

Acculturation

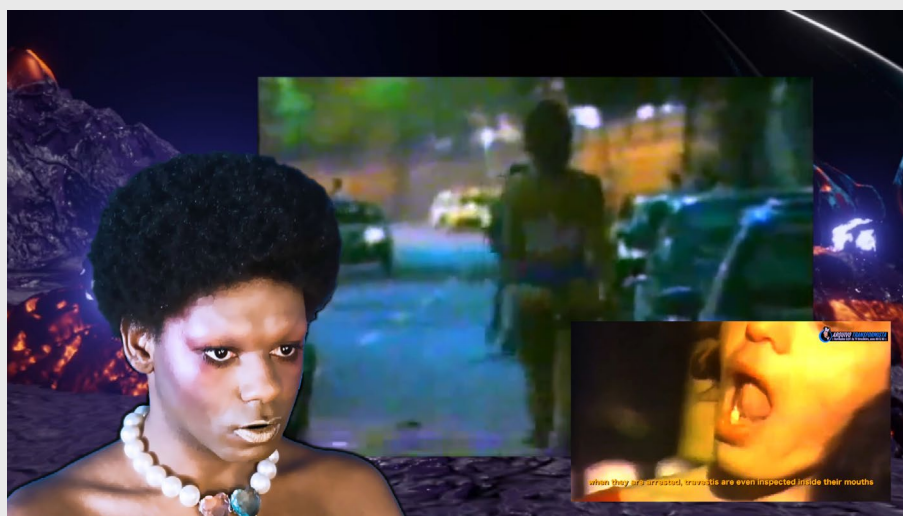


Um filme de Ode
com Ikaro Cavalcante (Occulted)
e Joaquim Ramalho

Comissionado por Cairo Clarke,
curadora fellowship de 2020-21 da
LUX Moving Image (Londres, UK)

LUX Exhibition

Notes on Travecceleration



Still from *Notes on Travecceleration* (2021), Ode with Ikaro Cavalcante (Occulted) and Joaquim Ramalho. Courtesy of the artist.

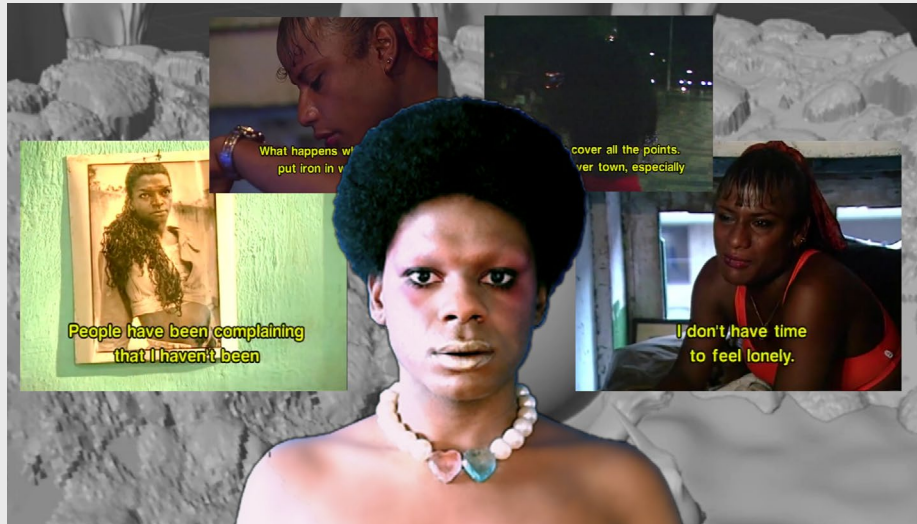
Online Exhibition: bit.ly/3eF76Ym

Notes on Travecceleration is an ongoing research project initiated by writer and curator Ode. As testament to the generative nature of this embodied research project, Ode expands *Notes on Travecceleration* into a series of invitations to fellow transvesti artists who share work in the context of this digital exhibition. In dialogue with one another, the shape, language and rhythm of the exhibition is constantly in flux. *Notes on Travecceleration* creates a space in which the curator and artists' articulations of agency reverberate as refusals of translation or consumption into heteropatriarchal capitalism through embodiment, text, performance, music and moving image.

Notes on Travecceleration was curated by Ode upon invitation from LUX Curatorial Fellow Cairo Clarke. Works by Aun Helden, Bruna Kury, Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro, Jota Mombaça, Maria Clara Araújo, Ode with Ikaro Cavalcante (Occulted) and Joaquim Ramalho, Sumé Aguiar and Urias. Text accompanying the works written by Ode.

Works translated and subtitled from Portuguese to English courtesy of Vita Evangelista. Exhibition poster by Ana Gama.

Notes on Travecceleration (2021) by Ode with Ikaro Cavalcante (Occulted) and Joaquim Ramalho



Still from *Notes on Travecceleration (2021)*,
Ode with Ikaro Cavalcante (Occulted) and Joaquim Ramalho.
Courtesy of the artist.

Note on Travecceleration (2021) sees **Ode's** 2020 essay *Note on Travecceleration* in the form of moving image and oral essay. Ode considers blackness side by side with travestilidade, 'since both my black identity and my travesti identity makes me and other people like me be considered subhuman: however, we also reinvent ourselves as inhuman and antihuman in efforts to advance with, through and beyond the modes of repression and alienation present in capitalism.'

Download full transcript [here](#).

Escritas ao entorno da carne (2019) by Sumé Aguiar



Still from *Escritas ao entorno da carne* (2019),
Sumé Aguiar, 19'53" Courtesy of the artist.

Sumé Aguiar (Rio de Janeiro, 1997) develops a work that draws from her research of what she calls her dissonant 'corpa' – a neologism created by the feminine inflection of the noun 'corpo', meaning 'body'. Her film ***Escritas ao entorno da carne*** [Written around the flesh] (2019) showcases the embodiment of different poses that take place both in the middle of the city and into the woods, raising questions with regards to the creation of memories and the unfolding of subjectivity. This way, Sumé desires to search for other means of cognitive stimulation.

Analogously, Jota Mombaça, in the article *The Cognitive Plantation* (2020, Afterall Journal), asks us: "What if, from the crossroads at which we find ourselves, our best chance of escaping the determinations of the cognitive plantation occurred at the moment when the tape of the Colonial Infinite breaks?".

I want to recall the intentions of Aguiar making this film and put them in dialogue with Jota's question in order to disturb and enhance the cracks that are intrinsic to the game of difference. The geometry present in the blind spot of the value equation, which subhumanises the travesti body inhabited by Sumé, is precisely what makes her and people like us reinvent ourselves as inhuman and anti-human, in efforts to advance with, through and beyond capitalism.

***Racha* (2020)** by Urias



Still from *Racha* (2020),
Urias, 2'41" Courtesy of the artist.

Urias (Uberlândia, 1994) moves issues of gender, politics, history and semiotic studies into the music industry in Brazil. In ***Racha*** (2020), she reveals the ways by which points-of-view and discourses on colonial images might relate to travesti bodies. Showing how the cognitive and discursive instruments and traditions that are present in our everyday lives affect our current relationships and actions, she questions whether such signs could be overcome by the gesture of consciously embracing them in the service of liberation.

The word 'racha', meaning 'crack', is a pajubá* slang for 'cisgender woman'. The symbolism of spiders, in Brazil, alludes to the vagina; however, a species of spider also gave its name to a mass genocide of travestis in the 1980s, the hidden Operação Tarântula.

Something that Urias addresses by using glitch at some points in this music video is the fact that all too often glitch is considered an error, a faulty overlay, a bug in the system; in contrast, the artist compels us to find liberation here.

*Pajubá is a popular language dialect made up of the insertion of numerous words and expressions from West African languages into the Portuguese language. The dialect is widely used by the so-called saint people, practitioners of Afro-Brazilian religions such as candomblé, and also by the LGBTQIA+ community.

Morar na Indefinição (2018)

by Jota Mombaça



Still from *Morar na Indefinição (2018)*,
Jota Mombaça, 2'25". Courtesy of the artist.

Jota Mombaça (Natal, 1991) works with writing and performance practices that address issues of violence, resilience and necropolitics. This piece results from a speech in which the artist investigates what it could mean to live in indefinition — a concept that arose from her being questioned whether the crossings from which her work derives should always require a fixed stand point. “Not necessarily”, she answers, then goes on to propose that in a non-binary perspective, gender transition can be interpreted as an ontology of the diaspora: “a bodily place in movement”.

Reaffirming our presences, in the hybrid places where identities mix, proliferate and come into unimaginable kinds of ‘devir’, the travesti identity becomes a historical inevitability of a transgression that the white and cisgender humanism revokes. So, we face the challenge of translating our existences. In some non-Western cultures, travesti not about gender, but about another social organization that perhaps does not even cut through the realms of Identity.

Xica Manicongo, for example, mostly known for being the first travesti who was killed for her gender identity in Brazil in the 16th century, must be named and recognized for her own ancestral and temporal language and etymology. After all, the process of decolonizing the history of gender requires an undersanding of the fact that neither Xica Manicongo nor the contemporary travesti identity corresponds to this history. Instead, they were and still are seeds of what is supposed to flower in both the present and future times.

This video was made by the research and extension group of CAHL - UFRB África nas Artes, within the Ecos do Atlântico Sul conference, organised by the Goethe Institute. Interview and video editing made by Fabio Rodrigues Filho. Images made by Silvia Leme and coordinated by Emi Koide.

“Travesti” não se traduz! (2017)

by Maria Clara Araújo

[Audio in Portuguese] Listen here: bit.ly/3eF76Ym

Transcript (ENG):

“Linn [da Quebrada], my love, let me tell you, let me quickly explain to you what I was thinking about when I sent you this message.

Friend, travesti is a Latin American identity and to say this means that the particularities and specificities of being a Brazilian travesti turn this identity into something unique worldwide. So, even if for example, “transvestite” is a commonly used translation of the term, and it is used in other countries, being a transvestite, I don’t know, in France, is not and will never be the same thing as being a Brazilian travesti, you know? And so it doesn’t make much sense to translate the term “travesti” when we are writing a text or making any kind of work out there because it makes sense that we add a historicity to the text, you know? A geopolitical position. Then, when we translate it, we might lose this context.

The travesti is a Brazilian identity, so, for example, this is something that I decide to embrace in my work, but I’m not saying that you should do this, you know? But one thing to think about is that not translating the term is precisely to position ourselves as belonging to a South American identity, to a Latin American identity, and to a Brazilian identity. With this, I think that no translation is going to be precise in this case, because the term is not the same... Like, the language is not the same language, you know? When you’re translating, it won’t just be the language that’s being translated.

The term travesti is not just a term, it carries a symbology, a representation, a social role, a specific social place in Brazil. So, if we translate it, I’m afraid that all the historicity of the travesti movement in Brazil, including that of having reclaimed a term that was used in a pejorative way for years and re-signified it, translating the term would make us lose a bit of the notion of our position in the world: as part of a dissident, South American identity, in a process of translation that is aimed at someone that is, for example, in a western geography and who needs this term to be translated in order to grasp it, you know?

Like, for me it is much more worthwhile that we present ourselves to the world without translation. Because why do we often need to translate ourselves, you know? For the white man to understand us. So, for the white man to materialise that in his head because he's going to look for a close representation, a close sign, you know? We have our own particularities and maybe this process of translation will make us lose them. We would, then, be seen from a general viewpoint, which tends to be a view that reaps, excludes, silences, hides specific things that we only live precisely for being Brazilian travestis."

OMEM (2020) by Aun Helden



Still from *OMEM* (2020), Aun Helden, 1'49".
Courtesy of the artist.

When I think about the performative compositions of **Aun Helden** (São Bernardo do Campo, 1997), I immediately recognise that she tends to enunciate herself through the exploration of poetry and reflections that are motivated by her relationship to motherhood, which arise from her repulsion of the male figure. By transiting through images that are often interpreted by others as monstrous, her artistic production is a perfect example of something that I point out when defining *travecceleration*, something that is urgently at stake: this phenomenon may be understood as transhuman.

Without centralising practices of dehumanisation, but transmutation, **OMEM** (2020) is a study of the semiotics present in hormonal processes. Rendered as a core producer of identity, hormonal processes are built from prosthetic signs, engendering the fossilization of liquidities such as testosterone and estrogen. By disturbing the rigid binary destiny of the body cartography that is installed by the hormone, Aun makes room for the failure of this structure and distanciates her travesti identity from other subjective relations; in this work she focuses on desire and death.

The work marks Aun's return to the visual arts, after a hiatus that made her come across as travesti. Ironically, this process also makes perceptible a contrary itinerary towards what might be cognitively interpreted as humanity: this place that she has always denied. A place that, today, because of her inhabiting of a mutant body, is denied to her in return.

e se começarmos a ver a colonização como uma infecção (2020) by Bruna Kury



Still from *e se começarmos a ver a colonização como uma infecção* (2020), Bruna Kury, 10'. Courtesy of the artist.

Bruna Kury (Rio de Janeiro, 1987) is an anarcha-transfeminist performer, visual and sound artist. In her work she focuses on overlapping questions regarding gender, class and race (against the current heteronormative patriarchal cistem, structural class oppression and warfare). She is currently investigating post-porn sonorities and the creation of objects, which function as ramifications of her performances. Taking the form of elucubrations, Bruna Kury expresses in her works the desire to invent new territories.

According to the artist herself, "Whiteness' convenience over structural oppression is one of the oddest things in society. 'Human' is itself a category anchored in racism, cis-heterosexuality and transphobia". Although black people can no longer be literally bought and sold, the logic of racial capitalism still remains and is reinvented throughout the centuries by means of white supremacist ideologies that are incorporated in the colonial world-system. The epistemology of cis-heteronormative capitalism also operates through supremacist ideologies that are incorporated in this diagram.

Drawing on practices of post-porn, Kury creates an itinerary contrary to the passivity associated with the feminine. Her work puts in check the desire to disobey the systematic control of bodies that challenge the current genocidal scenario which is installed by the Brazilian State, its police force and public healthcare system. This work leads us to think in directions that purposefully deviate from the policing projects that shape the world we inhabit today as bodies that are denied the right to transition. It leads us towards imagining fictions beyond what the pharmaceutical industry and Brazilian politics have instituted as a given formula.

***Uma noite sem lua* (2020)** by Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro



Still from *Uma noite sem lua* (2020),
Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro, 27'30" Courtesy of the artist.

Due to the 'criminalisation' implied by the term, the word 'travesti' becomes a limit, an invitation and an announcement of her blackness and gender. As **Vitorino Brasileiro** proposes by producing routes to freedom through transmutation, her body-flower becomes a form of survival in the face of colonial extermination. She summons us with ***Uma noite sem lua***, aiming to be more than an effect of the pain in which we were imprisoned, more than the brutality used against us, and older than the deaths caused by murder.

The artist's enquiries induce us to think of 'travestilidade' as an ontology of transmutation and routes to freedom. "What if I were to abandon all of you? Perhaps one choice is to live the completeness of the hybrid and no longer the binarism of polarisation. What if I abandoned all of this? What if I abandoned linearity and took on the crossroads?", says Vitorino Brasileiro in the first minute of *Uma noite sem lua*.

Finally, in refusing the literal translation of a term dictated by cis-heteropatriarchal capitalism, Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro activates mystery. Along the lines of the work of Aun Helden, Bruna Kury, Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro, Jota Mombaça, Maria Clara Araújo, Sumé Aguiar and Urias, and through the ruptures in the hybrid spaces of travestilidade, we not only live and vibrate, but we profess that we will live and vibrate despite racialisation, generification, capitalism, racism, machism and, above all, the necropolitics of Brazil.

Ode is Brazilian and is based in São Paulo. She/they are 22 years old, work as a stylist, writer and independent curator and were the founder of the extinct digital platform focusing on Afro-diasporic and African artistic productions Projeto Dúdús. In the fashion and art industry, over the past three years, she/they have collaborated with companies such as Dazed, The Perfect Magazine, Nataal, BRICKS Magazine, UNDER PRESSURE MAGAZINE, Cultural Bulletin, Bog, Bubblegum Club Magazine, MASP - Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand, Pivô Arte e Pesquisa, Google, Red Bull, artists like Tabita Rezaire, Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro, Samuel de Saboia, Urias, Rodrigo Sombra, Jacob Ace, Nixon Freire, Vitor Duarte, among others.

Aun Helden is a Brazilian transdisciplinary artist who works with multiple media such as performance, prosthetic incorporation, video, sound and image. She develops the creation process of a new body's imagery, creating fictions and languages that escape from the human and binary expectations, all aligned with her identity semiotic and epistemological research.

Bruna Kury is an anarctransfeminist, performer, visual and sound artist. In her works she focuses on overlapping questions regarding gender, class and race (against the current heteronormative patriarchal system and structural class oppression and WARFARE). She is currently investigating postorno sonorities and the creation of objects, functioning as ramifications of her performances. She has participated in Capacete Artistic Residency in Rio de Janeiro, Comunitária in Argentina, Abnormal Festival in Mexico, engaged in the organization of the póspornôpyrata Artist Residency in Fortaleza (CE, Brazil) and performed in the Festival Libres y Soberanas aka Performacula in Quito, Ecuador. Recently she was in the residence of Pivô Pesquisa Ciclo II (2020).

Castiel Vitorino Brasileiro is a visual artist, macumbeira and psychologist (CRP 06/162518), graduated from Federal University of Espírito Santo. Currently a master's student in the Clinical Psychology program at PUC-SP under the guidance of Profa. Dr. Suely Rolnik. She lives the macumbaria like a way body necessary for the escape and refresh/rest to happen. She dribbles, incorporates and dives in Bantu diáspora, and assumes life as a perishable place of freedom.

Jota Mombaça is a non-binary bicha, born and raised in the northeast of Brazil, who writes, performs and investigates on the relations between monstrosity and humanity, kuir studies, de-colonial turns, political intersectionality, anti-colonial justice, redistribution of violence, visionary fictions, the end of the world and tensions among ethics, aesthetics, art and politics in the knowledge productions of the global south-of-the-south.

Maria Clara Araújo is a transactivist and parliamentary advisor to Erica Malunguinho MP for PSOL/SP, graduated in pedagogy at the Pontifical Catholic University of Sao Paulo and researcher in curriculum theory with emphasis on anti-racist and decolonial pedagogies.

Sumé Aguiar is a brazilian artist, filmmaker and transmutant. She develops her experimentations in performance, audiovisual and object construction. She graduated from the Oi Kabum school of art and technology and is a graduate student in Cinema and Audiovisual at UFF. Currently her research is directed towards the investigation of the shock of her corporeality in relation to the physical and immaterial spaces of the colonial constructions. Through the resumption of her ancestry, she works on memory, the subversion of symbols, ways of being in the civilized and institutional field, manifesting her own presence as a trans and indigenous identity in an urban context.

Urias (Uberlândia, 1994) moves issues of gender, politics, history and semiotic studies into the music industry in Brazil.

ONLINE EXHIBITION: 27 May – 30 June 2021

Watch here: bit.ly/3eF76Ym

OFFLINE SCREENING: 27 May – 26 June 2021 at LUX

Open three days a week, Thursday – Saturday, 12 – 5pm.

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