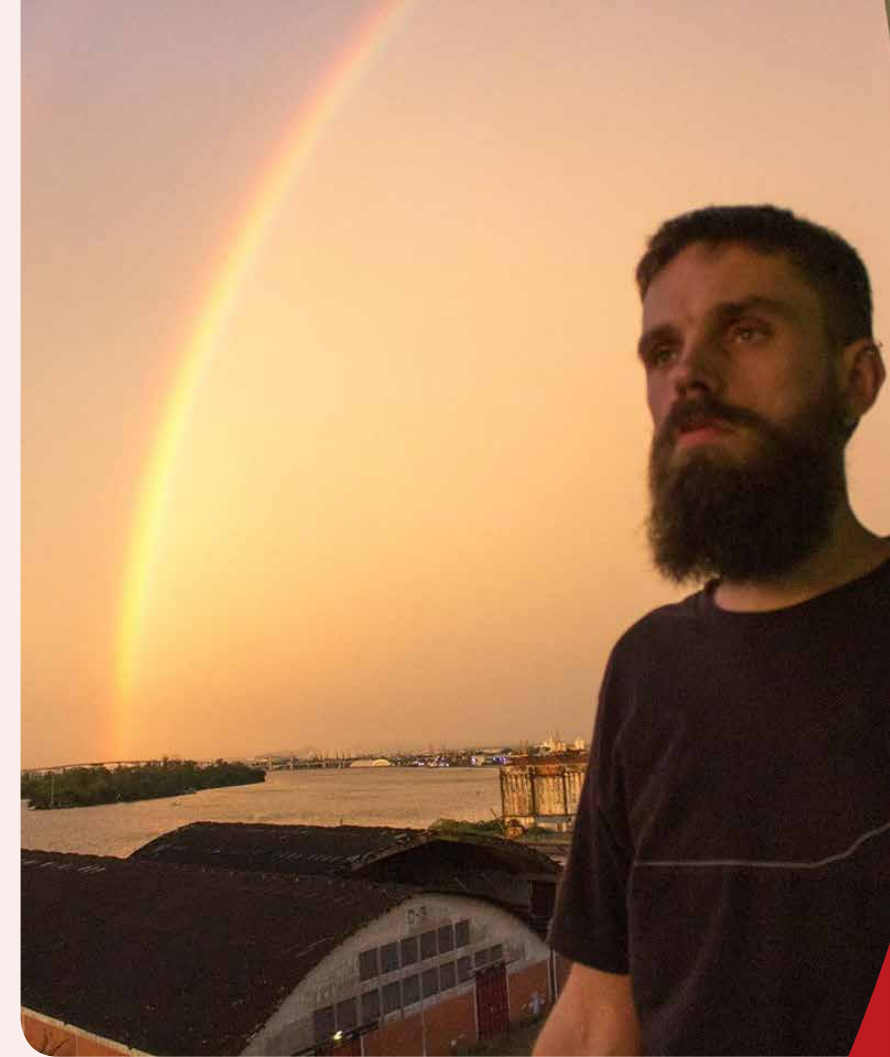
For years, I kept that story, suffocating myself constantly. Fortunately, at the right time, a hand reached out. It was dawn and I was on the seventh floor. We talked for hours. At no time did I feel judged, after all, that person did not know me. That was strange, but I was relieved to put it out, to share something that hurt. A great friendship bloomed.

Today I understand that what happened to me it's called sexual abuse. Even if the sex started with consent, that consent ceased to exist as soon as one of the people involved says that he does not want to. At one point I said "no", but I was not respected and I lived with it for years of my life.

It took me a long time to gain some of the sexual freedom that I allow myself today. I still have a lot to deconstruct. That pain was shared and, then, in some way, it eases in the day-to-day. But it doesn't mean it's gone: it just made me realize that I'm not the only one and that already helps me.

Since then, I have been reflecting on sexuality and its numerous possibilities for practices and theories. I seek in Art to develop works that bring this debate to our daily lives and also help me to revisit this pain and calm my thoughts.

Writing this testimony proved to be fundamental. Even though in doing so I realize how huge the pain is, I gradually tame that pain, learning to deal with it. It also serves for people who have been through this experience to feel that tight and supportive embrace. May no one ever have to go through what I went through! Talking is the best way to, over time, soften this scar that is eternal.



# Orlando

**A**t age 8, I was sexually abused by a friend of my father.

Married and with children, he gave the image of what is commonly called a respectable man. My parents trusted him so much that they once allowed him to take me to his place of work. But that man had another face.

In the place he took me, he tried to be alone with me in safe spaces for him, the garage, the basement, an unused room. Then he showed himself: he wanted to touch me, he exposed himself, he wanted me to touch him, he wanted to penetrate me, on the edge of silent oppression. In the naivete of my childhood, I didn't understand what that was, I didn't know that it was possible. Gradually, I realized that it displeased me, that it hurt me, that it wasn't right and that it didn't belong in my children's world. However, I was under his control, I depended on him to return home. I was at the mercy of that man's will and whims. In the tense game of physical and psychological violence he set up, I was at a disadvantage. And he made it last as long as he wanted.

Once satisfied, without saying another word, he took me back to my parents. I couldn't tell these parents what that man had done. There was no possible language for me to describe what had happened. It was just beginning to be painful.

And that man did not settle for a single time. He started to chase me in an attempt to repeat the game. Alone, unable to state my reasons, I managed to escape from him until he gave up. Before long, I forgot that man and what he had done to me.

In fact, as psychoanalysis taught me later, I suppressed an event that I was unable to deal with at that time.

In adolescence, when discovering (or rediscovering) sexuality, the memory of that returned. At the same time, I began to understand my attraction to men and the first contact I had with one of them. I managed to know what the child did not know: the meaning of what that man had done to me, the meaning of that forced experience. Then the pain appeared in its entirety, in a bitter mixture of anger, shame, guilt and helplessness. I understood myself as a child who was simultaneously mistreated and helpless, subjugated by the violence and silence of the

world of adults. It took me several years to clearly understand and distinguish what, for the teenager, was this intricate and confused suffering.

The abuse had not defined my homosexuality. My desire was not dependent on that experience. But as a teenager, and even at some point in adulthood, abuse had made it extremely difficult for me to understand and accept my guidance, in addition to the many difficulties inherent in the condition of gays in the society in which we live. Until I managed to differentiate things, my attraction to men was both desire and disgust. The encounter with the male body was dirty, aggressive, vile, to be done in an obscure and forbidden way; it could not be a date of loving reciprocity as I was already beginning to fantasize. All this was because the first of these encounters had been forced exposure to the most adverse and harmful aspect of sex. I was a teenager who was ill because I was attracted to men. And this time, I suppressed, not the memory, but the desire.

I got married, I loved my wife deeply, I had a son, I fully assumed my fatherhood. Only at the age of 35, when I started a therapeutic process, I was able to speak to someone, for the first time, both about the abuse and about my attraction to men and the difficulties I felt in dealing with it.

After the end of the marriage and months of therapy, I felt safe to approach a man for the first time and discover that the sexual experience with him could be of pleasure and affection, of reciprocity and understanding, of complicity and respect. A long process to overcome the harmful consequences of what a single man had instilled in me, like a poison, having done what he did. A long process to learn to be a man, to be gay and to be father, with every right I have to be them.

Throughout my son's childhood, I lived in a painful fear that he might suffer something similar to what happened to me. I lived under the strain of

protecting him and being there in case an abuse happened. I was concerned with maintaining a frank and open dialogue, constant communication, so that at least he would not suffer from the feeling of helplessness due to the silence I suffered. This ended up creating between us the best possible relationship between father and son, of profound admiration and love, including his acceptance of the gay father he has, with a rare dignity and respect. With all the effort it took me, I managed to transform violence and pain into love and complicity. I am proud to have been able to bring about this transformation.

I know that there are more horrifying experiences than mine. I was abused only once, while there are children being repeatedly abused in worse circumstances. So I firmly believe that never, under no circumstances can it be acceptable for a man to have to go through something like this, simply because another man has forgotten the respect he owes a child.

These stories leave an indelible and traumatic mark which accompanies practically the entire adult life of those who suffered it. These stories need to be told. We adults need to give a voice to these abused children that we were and who often did not know how to express what they suffered. Something good is born when stories are told, even if they are stories of pain.



# Joshua

**W**hen I was in college, I was sexually assaulted. It's a part of my story that was swiftly buried, tucked far away because I thought boys couldn't be raped. He was a friend, and I said

"yes" a lot before I finally said "no." I thought maybe that was just what gay sex was and that I should get used to it. That me and my body were the problem.

Then I went on with my life as if nothing ever happened.

The entire experience of my sexual assault was a silencing. In the moment itself, I couldn't cry out. My protests were ignored, so I stopped protesting — I went numb, lost the ability to speak at all. And ever since, my silence around that night persisted. But then another survivor shared her story with me, and I realized it was time to confront my own.

There's certainly a comfort in silence, being able to maintain the status quo, not rock the boat, and keep this all a secret. But silence never helped anyone. No one hands survivors a manual. A handy road-map to your healing.

Part of my own healing journey was an art therapy assignment: make art about what happened to me. So I did — and now I want to share it with everyone who will listen. Because that's the only way I know how to tell the truth.

We don't talk about sexual assault in the LGBTQ community enough. But that ends today. I hope that by breaking my silence, I can both heal myself and encourage others to confront their own stories, too. To have the courage to speak up because they're not alone. No one — not even the men who hurt us — can take away our voices forever.

Joshua is responsible for The Survivor Project that illustrates the article.



# J.C.

**J** was a kid. I spent a vacation at my uncle's house and my cousin came to sleep in the same room as me. He was 18 and I was 14 years old... I didn't realize what could happen. As it was summer, we slept in underwear. Early in the morning, he went to the

bathroom and when he returned he was already without his underwear. He lay down next to me and leaned his hard cock against my ass. Then he forcibly removed my underwear and the rest... well... you already know. He only stopped after he came inside me.

While it was happening, I was paralyzed. I was afraid to scream and people would think I caused that. I don't know what hurt the most, my body or my conscience. The next day, I couldn't face people properly.

Today we have our wives and children, but when we meet at family gatherings, the embarrassment exists. I tried to confront him more than once, but he doesn't even look at me and acts like nothing has happened. I wish he had the manhood to apologize.

But I remember every detail and I was never able to talk about it. You can't call your father or brother and say "I was raped by my cousin". I spent my whole life with a sign on my forehead written "fag!". I couldn't get rid of the guilt and the thoughts that it might have been different if I had reacted.

And this is not the only story...

I had gone to the beach with the youth group from the church I attended. It had a water loss where I lived and the group president offered me to take a shower at his house. While he was in the shower, I was in a bathing suit, waiting for my turn.

Suddenly, without me noticing, he grabbed me from behind and squeezed my breasts so hard that he hurt me. He was naked and I felt his dick on my back. I was without reaction. The situation got worse when I found out that there were two people hidden in the house to testify and spread bad things about me. These two people had already been through the same as me in the hands of this pastor. Today I cannot look at any religious leader good eye.

Anonymous testimonial.

# Double-edged sword?

by Filipe Chagas

**A** double-edged sword, in addition to piercing, is able to cut on both sides because it is sharp on both\*. It is also an expression to criticize bisexual men, meaning, those who have a “sword” that likes to “cut” both women and men. But this is just one of the many mistakes that exist around bisexuality.

\* FYI: a fencing sword is only pointed and pierced, while the katana, ninja sword, has only one sharp side.



In 2016, an American study revealed that most of the LGBTQ+ community was bisexual, however, an Australian study in 2018 says that only 40% of bisexual men assume their orientation. Why does the letter B appear to be the most invisible in the queer alphabet?

Writer Ashley C. Ford put it in the essay *I'm queer no matter who I'm with* that the fact that a bisexual person “cannot be classified immediately as homosexual or as heterosexual makes people tense” and this makes many bisexuals feel pressured to choose a “side”. It is not surprising that these people take time to speak publicly about their sexualities: while some say they discovered they were bisexual as soon as they started to be attracted to boys and girls, others say that it took them decades to identify themselves in this way because they thought they were “homosexuals in denial”.



Even though Freud popularized the idea that bisexuality is natural to humankind – in his work *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* of 1905 – and the *Kinsey Studies* of the 1940s and 1950s have corroborated, there is no scientific consensus that confirms that. In adolescence, with sexual identity in the making, it is more common for experiences to discover and develop sexuality. However, this does not mean that these young people are bisexual as they may not continue with this behavior in adulthood: it may have been an isolated practice and did not correspond to the person’s guidance. Inclosure or restraint (prison, war, monasteries, etc.) are other examples of situations that can alter an individual’s momentary sexuality, without necessarily meaning a sexual orientation.

There are countless stories in which the bisexual partner is insecure and brings questions like “is he satisfied?” or “can I do it?”, showing that it is not as easy or “with twice as many options” as people say. Bisexuals can, indeed, have a monogamous relationship, with a single sexual and marital partner. What counts is a matter of trust and the type of relationship the couple has.

There are also those who think that bisexuality is “just a phase” related to emotional trauma. Others put bisexuals as promiscuous and undecided: “he is gay now, but soon he changes” or “she is with that guy, but she loves a girl”. All this biphobia makes it even more difficult to understand this orientation, leading to erasure, invisibility.

International psychology associations have established that bisexuality is when a person has desires and consolidates sexual desires with both sexes, being able to feel equal attraction

(ambisexuality) or to have a preference for one of them. Separating sexual desire from emotional and/or marital relationships is important to understand this concept didactically and not fall into cultural issues or social impositions.

### **DID YOU UNDERSTAND? NOW WE WILL DECONSTRUCT!**

It is necessary to understand that, when talking about sexuality, there are no definite rules or unalterable concepts since society itself changes over time. Therefore, we need to accept that today, in the 21st century, there is no longer the binary of male/female genders.

The classic acronym **GLS** (Gays, Lesbians and Supporters) of the 1990s became, in 2008, **LGBT** (Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals and Transsexuals) in an attempt to broaden the scope of sexual orientations. However, as it was created without realizing all the possibilities, it quickly changed to **LGBTQ+**, inserting queers (including who identifies but does not fit) and an addition symbol for generic inclusion. With the strong activism and the relentless search for identification and visibility, the acronym was gaining other letters: today we talk about **LGBTQQICAPF2K+**. While L, G and B remained, Transvestites and Transsexuals were separated for the sake of identification with biological gender. In addition to queers, the new Q would be for those who are constantly questioning their sexual identity and orientation and end up including non-binaries and androgynous people. As:

**8=D INTERSEXUAL:** Who have physical and genetic characteristics of women and men. For some time, they were known as hermaphrodites, because they usually have the genitalia (external sexual organs) of men and women.

**8=D CURIOUS:** Who is sure of their gender and orientation, but allows themselves to experiment with other possibilities.

**8=D ASSEXUAL:** Who does not feel sexual attraction in general; sex is not part of relationships.

**8=D PAN and POLISEXUAL:** Pan is the one who feels sexual attraction regardless of gender or sexual orientation, those who say they “like the person”. Poli is attracted to several genres, but not all. Today the term “fluid” is used a lot for those who move between possibilities.

**8=D FAMILY:** They are the former “supporters”, family members and allies of the community.

**8=D TWO-SPIRIT:** Old North American indigenous identity that does not have the gender standard of society as a man and woman. They believe they were born with male and female spirits within them.

**8=D KINK:** Term used for those who have sexual fetishes.

As crazy as this acronym may seem, it brings a great truth: human sexuality goes beyond men and women.

And how are bisexuals in this new and diverse world? Even more lost. Before, a bisexual cis man could be attracted only to a cis woman and another cis man. Today, he can get involved with transgender, agender and so on. A bisexual can go beyond heterosexuality and homosexuality, and choose between different genders and sexual orientations. That's why they often end up associated with pan and polysexuals.

Bisexuality needs to be connected to the old binary to exist, since it is the oppositions between man/woman, hetero/homo, cis/trans that guarantee the existence of the letter B. However, a world that questions this binary system makes bisexuality increasingly invisible.

Therefore, this is the moment to hear the voices of those who have been living this since their discoveries. **8=D**



### SYMBOLS OF BISEXUAL VISIBILITY

The bisexual pride flag was designed by Michael Page in 1998 to give the bisexual community its own symbol. For a long time it was said that the definition of colors was pink for girls, blue for boys and purple as the union of the two. However, the Magenta strip at the top of the flag represents sexual/romantic attraction only for the same gender, the Blue strip at the bottom represents sexual/romantic attraction only for the opposite gender and the central Lavender strip acts as an overlap of the attractions and their ambivalence.

Many use these colors in overlapping triangles, like a Star of David, to reframe the triangles used in Nazi concentration camps. However, to avoid relations with the dictatorial regime, many use two mirrored crescent moons.

September 23 is a call for bisexual people, their families, friends and allies to recognize and celebrate bisexuality. It was created in 1999 by three activists, Wendy Curry, Michael Page and Gigi Raven Wilbur, who wanted to reveal that the prejudice suffered by bisexuals came from both heterosexuals and homosexuals.

# Felipe



**J** always thought I was a late bloomer, since my first kiss was at seventeen and I lost my virginity at 21 (with a woman). However, I have the

memory of several episodes from my childhood where I found myself looking at boys in a different way. I clearly remember a perfume advertisement, which had a young man in white pants and a green T-shirt, who smiled beautifully, jumped the pillars on a pier and looked at the camera with a delightful smile. I watched that advertisement countless times, always hidden. I had been taught that this was wrong. Sad but true.

I was once invited to a party and, as usual, I went with friends because my partner was busy. I had never been to a place like A Gruta, a well-known cubicle in Belo Horizonte's underground scene where several types of people, together, kissed freely in order to enjoy the whole night dancing. For anyone who lived in a monogamous heteronormative relationship like me, it remained to observe all that beauty that ended up echoing in my mind.

A month later, the 8-year relationship inevitably ended and I went into an existential crisis. Not only because of the break-up, but because of the proximity to 30 years. I started to question

everything and a curiosity started to take my sleep: what if I stayed with someone of the same sex? I talked to gay friends and one of them said: "you totally can be bi". That sounded so liberating! I would have a place, a tribe!

A few months passed before I kissed a man for the first time. Before, I just watched, until, at a party... Gods! What was that? My reference came from the women I related to and, suddenly, that catch! A physical thirst, as if he already wanted sex there. I started to understand why women get wet when excited... But the body was the same as mine! Feel a hard stick in your pants brushing the other? That really made my mind knot!

I went back to the advertising of my adolescence and remembered other examples where I felt sexually attracted to the male image, such as, going to the beach to observe the exposed bodies. In my mind I thought "I would like to have a body like his". Only after I started to relate to men did I understand the differences between desires – admiration and sex – and, then, I started to come out as bisexual.

I was never afraid to talk about sexuality with friends and family. Some joke that I am a hybrid between gay and straight, mainly in the way of speaking, because sometimes I use expressions and intonations from the gay world. I feel very free among close people! Although... I think that every man is straight until he receives a "greek kiss" well done...

However, with possible partners I always felt insecure. The freedom that came when I discovered the possibility of bisexuality also brought a label with several phrases, such as:

"Ah! But being bi is much easier! You have twice as many options!"

"You had a trauma with the end of your relationship. This phase will pass"

"You will decide sometime"

"Are you still in this?"

"What are you with now: man or woman?"

"With men are you active or passive?"

It just doesn't work like that. Just as seeing the female orgasmic wave drove me crazy, seeing a man's cum had the same effect. I was curious to be passive, but, used to being active because I only had relationships with women, I didn't know how uncomfortable I could be without being relaxed (nothing that a good tongue has not solved).

Being with men made me discover that "fuck for fuck" is not enough, that there are more fun ways to have sex regardless of gender. The bond that is created, the intimacy, allows the body to be fully enjoyed. I was able to stay with a couple, a man and a woman. There were few nights together, but it is something I aim for a lifetime! Having the freedom and all the possibilities ahead is something magical.

The dynamics change completely: there are three hours of sex, each taking care of the other's pleasure. And when you wake up the next day, there are two more bodies to fill your bed!

So I understood that there are ways to relate outside the imposed standard and that they can be much lighter and full of desire, since the choice of a single partner is very critical and very often depends on the acceptance of the other by bisexuality. I have heard from men that I would trade them as soon as I found a woman to marry, as well as I have been with women who were eager to never give me what only a man could give me. Normally women have a harder time accepting my bisexuality and they jump out in four months. This brings me frustration and insecurity regarding my self-acceptance, as if I was always the problem, even more after listening to the phrases above... Those more observant friends, quickly catch on the air when I'm dating a man or woman, because I really have a security lock when being with women.

People... the question is: if I am with someone it is because I want to be, it is because that someone is fabulous in my eyes, regardless of gender! Non-acceptance is still huge. With that, I learned that it is necessary to always talk to the partner about everything in the relationship, about monogamy or not.

# Christian

**I** found myself bisexual from a very young age, even if unconsciously, even without having labeled it for me. I was never sure in my mind that I should be attracted to this or that particular genre. The others asked these questions. But I knew that I felt “things” for girls and boys, only that I never externalized, because I knew it would be something impossible to be understood. As if it were a simple multiple choice question, I had to choose one or the other and accept the pros and cons of that choice. And it has always brought me a lot of conflict, pain and confusion.

There were times when I demanded a position from myself. I needed to adapt even if I did not fully identify with one of the two groups. I felt like a farce on both sides: I wasn't straight or gay.

And it was in this paradox that I stayed for years. In my mind, these two things coexisted harmoniously and the stigma of promiscuity and affective detachment from bisexuals did not apply to me (even at my age). But I knew that things were different in the world.

Over time, I had very positive experiences, such as access to books that dealt with the subject (the “Third Pillow” was a game changer for me) and conversations on the internet with people who felt the same things and were in the same age group than me (which is very important in those moments). So I started to understand myself better, accepting myself better between crises of confusion and clarity, respecting more who I really was and being aware that before I was bisexual I was a unique individual and that it was okay to be like that.

However, telling people about my bisexuality cost me a lot. I was very afraid of being seen in a banal way, as if it were “whatever” limited to what was on offer. When I knew that, in fact, it went much further than that, that it was an internal struggle for me to understand better about it. Today I care more about how much people know me than the vision they will have of me for defining me through a word. What they will think is their problem and not mine or caused by me. Even because I don't speak for all bisexuals in the world.

It took me a while to feel safe to demonstrate fragility to women, which was not an issue with men. I like to know that I can share responsibilities within a relationship, be it with anyone. That it is not necessary that everything depends on me, whatever.

For me, sex is very important for the emotional connection, but it must exist long before that. Soon it becomes difficult for me to put physical or biological limitations on all this. I like the whole, the kiss, the smell, the touch... and yes, they are different in each genre. Different, not better or worse. What will determine this is the connection.

I try to accept my desires and wishes every day without having to leave them. I have very well separated what I want for myself and how comfortable I feel. Maturity brought this, but I still have a lot to learn and to deconstruct these social roles. I feel more complicit, more secure, lighter, more part of something. What once made me feel insecure (because I was created to lead everything around me), today makes me more comfortable and with time for other things. Life is an eternal learning.

Being bisexual is an experience marked by conflicts and frustrations, but also a lot of self-knowledge. I didn't choose to be like that, but I learned to be proud of who I am, to raise that flag and help other people in this discovery, without judgment and allowing them to recognize first of all who they are.



# Sam

**J**only started to explore my sexuality around a year ago and identified myself as Bisexual/Queer. I had previously only been in relationships with women and always appreciated men, but I never felt a strong urge to act on it. When I first started dating men, it was pretty clear my appreciation had turned to desire.

My friend group is a mixture of straight & LGBTQI+ people so telling my friends was never an issue or fear. I am very privileged to have a very open minded family, so discussing and opening up about my sexuality to them was very easy. I was anxious to tell my parents just for the simple fact they are an older generation and they only ever knew me dating women. I was scared they would think I was confused or not fully comfortable with myself. I couldn't have been more wrong; they were extremely supportive, especially my mother.

Although I refer to myself as bisexual, I think the term carries a lot of stigma which is why sometimes, I am more comfortable using the umbrella term 'Queer' as it stops people from asking a million ignorant questions. For men, you are labeled as confused or you resort to labelling yourself as bisexual as a step before coming out as gay. Bisexual women on the other hand are seen as a fetish and completely over sexualised by society. Greedy, unfaithful, promiscuous are all other negative words thrown at the bisexual label; a stigma fueled by misinformation and ignorance.

I personally don't like to compare my feelings or desires for different genders. Sexuality is so fluid that if I said today I prefer one gender more to the other it would be a different story less than a week later. I love a man or a woman equally as a partner. I've had relationships with both genders, some more serious than others but all have been equally as beautiful. For me, you have to separate the gender of the person from the relationship.



I was overweight as a child and that caused me to cover myself up completely and not show my body off in public or to a person intimately for 7 years. This led me to working with the body and nudity as a recurring theme in my visual art practice. I had the opportunity to work with Spencer Tunick, a well-known photographer that uses nudity in large scale gatherings. On my first shoot with him I was surrounded by 70 naked people of all ages, gender and colors. I was in awe of how comfortable those people were in their skin. Regardless of gender or what you have between your legs you are a person. We are all the same. We all want to feel love. It was very inspiring.



# Francisco

**J**n fact, I don't identify myself as bisexual. Although I like men and women, I like people themselves more than genders (often confused with their genitals). Nor does that mean that I like men the same way I like women. There are people out of binary that I can have sexual desire with, and that takes me beyond bisexuality. I am also not just a "man who likes men and women", since I myself do not identify myself as either a man or a woman, regardless of my appearance and male genitals. So I could say that I'm bisexual when I'm with a guy and a girl and I can kiss them both at the same time. To them and others.

I can't have this conversation with everyone. When the other person doesn't care, I say "yes, I'm bisexual". To whom I believe to be important, I explain that I like people regardless of the gender with which they identify. Being questioned for your sexuality becomes an ambivalent position within seemingly dichotomous terrain: "it doesn't matter your gender, but you have to like men or women". So, being bisexual is often seen as insatiable, who "plays on both teams", who doesn't care who they are. For this reason, I find bisexuality more difficult than homosexuality, since even gays ask "why do you like women?". And women don't believe in your heterosexual desire because, after all, you also like cock.

It is not 100% the same with me. Today I am homosexual, but, from time to time, I feel this sexual energy within me aimed at a woman. I think it is something socially incorporated and I feel more sexual desire for men. It is something more carnal, bodily. With women, I connect through affection and, consequently, this unfolds in my sexuality. From the point of view of my performance in sex, when I am a woman in bed with a man, I don't need to feel much affection. It can be nothing more than meat and pleasure. When I am an active man, whether with a man or a woman, I do it based on a basis of emotional connection with the person, of love and affection. I couldn't explain it, but I can identify the differences of "socially constructed genders" in my ways of relating to men and women, as well as in the way I like one or the other.



I think the most important thing about how I relate to my body is independent of who I am with. I return to the co-substantiality of gender and sexual orientation, meaning, I like to feel beautiful and attractive to anyone. When I'm with a woman, I like to emphasize the more masculine characteristics of my appearance and my body. When I'm with a man, I like to be "more feminine". However, I also like to relate to women based on my femininity (which would also be bisexuality), as well as being "two men in bed".

So everything about my bisexuality depends on my position in front of the person I am going to relate to: if I like both genders, it is because I also have two ways of being and they also like these genders.

# Marcus

**M**y parents are from one of those traditional evangelical churches, you know? So, the fact that I was aware that my sexuality was different from the “norm” always weighed heavily on me. However, the issue of bisexuality itself took a long time for me to understand.

When I was a kid, I always felt uncomfortable when I was attracted to boys and denied that. Apart from teenage flirts, I never dated women and I wondered if it was just a sexual interest or some impossibility/difficulty to get emotionally involved. Time passed and I got a boyfriend. My family ended up finding out and I lived a long time feeling “gay”: after all, if men attract me, I could only be gay. It took me a while to realize that I was not “just” gay.

Part of this discovery came with the discomfort of hearing how several close gays referred to the pussy: always disgusted. I always thought this was bizarre: it would be normal to say you don’t care, but feel disgust? I never had this disgusting relationship with pussy. But the realization came even when I heard a singer talking about her discovery as a bisexual after questioning the idea that everyone is interested in only one type of body, usually based on the person’s genitalia as an object of desire. Unfortunately, this idea is still very present, even among gay people.

I have a very sex positive relationship (open and calm about sexuality) with a boy, but I still see some resistance with my desire in relation to girls. I never used the term “bisexual” to describe myself to anyone in real life. Maybe part out of cowardice and part out of laziness to raise the flag of an almost erased sexuality and still have to deal with this feeling of explaining myself to those who do not understand the attraction to people of different genders. I end up living like a gay boy who eventually gets some girl.



# S. J.

**A**t first, I would like to make it clear that sex was a prohibited subject in my family! Still is. So, the little I learned was watching porn movies, going to explicit sex movie theaters or with childhood friends.

The adolescence phase was the most difficult, because my religious family put in my head that sex was only after married and homosexuals would go straight to hell. However, some games with friends were to compare the cocks, talk about why they get hard, what would be the pleasure of penetrating a female genitalia! Sometimes there was a handjob, a rubbing of glands, even a docking... I confess that it always made me extremely horny! At this time, I experienced abuse within my family and harassment within the religious community.

With my castrating education, you must have already imagined the confusion that went through my head between admitting the desire and the guilt of sin! I always thought the naked body was beautiful, whether male or female... Even though I loved the opposite sex I never stopped admiring male beauty. But I am not comfortable telling others that I am bi. I think because of the repressive education I had and the abuse I suffered.

Today I’m married to a woman, I have a son and it’s been a long time since I know what it’s like to sleep with another man. I consider myself a nudist and accept my body as it is, I feel comfortable! I respect and admire the bodies of others. I think many men know how to make each other come with much more pleasure and intensity than a woman, because they know how and where to caress. But women have their value in sex. Although they have differences, each one has its merit, taste and flavor!

# (dis)Ability



by Filipe Chagas

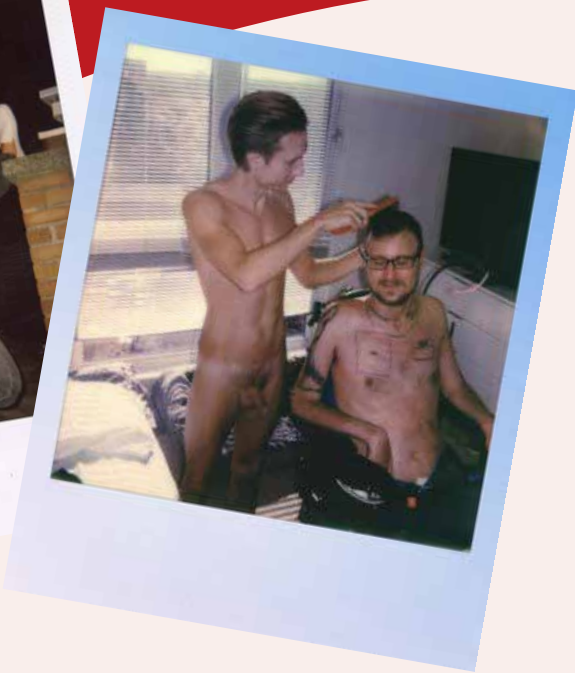
**D**isability is the term used by the World Health Organization to define the absence or dysfunction of a person's psychological, physiological or anatomical structure, whether physical-motor, visual, auditory, intellectual, learning or autistic spectrum, among others.

But the question remains: **who defines what is ability?**

So, before reading a text about that, I thought it best to start with you meeting people who deal with the world in a different way. I guarantee a transformative experience.



# Robert



**A**t 21, my life changed: I broke my neck training a double backflip on a trampoline! I went from a crazy athletic dude to a crazy disabled dude! One thing that remains the same is my sexiness!

I have always been interested in photographing my life and the people around me. Growing up as an able-bodied person, I was able to gain confidence and self-esteem through my very own talents. After my accident, I still had enough confidence and self-esteem to apply it to my disabled body. In fact, it was a free moment, not having to subscribe to a certain body type because I physically couldn't change my body. I learned very quickly to appreciate what I have and love my body inside and out, no matter what it looks like or how it functions. This drove me to show others that my body will always be beautiful, sexy, and desirable.





*When it came to photographing myself again, it just felt to be the model first, before I could photograph others. I wanted to inspire other people with disabilities to be completely comfortable in their bodies. I find the disabled body is so beautiful and*

*interesting! The way the body ages with a disability is so incredible! I just had to adapt myself: since I have no body movements below my shoulders, I activate the digital camera using a joystick operated by my mouth. I need time and production assistance.*



*As a huge homosexual, it came naturally to photograph the people I find attractive. I am not opposed to photographing women. In fact, I hope to photograph more women with disabilities as I continue my photographic process.*



*I also think it is extremely important to show that a man with a disability deserves love, intimacy and sex! There are people with disabilities who have no idea how their bodies even works sexually, because health-care professionals don't cover sexuality as part of their practice. People with disabilities are left to figure out everything on their own. Society doesn't see us as sexual human beings, but we are! We have a conscious ability to please ourselves, and we shouldn't be ashamed to do so.*



*I am a very sex positive positive person. Sex is used in just about every aspect of life especially in the media: "sex sells". I use this to get my point across, to help get the message of disability issues into mainstream media. My work is just scratching the surface, but it gives me a voice that amplifies that of others. We need to start shifting the conversation from "how do you have sex?" To "what sexual practices do you enjoy?" I want to recover the autonomy of disabled bodies.*

*I've come so far re-learning to breathe, swallow and live on my own... I tell everyone that I am "balls, charming, devastatingly handsome, homosexual, disabled, artist, activist"! I finished my Master in Fine Arts in Photography at Yale! Never in a million years did I think I would be where I am at today, but I am glad to be here and to have my amazing family and friends with me every roll of the way!*



All photos, including the opening, are from the artist himself.



# Marcos

**M**any people I know say it is quite a challenge to live in the 21st century! If it is difficult for a person seen as “normal” by society, imagine for us that we have a disability! We live together in a society that talks so much about inclusion, equal opportunities, that builds so many technological advances, but forgets the most important thing: changing its own thinking, its actions, its ways of JUDGING what there’s no knowledge about, putting in the PRE-CONCEPT. Society marginalizes people with disabilities in such a way that, many times, we end up being prejudiced against ourselves! We hide inside our houses so as not to be judged, because we feel ugly and inferior to others!

Particularly speaking, I spent more than 50% of my life in “anonymity”! I did not like to go to parties, because there I could find someone who was afraid to come near me, who looked at me with pity eyes or came to treat me as if I were a newborn etc. I lived in a “protection bubble”, where I was deprived of a lot because of the simple fear of my family that I would suffer some embarrassment, some form of prejudice! So, I grew up a person without knowing how to make decisions, afraid to approach people, ashamed of myself, a person who decided not to give wings to his passions, to his carnal desires, because since I was a child I heard that I was not like those other men without explanation!

At 16, 17 years old, I decided to go after hidden truths, omitted things so that I wouldn’t suffer as every human being does! And then my biggest challenge began: to know myself and accept me as I really am! Have the courage to live and show my face to be happy in the middle of a hypocritical and prejudiced society!

Today, at the age of 37, I haven’t lived everything yet! I mean, I lived ABSOLUTELY NOTHING! I keep discovering myself, only that, unlike before, I am allowing myself to dream more, to pursue my goals without worrying about the opinions of A or B, taking into account my own opinions! I am daring more, I am opening the doors of my life so that the world better knows everything that a person with a disability is and can do! I am fighting against internal prejudices that still make me look at myself with eyes of shame, of difference! Compared to my life back there, it evolves a lot and I still want much more!

I’m still in the acceptance phase when I look in the mirror. I can say that I have advanced a lot, compared to my 20 years, when I did not look in the mirror even by a decree! If I passed a mirror and accidentally saw myself reflected there, I thought I was a monster, a hunchback of Notre Dame! I still have a bad habit of comparing myself with other men, because I would like to be strong, stocky and hairy chest, shredded abs, etc. I currently use the mirror to quickly comb my hair. I risk taking selfies without a shirt (or even naked from time to time), but I still feel a little uncomfortable with what I see!

I am trying my best to get all this over as quickly as possible! I want to arrive in front of a mirror, and appreciate what I see, feel proud and say: “Hey, hot guy!” I know the road will still be long, but the most important thing I have: strength, focus and goals to accomplish!



Above: Self-portrait.

Previous page:  
Quarantine Bodies Project.  
Photo: Chris, The Red

# Victor



**T**he word “disabled” brought the idea that a person was limited only by his disability, meaning that he was not even a person. “Special needs” didn’t fit either, since everyone has or may have a special need. In 2013, then, a decision was made for a “person with a disability”, that is, the person comes before the disability, is a human being.

Particularly, I don’t like the word “disability”, as this indicates inability and we need to discuss a lot about what it is to be able in a society like ours. There are several types of disabilities and each one has different peculiarities, in my case, if I’m standing still, people don’t realize it. When I speak or move, it is perceived. There are days when generalized dystonia is even more visible and then I become a non-desire body, but of exploration or reference for overcoming. It is a “myth of the hero”, one that you put on a pedestal, but never has an affective involvement, only inspirational. And a one-sided inspiration serves only to massage the other’s ego! We must also review this idea of overcoming: what is being overcome? Why do you have something to overcome? If the disability continues, is there anything really being overcome?

I am a filmmaker and I see cinema as an instrument to build and reconstruct the imagination of a population. We had in Brazil only two films with public incentives directed by people with disabilities. If we compare that to the other minorities that also claim spaces, this is nothing. People with disabilities are still not seen as people and there is no way for this “non-person” to seek a space, to have a voice.

When I tried to study Visual Arts, I was prevented from taking the entrance exam because of my issues with hand movements and the mandatory specific test. Public places exclude people with disabilities at all times.

As an actor, I’ve heard “how am I going to put you in my movie?” The Netflix series *Special* is interesting for having a main character with a disability, but it puts him in a caricature, in a poor place to be loved and wanted by everyone. People don’t want to deal with crooked bodies on TV, because that would also have to deal with themselves, with their bodies, with their “abilities”. And this is what needs to happen. We need to question what is a body, what is our body and the body of the other and what does this imply in our relationships.

I only realized that my body was different because of the other’s gaze. For me, I was never different. When I was a child, I used to fuck up, but in adolescence, we sought approval from the group. So, I started to create the idea that “I would never be loved”, but, on the other hand, I lived my sex life well liberated. And this is somewhat common: the disabled person ends up having sex for sex, because he thinks there will be no love.

My experience of having a disabled body in the LGBT environment goes through the problem that the body in the gay environment is very sexualized, the overvaluation of the perfect body coming from a toxic structural machismo. I have been with a person without disabilities for 5 years and I still hear that I am a burden, a weight, that he is strong, such a “mythical hero”. I don’t like to establish a moral line, because I think that everyone should do what they like, but I see people with disabilities putting themselves in submissive sexual situations because they are not sure of who they are.

Because we were raised in an ableist society, we must be careful to identify the veiled prejudices in the form of affection and overprotection. When deciding on the path of the Arts, for example, I heard from my family that I should look for a certain profession, that I should support myself and achieve emotional stability... This is wrong. We must find ways of autonomy to develop our potential without falling into the role of the “hero”, of being an inspiration for ourselves and not for others. In a painful and pleasant way, I am the one who creates my nature.



Still from the video  
*Accelerations marked by a  
world seen through you.*

# Beto

**J**lost my leg at 2 years old, so my whole life was as a person with a disability. I always had to adapt to the world,

but it was with other PWDs that I learned that I was capable of much more. In football for amputees, for example, I found references and learned several tricks in the use of a crutch. When I saw Leandrinha du Art, I finally felt that someone was really questioning the labels and their possibilities and that they represented me not only for being a PWD but also for being part of the LGBTQIA + community.

As a teenager, I thought I had to be straight. Even though I was dismissed in Physical Education, I played sports, but I didn't bathe in the open locker room. It was very embarrassing because of my desire, the fear of an erection... not my absent leg. I forced myself to be with a few girls, in a romantic, passionate, not-so-horny way, and I even considered myself bisexual until I understood who I was and started to accept me for real.

In relationship apps, I've always been truthful and made it clear that I don't have a leg to avoid surprises and unpleasant situations. If I was not rejected and blocked, I would receive messages like "I don't know, I never stayed with someone like that"... without much patience I would reply: "are we going



to kiss or race?". I have already heard someone talking about me: "you must be very desperate to be with him". Of course, I carved whoever said that, but I felt really bad... I became the despair of others! All because of the way the person with disability is seen in society.

Today I am lucky to have met a man who does not see me as different because I am a PWD. He understands my limitations and my different ways of doing various things, but it never affected us. When he doesn't know how I'm going to deal with something, he simply asks "how do we do it?", Without looking sorry or putting myself on a pedestal. Before dating, I even warned him that someone could comment on him and not me on our relationship.

The journalist and comedian Stella Young has a lecture in which she says "I am not your inspiration", making it clear that both she and everyone do the

best with the body we have. However, the ableist world tries to fit the person with disability in a single way, when, in fact, there are countless possibilities.

Recently, I was very uncomfortable when I received an image of a programmer without his arms, typing with his feet, and the comments were "the hero of overcoming", "if he can do it, I can do it too"... but nobody stopped to think that the boy studied the same thing as everyone else and adapted to the situation in a different way!

This overcome situation puts a lot of pressure, as if every person with a disability should always be a good person, an example for humanity! Only, in fact, this only shows the low expectations for people with disabilities, as if leaving home and going to school / college / work was a miracle on Earth! People need to understand that people with disabilities can drive, work, eat alone. I made adapted driving school, with cars prepared for people with disabilities, which was open to everyone and this created an interesting environment: those who were not people with disabilities were different!

In a parking lot, if I get out of the car from the driver's side, people look at me crookedly. A person with disability is expected to get out of the passenger seat and in a wheelchair! I've fought a lot, but today I don't see it as evil when in preferential lines, people complain about not seeing my mechanical leg. I show it politely in an attempt to teach and make them reflect that not every disability is visible and perceived easily.



People with disabilities are also expected to be straight cis. It is difficult to accept that people can have a sexuality different from the standard. They think that if there is a disability, sexuality is nil, that we cannot have and give pleasure, dating, starting a family, being parents. So, there are several exclusions.

In many cases, bodies with disabilities prefer to hide to avoid a judgment. However, when the announcement of the Rio Paralympics came out with two celebrities simulating people with disabilities, I was really irritated by the degree of intentional invisibility. We need to show up and people are open to not judge us as incapable or angels on Earth.

Photoshoot by Beto Maia and Jimmy Andrade for the Other Colors project by photographer Janssem Cardoso.

# Kollinn



**I** lost myself for 22 years and finally found myself.

I found myself in the middle of a body in which I did not identify with gender. I avoided mirrors, photos and looks, feeling undesirable for not knowing who I am or not knowing who I wanted to be, for also being a person with a disability, for not knowing who I was. I faced society, family and friends. I'm still facing it, but it took me a while to find myself and now, more than ever, I'm not going to get lost, either by anyone or anything!

I am much more than a disability. I want much more than ramps and bars: I want to break stereotypes, I want visibility and respect. I want to do my trips without having to educate people saying that I am more than a disability. God will not heal me. I'm not a warrior because I'm just living. I am not an example of life for being in places or having routines and much less I want your congratulations, because it is not my birthday.

I recently went to the beach to face two challenges: wearing swim trunks in public and having to remain seated on the sand next to the sea to enjoy, since I can't stand for long. Sitting on the sand brings a childishness to the eyes of others, further reinforcing the stereotype that we, people with disabilities,

need constant supervision. However, even with my swimming trunks full of sand, I sent society to hell and took my vitamin D in the sea water.

I don't hate my body or my genitals. Much less I was born in the wrong body. I just didn't know how to put myself in society.

When I became a trans man, I brought others' narratives like a mirror, I wanted to have a six pack belly and a pumped arm. Over time I realized that this was making me sick and I decided to make my own narrative: the man with breasts, a wheelchair, trans, bipolar, possibly intersex, who does not have shredded abs and does not do hormone therapy for now.

Hair has a lot of meaning in my transition. It was through him that I found the courage to accept myself. After the end of a relationship, I decided to cut that hair that made me cry because I was stuck in a need for chemistry and straightening by social standardization. It was really revolutionary: four months later I assumed I was trans and cut it even shorter.

So, I made peace with my body, with me. I managed to be a man for myself and not a man to fit the standard of society. Society shall struggle to deal with a trans man in a wheelchair in his life. Society shall struggle to see my happiness.

I usually speak in lectures about my experience and how difficult it is to break these social paradigms in which we are placed as a person with a disability. It is necessary for everyone to see that we are capable of having a social, loving and sexual life, regardless of limitations.

There was a carnival that my friends took more than an hour and a half to find a beach where they had accessible chairs so that I could enjoy the water, even for a few minutes. It was a short and fun ride. But it needs to be clear that they are not superheroes and have not done me a favor. They simply showed that they wanted everyone to be equally comfortable.

I am grateful to family members – thanks mom, for having rebuilt yourself for me – and friends who supported me during the transition and helped me to have emotional stability. I know that I am privileged to have nice people around me. I am grateful to finally be happy for who I really am.

## Freedom

The wind that didn't come  
The sun that came out and didn't come back  
The water that didn't run

The stuck smile  
The long tear  
The timid conversation

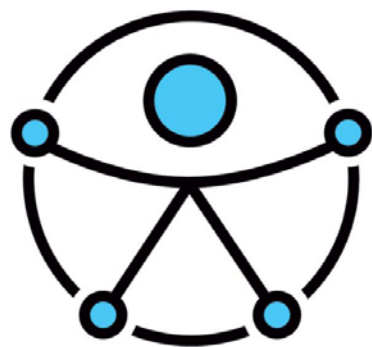
Taking from the soul  
From the hidden veins  
Taking out of the eyes  
From the ears

I freed myself  
Of the darkest  
Of those who tortured me  
That gave insomnia and sleep to more

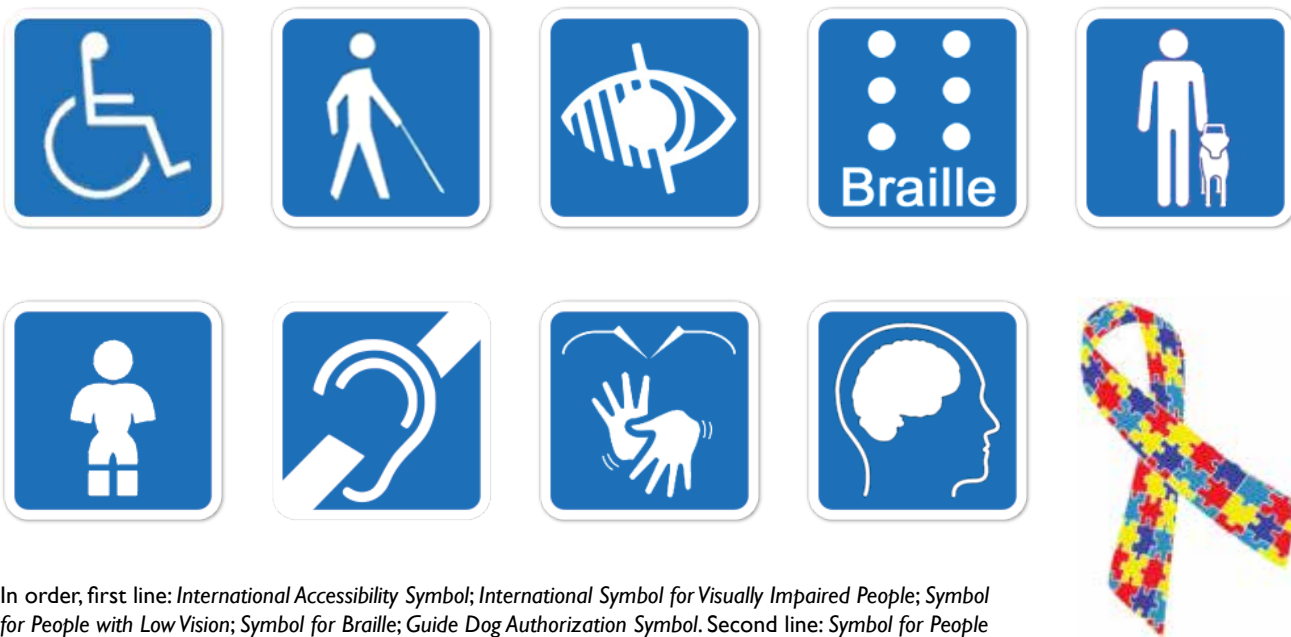
I broke free and came back  
The fresh wind in the soul  
The sunlight  
Water flows  
The long smile  
Short tear  
Random conversation

I took from my soul  
From the hidden veins  
I took it out of my eyes  
From the ears  
My demons.

**A**fter these powerful speeches, it is worth remembering that the correct expression to be used is **people with disabilities (PWD)**. The term “disabled” is inappropriate, as it carries a negative and derogatory charge, reducing the person to his disability. Both the term “special needs” and “functional diversity” have been proposed to encompass not only PWD, but also those who are currently dependent, such as, for example, children and the elderly. Therefore, this tends to exclude the difference.



In 1992, the United Nations (UN) established December 3rd as the International Day of People with Disabilities. In 2015, it announced a new symbol for accessibility, more neutral and impartial, not only focused on the physical-motor disability that requires a wheelchair. However, there are other symbols that try to facilitate the signaling and understanding of the different categories.



In order, first line: International Accessibility Symbol; International Symbol for Visually Impaired People; Symbol for People with Low Vision; Symbol for Braille; Guide Dog Authorization Symbol. Second line: Symbol for People with Dwarfism; International Symbol for People with Hearing Disabilities; Symbol for Libras Interpreter; Symbol for People with Intellectual Disabilities; and World Symbol of Autism Spectrum Disorder Awareness.

From a conception of “standard body”, our society sees disability as inferior, abnormal, something that needs to be corrected: remember that the terms “incapable” and “invalid” – which have already been used to refer to PWD, especially, physical-motor –, comes from “not having capacity”, “not having value”. In a recent online interview, writer, blogger and PWD activist Leandrinha du Art needed to reframe the term “monster” that she has heard all her life:

*The word “monster” bothered me until I understood that one of the etymologies of the word in portuguese is “one who shows something”, “one who gives a message”. I saw the importance, the power to be that monster. So, I assume this so-called monstrosity and make my body a showcase for others to identify themselves.*

This shows structural **ableism**, meaning, discrimination against people with any type of disability that is rooted in society, including active and deliberate oppression (insults, negative considerations, jokes, urban and practical inaccessibility, etc.) and passive oppression (pity treatment, addressing the companion and not the person itself, myth of overcoming etc.). Australian journalist Stella Young, in a TEDx, said that there is institutionalized “inspirational pornography”, that is, the objectification of PWDs for the benefit of people without disabilities, a way for the so-called “normals” to be motivated.

These oppressions – coupled with the neglect of studies – also limit the sex life of PWDs to nonexistence (asexuality) or taboo (invisibility). History tells that forced sterilization techniques were applied and that, only in the 1980s and 1990s, studies on HIV and AIDS led to the

inclusion of disabilities in research on sexuality. A recent study in the USA found that 50% of PWDs have no sexual relationship.

Thus, stereotypes are created and compromise not only the body image of PWDs, but also emotional constructions, sexuality and intimacy. It is widely believed that a PWD will always be dependent and, in cases of congenital disability, he is treated as an “eternal child”, which causes numerous social limitations. It must be remembered that fear of rejection and problems of self-esteem or confidence are not exclusive to PWDs: **everyone has a desire to love and be loved, to feel and give pleasure.**

Even today, sexuality is concentrated in the genitals, however, **the whole body can and should be experienced.** Sex toys, physical aids (such as modifications to the bed or specific furniture) or services provided by a qualified sex worker\* are usually indicated. The idea is to find alternatives of pleasure beyond penetration, whether in other erogenous zones or more appropriate sexual positions: in fact, **it is a tip for everyone!**

\* In 2013, citizens with disabilities in the Netherlands were reported to be eligible for a government-funded scheme to cover up to twelve occasions of sexual service per year.

BDSM – acronym for *Bondage and Discipline* (B and D), *Domination and Submission* (D and S), *Sadism and Masochism* (S and M) – is described as an empowerment for PWDs due to its acceptance of non-normative bodies and to different degrees resistance to pain. The Internet, on the other hand, has been used as an escape valve, especially for those who have disabilities that interfere with their perceptions of self-image and cause intense fear of visual rejection. However, the virtual environment is not yet fully accessible.

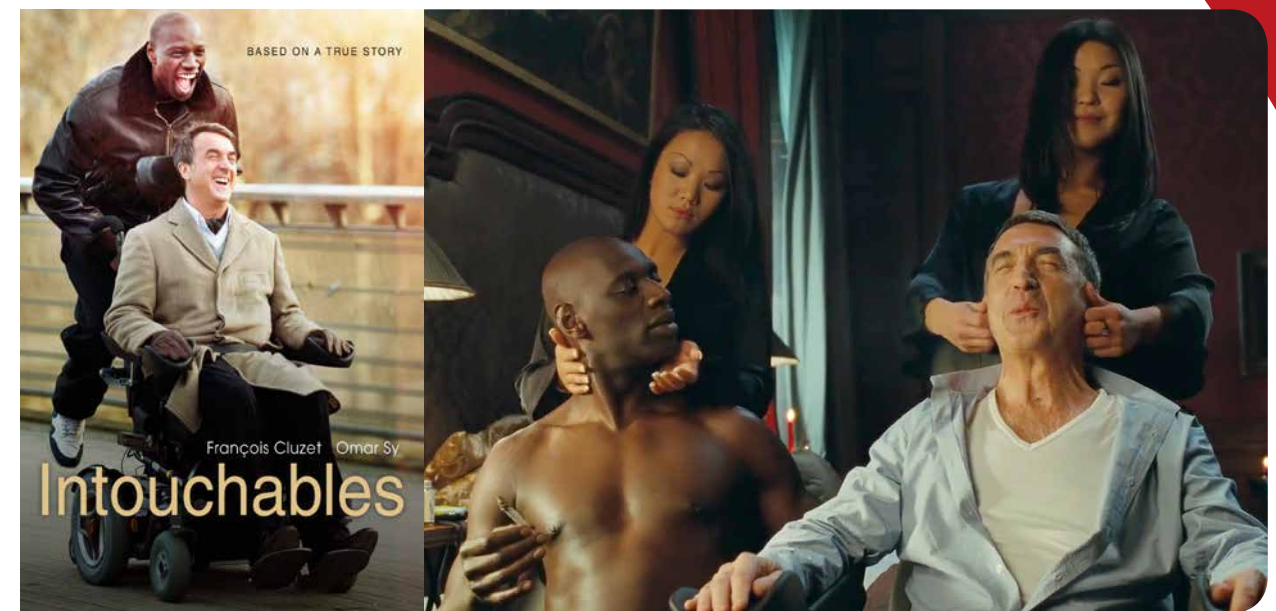
Platonic relationships end up being very common, as they avoid contact and judgment by appearance or performance. And those who have sex with PWDs end up suffering the same oppressions: they are seen as abusers or charitable, they are said with low self-esteem for not allowing themselves to be with “someone normal”. In 1990 it was even considered as a deviant sexual behavior (*abasiophilia*, sexual attraction by PWD, and *devotism\**, attraction by the image of the PWD), increasing the marginalization of this type of relationship.

In some cases of intellectual disability, sexual condition must be monitored in order to have the necessary understanding and learning – both social and individual. *Special*, the Netflix series (2019), tells the adventures of a young gay man with mild cerebral palsy\* who decides to hide his disability saying that he was run over to rewrite his identity and live the social, love and sexual life he wanted. However, Miriam Kaufman – author of *The Ultimate Guide to Sex and Disability* – says that hiding a disability or minimizing its existence is an unnecessary burden.

In 2012, two films addressed the sexual condition of PWDs in some way. In the film “Untouchables” (*Intouchables*), the protagonist is a wealthy aristocrat who becomes quadriplegic after a serious accident, but that does not prevent him from enjoying ear massages for his delight. The film “The sessions” goes straight to the point: it tells the story of a quadriplegic writer and poet who feels incomplete because he has never experienced sex and is advised to go to a sex therapist.



In 2018, the Brazilian Ricardo Alonso Jorge created *Devotee*, a relationship app for PWDs that includes people without disabilities who feel interested.



\* Actor Ryan O’Connell, who stars in the series, actually has mild cerebral palsy for real. The series is based on his autobiographical book, *I’m Special: And Other Lies We Tell Ourselves*.







However, here we have an issue: **cripface** is the term (little known or used in Brazil) that designates a person without a disability representing a person with a disability in some audiovisual work. We can mention several that were even awarded: Dustin Hoffman in *Rain Man* (1988); Al Pacino in *Scent of a woman* (1992); Sean Penn in *I am Sam* (2001); and Eddie Redmayne in *The theory of everything* (2014). In a lecture on bullying, actor R. J. Mitte – who has mild cerebral palsy and acted in the series *Breaking Bad* – said:

*This industry is very negative and hard on people with disabilities because of the idea of perfection that technically does not exist.*



The TV musical series *Glee* (2009-2015) received a lot of criticism for saying it was inclusive and making cripface (actor Kevin McHale played a wheelchair-bound). Then, in 2013 there was the really wheelchair-bound actress Ali Stroker in some episodes. In 2019, Ali broke paradigms: she was the first wheelchair-bound actress to act on Broadway, the first to be nominated for the *Tony Awards* (biggest award in American theater) and to win it, proving that PWDs only need opportunities to show their skills.

It must be made clear that there are countless variables for each type of disability and that, added to the emotional and social conditions of individuals, it becomes impossible to generalize or think of unique solutions. This article does not intend to exhaust the subject, but to reduce the noises that silence and impair the understanding that people with disabilities have unique potentials and deserve space. **8=D**



# One less limb

by Filipe Chagas

**E**unuch (from the Latin *eunuchus*, in turn from the Greek *εὐνοῦχος*, meaning “watchman of the bed”) is the term used for a man who had his external genitalia partially or totally removed, due to war, criminal punishment or religious imposition. Currently, the mutilation of a prisoner is considered a war crime by the Geneva Convention. Likewise, genital mutilation for religious reasons is recognized as a violation of human rights by the United Nations.



Genital area of a 19-year-old man with partial penectomy without urethral relocation. Penectomy was performed at age 12 because of a necrosis (Fournier's gangrene).

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1. Today there is chemical castration, a temporary form of castration by the use of hormonal drugs that act on the libido. It is used both to treat hormone-dependent prostate cancers and as a preventive or punitive measure for those who have committed violent sexual crimes.

In the psychic universe, briefly summarized, castration is linked to the lack, deprivation and the imposition of limits, with consequences in the Oedipus and Elektra Complexes.

2. Read more about this type of surgery in the **2020 Faló History**.

3. Read more about testicles in the **2019 Faló Photo**.

4. Read more about testosterone in **2019 Faló Photo**.

There are two processes that lead to the conversion of a eunuch: **emasculatio** – total removal of the penis (penectomy) and testicles (orchietomy) and, therefore, the ability to copulate – and **castration** – withdrawal<sup>1</sup> from the producer of sex hormones (the testicles in men and ovaries in women). In both cases sterilization occurs, meaning, the loss of reproductive capacity, however the man is still able to urinate, as the internal urethra remained intact. Removal can also occur in cases of sex reassignment surgeries<sup>2</sup>, serious accidents or illnesses, such as cancer<sup>3</sup>.

If converted to an adult eunuch, the man has a substantial hormonal loss in his body, however, erections are still possible, since a small part of testosterone<sup>4</sup> (up to 3%) is produced by the adrenal glands. If converted before puberty, the man is unable to develop the minimum masculine traits, such as muscular structure and deepening of the voice, due to the reduction of testosterone in his body<sup>5</sup>.



Part of the *Ghent Altarpiece* (oil in wood by Van Eyck, 1432), which shows angels singing, is a representation of the *castrati*.

5. This was a very common practice from the 4th to the 18th century among the famous *castrati*, singers castrated in childhood to preserve the high voice and correspond to the female voices, be it soprano, mezzo-soprano or contralto, since women were not allowed in Church choirs. The practice is believed to have started in the Byzantine Empire with eunuch singers becoming well known until the early 13th century, when the sacking of Constantinople destroyed the capital and the *castrati* disappeared. His return would have happened at the request of the Church in the 16th century. In the following centuries, Baroque operas were often written for *castrati* in the lead role. Senesino, Farinelli and Caffarelli were famous *castrati*.

Many boys targeted by castration were orphaned or abandoned children. Some poor families, unable to raise their large offspring, delivered a child to be castrated and to receive education. Others did it for themselves for the honor of serving God. Sources say that many Naples barber shops had a sign written *Qui si castrano ragazzi* (Boys are castrated here) at the entrance.

At the end of the 18th century, Enlightenment Europe was already showing signs of outrage at the practice. Jean-Jacques Rousseau stood up against “barbaric parents” who “deliver their children for the pleasure of voluptuous and cruel people”. In 1870, the practice of castration for this purpose was prohibited in Italy, the last country where it was still carried out. In 1902, Pope Leo XIII definitively forbade the use of *castrati* in church choirs: in 1931, the last *castrate* came out in the choir of the Sistine Chapel, Alessandro Moreschi.

## HISTORICAL (AND CRUEL) PRACTICE

The first records of intentional castration to produce eunuchs are from the Sumerian city of Lagash in the 21st century BC. Unilateral castration (monorchia, removal of a single testicle) was known in central Algeria among Egyptians, Ethiopians, South Africans, Micronesians and some Aborigines Australians.

Several civilizations used human castration as a weapon of war. In Asia, it was practiced since the Assyrian Empire, in antiquity, until the Korean Empire, in the modern age. Young princes of conquered kingdoms were taken as children as prisoners of war and converted into eunuchs to be used as concubines or servants in the palaces, being the only men with access to the royal family and the emperor's wives. Such practice was intended to discourage leadership and frustrate the feeling of independence among the dominated people.

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6. Because in Islam castration is considered a sin and strictly forbidden, whether someone practices it in himself or in another. In the image, a medical illustration by Sharaf ad-Din, which describes a castration operation (c. 1466).

7. The classic film *In the realm of the senses* (1976) is based on the true story of Sada Abe, a Japanese geisha and prostitute who murdered her lover, Kichizo Ishida, through erotic asphyxiation in 1936, and then cut off his penis and testicles to carry with her in her kimono (image: post-emasculatation scene).



In Muslim kingdoms, there were castration centers on the borders of non-Islamic territory<sup>6</sup> in the belief that this kept the land pure. Those who were emasculated (and survived the painful and often deadly procedure) were “privileged” with the role of guardians of the harem and were exempt from heavy work. Usually it was African slaves who underwent this procedure because of the size of their penises and this strengthened the western image of black eunuchs fanning empresses. The Arab trade usually negotiated the sale of castrated slaves, especially black boys aged 8 to 12 years. The Baghdad caliphate had more than 7,000 black eunuchs and 4,000 white eunuchs in the early 10th century.

The eunuchs who managed to age in the profession even became *kizlar agha*, a kind of third man of the empire – below only to the sultan and the caliph –, exercising great political power in the court. It was even believed that they were less corrupt because they had no descendants to leave inheritances.

The practice was also used as a criminal punishment. Among Assyrians, homosexuality was punished by castration. In Ancient Greece, conversion was imposed on anyone who relapsed into adultery or a crime of rape – probably due to the myth of Uranus and Gaia (read on the next page) – although the Greeks also castrated domestic servants to make them more docile and harmless.

In Japan, emasculation (*rasetsu*) could be a punishment to replace execution or a religious act performed by Buddhist priests to guarantee celibacy. Castration (*kyuukei*) was a form of punishment for abusers<sup>7</sup>.

## URANO'S EMASCULATION

Uranus was the Greek deity who personified the starry sky, the first deity to take control of the universe.

In Hesiod's *Theogony*, the god emerged from Gaia (the Earth) in an asexual way and immediately covered her with his starry mantle in all its extension, then becoming his consort (some readings, put him as a rapist). From this union between heaven and earth, the world began to take shape. Together they had several children, among them Cyclopes, Hecatonchters and Titans.

Uranus detested his children and feared he would be dethroned by them. Thus, as they were born, he imprisoned them in the bowels of the Earth (Tartarus) and delighted in this cruelty. This caused great pain in Gaia, who began to conspire against her husband/son. The goddess forged a sharp scythe and offered it to Cronos, her youngest son. The fearless titan hid and, at night, when Uranus covered Gaia, he cut off his father's sexual organs with a single scythe, throwing them into the sea.

Some legends say that Cronos had the help of his brothers Iapetus, Hyperion, Ceos and Crius. They each positioned themselves in one of the four corners of the earth and held a member of Uranus while Cronos emasculated him. Each brother took a member of his father to rule a corner of the earth: Iapetus went to the west, Hyperion to the east, Ceos to the south and Crius to the north.

It is interesting to say that Uranus was rarely considered anthropomorphic – apart from the genitalia of the emasculation myth. From a symbolic point of view, Uranus represents an excessive and undifferentiated creative proliferation.

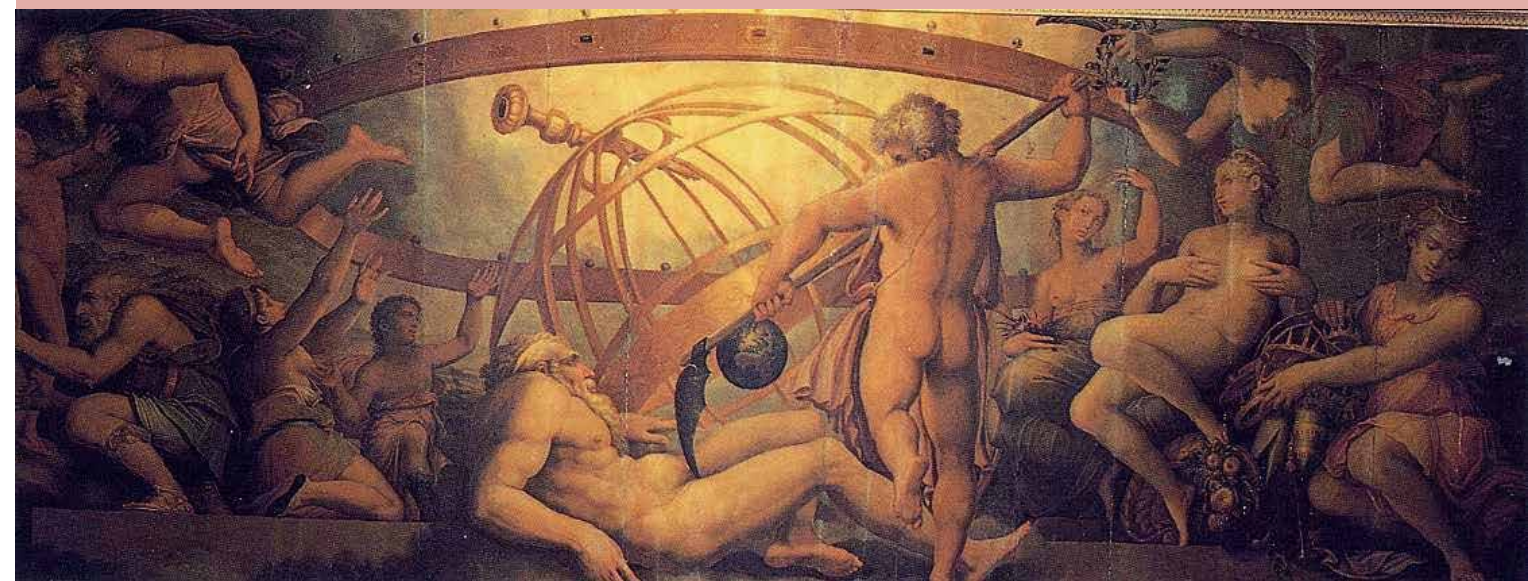


Medieval reinterpretation of Uranus' emasculation.

*From the stake, the son reached with his left hand, with the right hand he took the prodigious, long, scythe. And the father's penis reaped with haste and threw it haphazardly backwards.*

Hesiod

*The Mutilation of Uranus by Saturn, by Giorgio Vasari and Gherardi Christofano (16th century).*





8. The most important representation of Attis is the life-size statue discovered in Ostia near the mouth of the river Rome. The statue is of a reclining Attis, after emasculation. In her left hand is a shepherd's staff, in her right a pomegranate. His head is crowned with a pine wreath with fruit, bronze sunbeams, and on his Phrygian cap there is a crescent moon.

Mythology says that the Phrygian entity called Agdistis had male and female attributes. Fearful of their power, the Greek gods of Olympus emasculated her: Agdistis became Cybele and his cut penis became an almond tree. Nana, daughter of a Phrygian river god, became pregnant when an almond fell into her lap, but soon abandoned the baby to be cared for by a goat. The baby was adopted and called Attis. As he grew up, Attis drew attention to the divine beauty of his long hair and made Cybele fall in love. However, his parents had promised him to the daughter of the king of Pessinos. The moment the wedding song was being sung, Cybele appeared in his transcendent power, which made Attis go crazy and cut off his genitals. Repentant, Cybele transformed Attis into his consort and god of vegetation: his self-mutilation, death and resurrection, represents the fruits of the earth that die in winter to rise in spring.

9. Some modern scholars have considered *galli* to be an ancient Western interpretation of transgender.

### ALWAYS RELIGION...

Religious sects also imposed the practice as a way to achieve “spirituality”. Even Heaven’s Gate – a UFO sect that caused collective suicide in 1997 – performed “voluntary castrations” to maintain an ascetic lifestyle.

In the former region of Frigia – southwest Asia Minor, today Turkey – the cult of Cybele and her consort Attis<sup>8</sup> was performed by eunuch priests called *galli* who had considerable influence, with records of their political relations with various kings. Castration always took place on March 24, in a celebration called Blood Day (*Dies sanguinis*, for the Romans). During the preparation, the followers wore long, bleached hair, heavy makeup and dressed in feminine costumes, mostly yellow, and a kind of turban, in addition to pendants and earrings<sup>9</sup>. They begged for charity in the streets in exchange for divinations of the future. In the main celebration – Day of Mourning for Attis – they ran wildly, danced to the sound of flutes and tambourines and whipped until they bled.

The cult arrived in Rome in 204 BC, but Roman citizens could not become *galli*, as castration (*eviratio*) was prohibited. Subsequently, the sanction was withdrawn, but there were already *archigalli* without castration, chosen by a collegiate of priests (*Quindecimviri sacris faciundis*). With the rise of Christianity, ancient rites were considered pagan. During the Council of Nicéa it was forbidden for clergy to perform voluntary castration, but those who had been castrated by others against their will, due to illness, medical necessity, or born as eunuchs were accepted.

“And let no eunuch complain: ‘I am but a dry tree’. For thus says the Lord: ‘To eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases me and stick to my covenant, I will give them, within my temple and its walls, a memorial and a better name than children and daughters, an eternal name, which will not be eliminated.’” (Isaiah 56: 3-5)

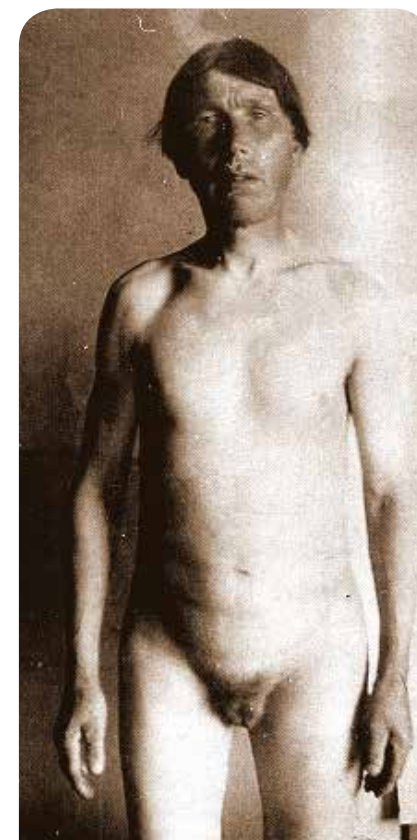
In Acts (8: 26-39), the story of Philip the Evangelist is told, who reportedly baptized an Ethiopian eunuch and, consequently, inaugurated the Orthodox Church in Ethiopia. However, the interpretations of the Bible were crazy<sup>10</sup>. For example, in the 3rd century, the Jordanian religious organization called *Valesii* preached castration to its followers as a way of reaching the Holy Spirit.

Between the 18th and 20th centuries, Russia was shaken by the Christian sect *Skoptsy* (“castrated” in Russian). They believed that the human genitals were a mark of original sin and that, after the expulsion from the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve had the halves of the forbidden fruit grafted into their bodies, forming testicles and breasts. Thus, the removal of these sexual organs would restore followers to the primitive state before original sin. They performed what they called the “minor seal” (castration) and the “major seal” (emasculatation) in a “baptism of fire” – the use of red-hot iron to perform the procedures – where, in the end, it was shouted “Christ is risen!” Later, they started using knives and razors with the hot iron used for cauterization and twisting the scrotum to destroy the seminal vesicles and interrupt the flow of semen.



The baptism of the eunuch, oil on oak panel by Rembrandt (1626).

10. In the 2nd century, Tertullian went so far as to wrongly translate biblical texts by placing Jesus and Paul as castrated rather than virgins, which spawned some other radical orthodox sects. And we don't even talk about the “Catholic castration” that occurred in works of art from the 16th century. Read about it in the **2019 Faló History**.



Skoptsy man.



Illustration of Origen of Alexandria emasculating (15th century).

The skoptsy followed Matthew's words:

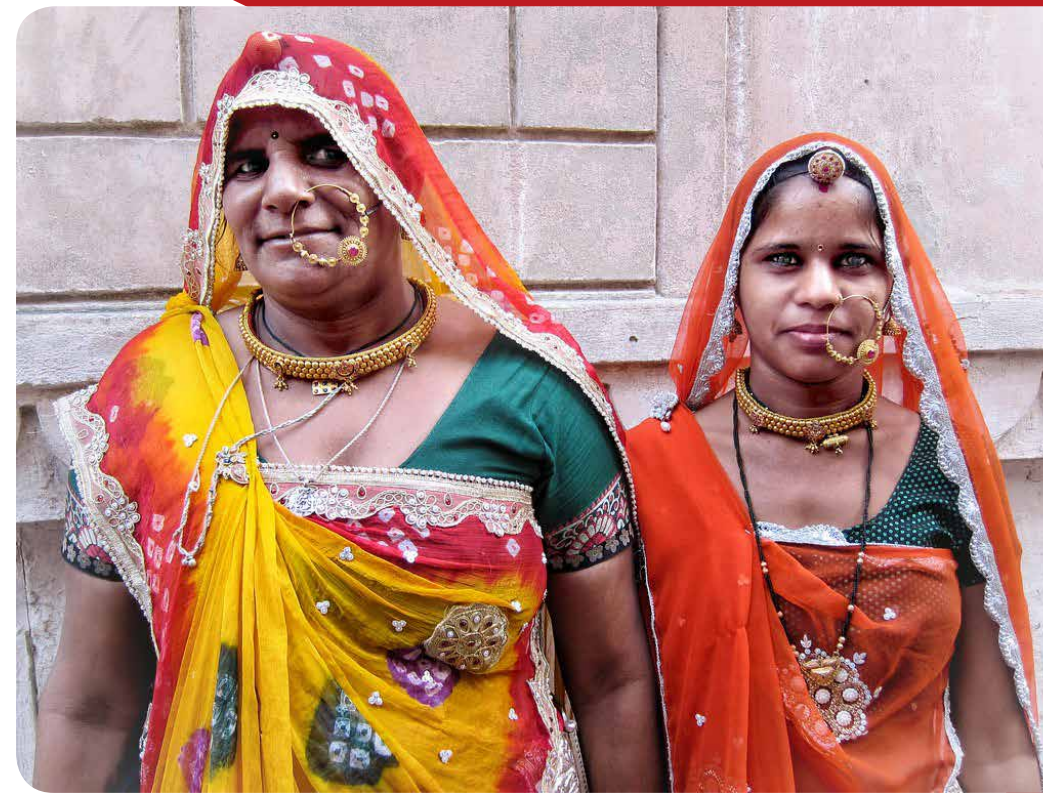
*Woe to the world, because of the things that make you fall into sin! It is inevitable that such things will happen, but woe to the one through whom they happen! If your hand or foot causes you to stumble, cut them off and throw them away. It is better to enter life maimed or crippled than, having both hands or both feet, to be thrown into eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to trip, pull it out and throw it away. It is better to enter life with one eye than, having both eyes, to be thrown into the fires of hell. (Matthew 18: 7-9)*

*Some are eunuchs because they were born that way; others were made that way by men; still others became eunuchs because of the kingdom of heaven. Whoever can accept that, accept it. (Matthew 19:12)<sup>11</sup>*

However, the Old Testament also says that "whoever has crushed testicles or amputated the virile member will not be able to enter the assembly of the Lord" (Deuteronomy 23:1). With the advancement of individual freedom and greater access to education, these groups radicals lost space and were mostly extinct.

<sup>11</sup> This verse was also used in the 3rd century to defame Origen of Alexandria. The leading theologian and scholar of early Christianity was accused of "having castrated himself to become more devoted to God, however, this would have made him approach Satan".

Hijras.



In India, the Hindu community called *hijra* imposes emasculation (nirwaan) as a way to please the goddess Bahuchara Mata. According to Hindu tradition, *hijras* have a great facility to "bless or curse", which makes this community feared and respected. In 2014, the country's supreme court of law defined *hijras* as belonging to a "third gender", making the Hindu situation unique in the history of anthropology.

Castration rituals are practiced by trained and specialized priestesses, using a ceremonial dagger with due care to keep men alive. After being castrated, eunuchs are forced to dress and behave as women and are marked to faithfully serve the one who castrated them, since they must remain virgins for life.

There are two other ways to become a *hijra*: boys who have been sexually abused are often led by their own families to cult leaders; and unfaithful partners who are castrated by some women trained in the arts of seduction. This led the UN and several NGOs to question the sect, including accusations of coercion, kidnapping, sexual exploitation and threats against socially vulnerable individuals, such as walkers and drug users.

## AMONG THE POWERFUL

There are records of eunuchs in the courts of several ancient civilizations. Among the Hittites, it is known that eunuchs even became regents in cases of minor heirs. Political eunuchism was an institution established among the Persians: Bagoas was the eunuch vizier (prime minister) of the Achaemenid Empire, the first Persian empire. As a consequence, the Byzantine Empire had a large number of eunuchs employed in domestic and administrative functions, organized as a separate hierarchy with a parallel career of its own. The arch-eunuchs – in charge of a group of eunuchs – were among the main officers in Constantinople.

Known for setting fire to Rome, the famous and cruel Nero has a history of passion for a *puer delicatus* (young slave of the most important Roman citizens) called Spore. The emperor found the young man very much like one of his ex-wives, Poppaea Sabina, whom he had beaten to death while pregnant. In a possible remorse, Nero released Spore and started to call him by the name of his ex-wife.

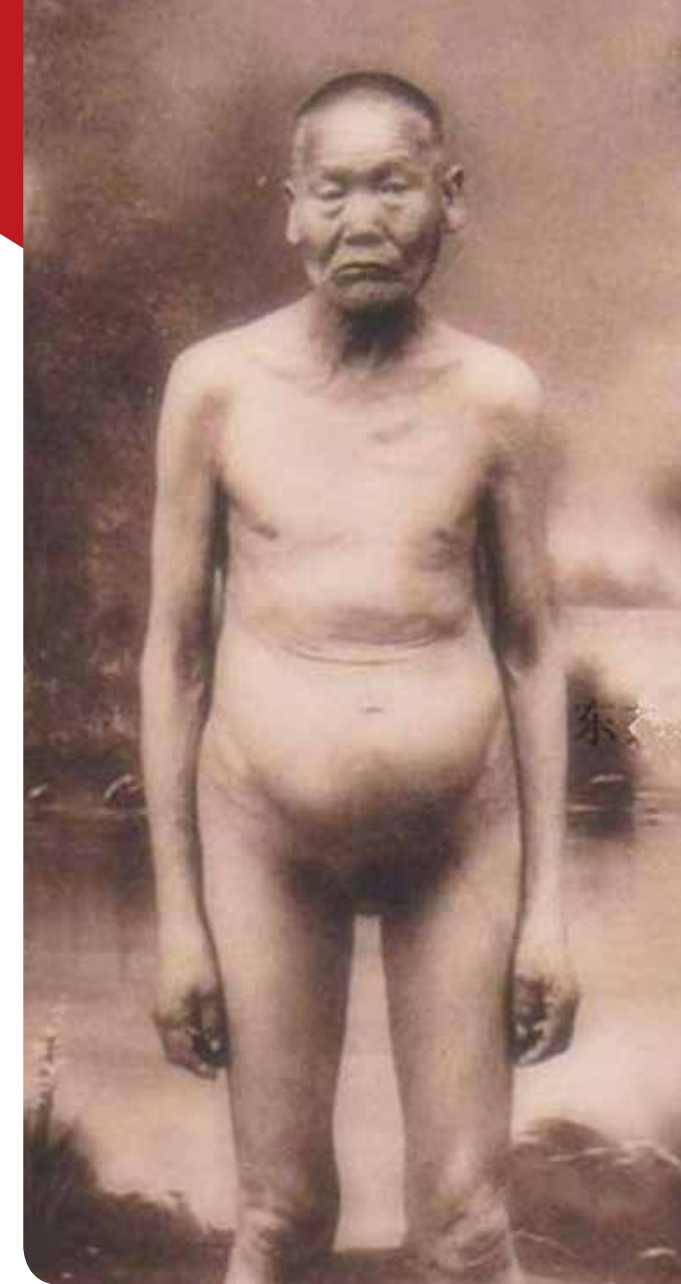
The young man was castrated and had to marry Nero in a traditional ceremony, being treated like a real empress, full of luxurious items and servants to serve him. There are no records to prove whether Spore really liked the situation, mainly because he needed to accept the imperial husband's violent desires as well as the large number of lovers.<sup>12</sup>

**12.** A report says that Spore placed a ring on the corpse of Nero with an ornament representing the goddess Proserpina, the goddess who had been kidnapped by Pluto and forced to live as his wife. After the emperor's death, the young man was at the mercy of several men who wanted to feel the pleasures that Nero had in life and sought high public positions. To avoid constant humiliation, Spore took his own life at the age of 20.

In China, eunuchs appeared around 1050 B.C. during the Chou dynasty, when castration was included in Chinese legal codes as a form of punishment. The condemned were forced to work for free<sup>13</sup> by opening roads, building bridges and serving the nobles. An old saying said that there was only one thing worse than being born a woman: becoming a eunuch. Pu Yi (1906-1967), the last emperor, recorded in his diary that beating eunuchs was part of the routine and that, to ward off boredom, he shot them with his shotgun.

**13.** It is said that the famous Chinese terracotta army was made by eunuch slaves.

**14.** There was also castration by compression done in very young children. The testicles were tied and squeezed three times a day. Over time, genital development would be impaired and would even affect hormone production, causing the child to acquire female physical characteristics.



Chinese eunuch of the Ming period.



The two important eunuch characters from the *Game of Thrones* series (2011-2019): **Varys** (Conleth Hill), was an adviser to kings and had a network of informants; and **Grey Worm** (Jacob Anderson), commander of a lethal army formed only by eunuchs. Note: the actors are not really eunuchs.

But let's make it clear: castration was not always seen as a punishment, because in China it could be a way of life. Voluntary castration<sup>14</sup> was a way of escaping misery and children of peasants made sacrifice in the name of the family. In a recruitment campaign in 1540 for 3 thousand vacancies, 20 thousand candidates emerged! In 1580, 70,000 eunuchs were admitted! At the time, the royal harem had 9,000 women and 100,000 castrates worked there!



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The genitals were placed in a brine bowl and returned to the owner, who needed to present them to the superiors in the palace, proving castration. The bowl could be ordered during an inspection, or whenever the employee was promoted. This requirement created a parallel market for removed genitals. In the event of loss or theft – it was not uncommon for a eunuch to steal and destroy his rival’s “precious” to prevent his career from advancing – he had to be replaced, borrowing from another eunuch or resorting to unscrupulous surgeons who collected extirpated genitals to rent or sell them at prices that could reach 1.5 kg of silver.

There are records of several eunuchs who, over time, began to control bureaucracy, making fortunes and gaining prestige and power; many

**15.** Sun Yaoting was castrated at the age of eight by his own father to serve as a eunuch in the court of the Qing dynasty.

through conspiracies. During the Ming dynasty, castration was often used as a weapon of war. In 1949, when the communists took power, the castrated became a symbol of decay and were isolated in nursing homes. The last Chinese eunuch, Sun Yaoting<sup>15</sup>, died in 1996, just before he was 94 years old, in a temple in Beijing, where he lived. Because of all this history, China has a museum dedicated to eunuchs.

Korea’s eunuchs, called *Naesi*, were royal officials and had a hierarchical department. It is said that castration consisted of passing feces on a boy’s genitals so that a dog could pull them out. Later, with eunuchs becoming a desirable merchandise for tributes, dog bites were replaced by more sophisticated surgical techniques.

## IN THE HEAD FROM ABOVE

Castration has been documented in history as a therapeutic procedure to effectively reduce the symptoms of schizophrenia, psychosis, violent behaviors, paraphilias, mania, hyperactive libido, and even baldness and apnea, in addition to reducing the incidence of several sexually transmitted diseases through eliminating or reducing sexual activity. However, it is known today that some men desired castration due to gender dysphoria, bodily dysmorphia<sup>16</sup> or apotemnophilia (sexual arousal by self-mutilation).

In 1913, self-mutilation was considered a psychotic substitute for masturbation. Only in 1938, this self-destructiveness was understood as an “attenuated death wish”, a partial suicidal behavior. After Freud, self-mutilation became a psycho-sexual drive.

Scopic Syndrome<sup>17</sup>, for example, is a psychic condition that involves genital self-mutilation. Found in the fourth volume of the Diagnostic and Statistics Manual for Mental Disorders (DSM, from the American Psychological Association), it can be motivated by an intense sexual guilt, in which the genitals are identified as responsible, which leads to the desire to remove or their injury.

**16.** Read more about Corporal Dysmorphia in 2019 Fallo Art.

**17.** The term is a reference to the Skoptzy sect.

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## PENIAL TRANSPLANTATION and PHALLOPLASTY

The first penile transplant was performed in 2006 at a Chinese military hospital. The 44-year-old patient suffered the loss of most of his penis in an accident. The transplanted penis came from a 22-year-old man with brain death. Despite the surgical success, the patient and his wife suffered psychological trauma as a result of the procedure and the surgery was reversed 15 days later.

The first successful penis transplant was performed on a 21-year-old man in 2014 at the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa. The patient had lost his penis at age 18 in a poorly performed circumcision procedure as a rite of passage into adulthood (often unhygienic, performed by non-certified amateurs). In 2015, it was reported that the patient successfully conceived a child. The South African university is the only medical center in the world to have successfully completed two penile transplants (the other occurred in 2017).





Image of a reconstructed penis using a thigh flap. (Kamol Hospital)

However, a penile reimplantation hit everyone's newspapers well before that, in 1993, when Lorena Bobbitt, after years of allegedly being raped and beaten, cut her husband John Wayne's penis with a knife while he slept. She ran away with the cut limb and, after driving for a while, threw it out the window in a field by the road. When she finally stopped, she called 911, told about the incident and gave the location of the penis. After an exhaustive search, the penis was found, properly cleaned and reimplanted. To close the story: after being acquitted of the rape charge, John Bobbitt starred in two porn movies.

If replacement of the removed penis is not possible (in less than 24 hours, as in Bobbitt), doctors can reconstruct it from grafted muscle and skin from another part of the body, such as the forearm. The first total reconstruction

of a penis was recorded in 1936 by the Russian surgeon Nikolaj Bogoraz, using rib cartilage in a phallus reconstructed from an abdominal tube flap. A penile implant is always necessary for erection and ejaculation to be possible. The results are still not very satisfactory, but may be necessary in some situations.

The recent case of Andrew Wardle – a 44-year-old British man who was born with bladder exstrophy of the bladder, a malformation that affects the urethra and bladder, which is exposed outside the abdomen – caught the world's attention with the headline "Man with bionic penis finally you will lose your virginity". After undergoing numerous surgical procedures, in 2018, Andrew received his "bionic penis", created from the skin, muscles and nerves of his left arm and the vein of his right leg. His first sexual experience was far from easy: after his medical release, he still had to wait six weeks and remain erect for ten days (Andrew uses a button on his groin to inflate his artificial penis).

In July 2020, Andrew's doctors started preparing yet another penis transplant. Briton Malcolm MacDonald lost his penis in a perineum infection that was necrotic and today he already has his penis in his arm (to avoid rejection), waiting for the moment of the transplant.

However, it looks like we will have news in the future: in 2009, American bioengineers transplanted genetically modified penises into 12 rabbits. They all mated and four produced children. It was the starting point for the production of human penis modified by bioengineering. **8=D**

## AFALIA or PENIAL AGENESIA

It is a congenital malformation in which the penis is absent and the urethra opens in the perineum. It is a rare condition (1 in 20 million) related to a failure in the formation of the fetal genital tubercle between 3 and 6 weeks after conception, with no connection with a deficient amount or hormonal action.

Men with aphalia but normal testicles have a normal male appearance. Men with aphalia and testicular agenesis tend not to produce sex hormones and, as a result, tend to have a prepubertal appearance, with a child's skin texture and little body hair. Muscle development is also delayed and testicular agenesis are very fragile, with short limbs and small hands and feet. However, certain male characteristics are the result of other male gender marker hormones and allow the development of secondary male sexual characteristics, such as deepening of the voice and facial hair.

Today aphalia is classified as an intersexual condition attributed to the male gender, known by the slang *nullo\** (of *nullification*, annulment). However, even in babies born with testicles, aphalia was already a historical justification for the child's coercive sexual designation as a woman, which caused profound gender identity problems\*.

\* Canadian David Reimer has become a major media case. A poorly performed circumcision and a misguided psychological direction by the famous sexologist John Money led the family to decide David's sex for the female and, in addition to emasculation, a vagina was built. The sexologist ended up using Brenda (David) in his experiences in an abusive way and, only at the age of 15, her parents told about her birth. From that moment on, he assumed his masculinity, initiated hormonal reversal and performed a phalloplasty. He later married and adopted children. However, in choosing to make his story public, it generated a myriad of consequences that led him to suicide.

The best-known *nullo* was Will Golden, who constantly posted nude photos to raise debates about sexuality and the body. But the term *nullo* (or *smoothie*) also refers to a subculture of extreme body modification composed mainly of men who have had their genitals (and sometimes also their nipples) surgically removed. There are women who also voluntarily suture the vagina and the clitoris is removed. The most famous case is that of Mao Sugiyama, a Japanese artist and asexual activist who in 2012 had his genitals surgically removed, cooked and served to six paying guests (one gave up) at a public banquet viewed by more than 70 people.

*"Please retweet. I am offering my genitals (penis, testicles, scrotum) at a dinner for 100 thousand yen. I will prepare the meal the way the buyer chooses and at the place of his choice"* – 2012 post by Mao Sugiyama.



Photos of the prepared meal showed a sliced penis, a scrotal skin with three millimeters of pubic hair and a sliced testicle, accompanied by parsley and mushrooms.



# Anonymous

**Y**ou would never imagine that a simple and disturbing banner about testicular self-examination at the bottom of the screen on Hotmail Messenger could save you from what would be your life's nightmare

and, in the following month, also discover a mass in your private parts. I remember the doctor telling me that I had nothing to be concerned about, but he gave me an order for an ecotomography "just in case". If it had not been for the echoradiologist, I probably wouldn't be here telling these facts. It was he who warned me to the seriousness of the situation.

Two weeks later, I went back to the same medical center for a second opinion. It was December 12th, 2001, the day when everything started. I was just nineteen years old and as anyone who is about to start college, I had a lot of dreams. However, when you are told you have a tumor on one of your testicles, things drastically change for good. What things? Everything! Your mind, your soul, your faith and your body with all the scars are the proof of your battles and experiences.

I remember just a couple of things from that situation; for instance, the words that came out from the doctor's mouth as he was examining me: "There's a tumor on your right testicle and you need to have it extirpated tomorrow." he claimed "What? Can't we do it in a couple of weeks? After Christmas?" I suggested. "No way! You are going to make your admission at the hospital as soon as you get out from this office and an urologist will stop by your room to explain the procedure" he added. Have you ever been in an unexpected stressful situation to the point of making you gag? As the doctor was auscultating me, I gagged on him everytime he would ask me to

breath out. "Chill out. Don't make a big deal out of this situation" he suggested as he continued checking up on me. But I was panicking! I hardly knew there was a lump and to know whether this one was cancerous or not I had the first of multiple surgeries scheduled for the next day! The only thing the doctor knew was that we had to act immediately either to save the testicle or remove it in case of a bad scenario. To be honest, at that time, losing a testicle was not a concern, as I knew I could live with just one. To be honest, at that point losing one of my testicles wasn't a big concern since I knew I could live with only one of them.



The day after the surgery, the urologist came to my room to talk to me and told me he had had to go plan B – the partial orchiectomy – because there was no way to save it. But the story was not over yet: three weeks later, the biopsy confirmed that the tumor was cancerous and I had to go back to the operating room, since the doctor wanted to confirm that the cancer had not spread. Unfortunately, chemotherapy was the way to go.

When you are diagnosed with something so terrible, nothing else seems to matter. You have neither the time nor the energy to focus on other aspects of life. I was hoping everything would work in my favor, yet on the other hand, I was petrified by the idea of not being able to overcome all of this. I was so mad at the world! Thankfully, God not only put the right people by my side, but also gave me the strength to go through the treatment and its side effects in order to defeat cancer for the first time in my life.

Yes, first time... because, nine years later, I was diagnosed with testicular cancer for the second time.

At that moment, nothing seemed to make sense, as if destiny was playing a bad joke on me or maybe the first time had not been enough. According to my doctors, it was a different cancer than the previous one, so the treatment consisted of radiotherapy sessions and no chemotherapy at all, which definitely made things more bearable.

However, the main issue for my urologist was not only the cancer, but the removal of the only testicle I had because the tumor was located inside of it. Even though I had lived perfectly



fine with just one testis for almost a decade, he carefully explained what the new setting would be like stating that patients with my diagnosis were provided implants in order to diminish any sort of emotional or psychological wreckage due to the new physical condition. He pointed out that despite of this "new condition", my

sex life would not be affected as long as I had my testosterone level controlled regularly. He also urged me to consider cryo-conservation to have children in the future.

To be honest, I was so weary of dealing with cancer that I just wanted to get rid of it, but from a medical scope it's not that simple: no matter what your health condition is, removing the reproductive organ without consistent medical reasons is considered mutilation. As I never wanted to have kids, not being able to become a father was something not relevant for me ("fun fact": I ended up trying, but my sperm sample had low mobility and it was not worth preserving it).

Soon I will complete a decade in this new "condition" and I can say that I have never felt more like a man than now. It sounds cliché I know, but it's the truth. My testicles do not define my sexuality, yet I cannot deny the implants have helped me rebuild my confidence.

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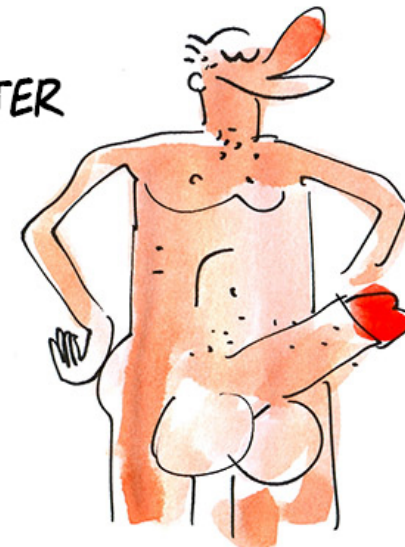
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Sam, ECCE HOMO II series, digital collage in Hahnemühle photo Rag by Ramón Tormes, 2020.



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ISSN 2675-018X  
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